

Forms of Advertisement Translation in Latvia and the Latvian Language in Translation*

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Abstract. A range of factors such as brand type, brand positioning and the target culture's attitude to global brands influence the translation of advertisements. There are various kinds of adaptation in advertisement translations: adaptation by replacement, by omission, by sentence-structure change and by addition. Advertisements may be translated literally, by a synonym, by glocalisation and abstraction change. In other cases, the text in the original is simply replaced. Translated texts of all types of brands are characterised by borrowings and a calqued sentence structure, and these in turn penetrate the Latvian language. Under the influence of English, fashion words enter Latvian from translations. Brands, and translations of texts defined by them, determine the peculiarities of Latvian in advertising. **Keywords:** translation of advertisements, adaptation, brand, borrowings, language in translation

Introduction

Various terms are used when designating the translation of advertisements: adaptation, versioning, transcreation and localisation. All of them are related to overcoming cultural differences when advertising a product in a different country.

Translation is viewed as a transfer of text from the source language to the target language by creating an idiomatic version of the original text. The text remains faithful to the source text (medium.com).

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Transcreation is a modern term and is interpreted as creative translation, including the creation of parts of the text. The original idea is preserved, but the content is more acceptable to the new audience because emotionally appealing words are used. Transcreation is more related to plays on words, and is considered more creative than ordinary translation (medium.com).

The term *versioning* is most often used in relation to video adverts and means their re-editing into different versions. It can include the insertion of new text, as well as the addition of music more pleasant to the target audience. Versioning is more related to actual changes to videos, printed or digital content.

Adaptation is adapting a global brand campaign to another country. The target culture's differences, legal conditions, media and economic situation are taken into account.

Localisation is more related to the product itself, making it culturally and linguistically more relevant to its target audience and market. Localisation can take place on several levels, including translation (medium.com). Localisation is also viewed as the adaptation of a product to a particular region (culturesconnection.com).

Since adaptation is a broader term widely used in Latvia, it will be used here to describe various methods of translating advertising texts. Translation is seen in a broad sense, encompassing its various forms. The material of the article dates from 2011–2021 and encompasses adverts on television, in virtual environments (including company websites) and in printed media, for example magazines. The language of advertising is changing. It is influenced to a large extent by translations. There are several factors that determine the translation of advertising.

1. Translation of advertisements and brand typology

The strategy of translation of advertisements in the Latvian market is largely determined by the brand. Brand typology distinguishes between four types of brands: prestige brands, global master brands, superbrands and glocal brands (a blend of the words “global” and “local”) (Baker, Sterenberg, Taylor 2007, Ločmele 2013: 355).

1.1. *Prestige brands*

Prestige brands are described as fascinating, reserved, captivating, and a little exciting. Examples are high fashion products and expensive perfumes, and some car brands. Prestige brands' ads tend to be left untranslated, they are like works of art. They are created for fantasy and are globalised. They speak in the same way to the audience all over the world. For example, an ad for the perfume *La Vie est Belle* from the perfumier *Lancôme* leaves the text untranslated in the video with Julia Roberts (TV3, 14.09.2018,

at 21.16) as does the *Giorgio Armani* perfume *Si* in the video with Australian actress Cate Blanchett (TV3, 11.12.2020, at 21.25). In Latvia, the short text included in such advertisements is not translated, in defiance of the Regulation on the Use of the State Language in Names and Information (likumi.lv).

1.2. Global master brands

Global master brands are the ones not fully associated with their country of origin. They are based not on cultural identity but on a universal myth (such as Coca-Cola and Nike, which respectively held 13th and 21st place among the 100 most valuable global brands in 2020 (BrandZ 2020)). Global brands use universal emotions to gain an audience all over the world (Olinss 2005). Their advertisements are sometimes translated.

Coca-Cola's 2020 Christmas video ad is the heartfelt story of a father's self-sacrificing love for his daughter. The video is directed by Taika Waititi, a writer and director and winner of the American Film Academy Award. It shows the father's difficult journey to the North Pole to deliver his daughter's letter to Santa Claus. When he finally meets Santa Claus and is brought home by Santa's iconic Coca-Cola truck, he learns the wish written in the letter. The letter "Dear Santa, Please bring Daddy home for Christmas"¹ is translated into Latvian with the word order change: "Mīļais Ziemassvētku vecīti! Lūdzu, Ziemassvētkos atved tēti mājās!" [Dear Santa Claus! Please, at Christmas, bring Daddy home!]. Also translated is the text of the advertisement, an appeal "Šogad dāvēni Ziemassvētkos to, ko uzdāvēnāt vari tikai tu!" (from English "This Christmas, give something only you can give."). The word order of the subordinate clause in Latvian emphasises the meaning of the pronoun *tu* [you]. In the year which brought significant changes to the whole world, Coca-Cola used this ad story to highlight the fact we want to be with our nearest and dearest at Christmas.²

The famous slogan "Just do it" from the manufacturer of sports shoes, the master brand Nike, has not been translated into Latvian. Created in 1988, it also linked its history to one of Nike's advertising faces, the former American footballer Colin Kaepernick who, during the performance of the United States national anthem, went down on one knee to protest against the police shooting at unarmed black citizens. Kaepernick's actions gave rise to conflicting reactions among the US population: on the one hand, his example was followed by many other American footballers while on the other, he was criticised by many people including the then President Donald Trump. Kaepernick had to leave his team San Francisco 49ers and has been unable to

¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_8BJUrUPm-U (accessed 17.07.2021).

² <https://www.coca-cola.lv/ziemassvetki> (accessed 18.01.2021).

find a place in the American National Football League for several years. Trump's anger was also caused by Nike's actions, choosing Kaepernick as ambassador for the 30th anniversary of the slogan in 2018. Nike's ad, referring to what happened, said "Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything." (Bella 2018). Nike is trying to reach buyers with messages about topical issues in society. At the end of November 2020, Nike published an advertising video against mobbing and racism in Japan. It was in Japanese with English subtitles.

1.3. Superbrands

Superbrands are strong brands less connected to a universal myth (including McDonald's, which ranked ninth on BrandZ's 100 most valuable brands list in 2020 (BrandZ 2020) and IBM). Superbrand ads are translated in Latvia. Their translated advertisements contain a great number of anglicisms, such as the McDonald's "Gardie Megadāli ir atgriezušies!"³ [The tasty Mega Deals are back!] from English *McDonald's Mega Deals*⁴. Some McDonald's products are offered under the heading "Bestselleri!"⁵ [bestsellers], and many names are in English: "Izvēlies savu Big Tasty"⁶ [choose your Big Tasty].

1.4. Glocal brands

Glocal brands are positioned as genuine and sincere. Baker, Sterenberg and Taylor rank cosmetics such as Dove, and Nestlé coffee among the glocal brands (Baker, Sterenberg, Taylor 2007). After the Dove shower gel ad of 2017 in which a black woman turned white caused a storm of indignation as racist, Dove launched the #ShowUs campaign in 2020. Its goal is to create a collection of images giving a broader view of beauty, making it more inclusive.⁷ These images are intended for use for other companies in their advertisements as well. Dove itself uses them on its website. The Latvian version of the campaign, "#ParādiSevi" [Show yourself], is a converse, because it expresses the same situation from the opposite point of view (Chesterman 2016: 100). The translation is like a mirror image. The English text "More women who look like me" is translated literally as "Vairāk sievietes, kas izskatās kā es", but the woman's name Itzel is left

³ <https://mcdonalds.lv/> (accessed 18.02.2021).

⁴ <https://supermarketpromotions.blogspot.com/2021/01/mcdonalds-mega-deals-festival-04-27.html> (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁵ <https://mcdonalds.lv/> (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁶ <https://mcdonalds.lv/> (accessed 18.02.2021).

⁷ https://www.dove.com/uk/stories/campaigns/showus.html?fbclid=IwAR0gPb7R4ksJAIKxVNRtWY9WzfByY0dGXIIYngtHKg7Nv_WnIUPNblEr5Vo (accessed 17.07.2021).

untranscribed, thus departing from the norms of Latvian. The mirror image principle is continued by extra-linguistic means: JCDcaux offered a non-standard solution for the placement of non-standard ads on the streets of Riga in 2020, allowing passers-by to see themselves in a mirror placed next to each ad.

A coffee from another glocal brand, Nescafé Dolce Gusto, is advertised under the heading “Organiskās kafijas kolekcija no Centrālās un Dienvidamerikas” [Organic coffee collection from Central and South America]⁸. This translation shows the influence of English: *organiskā kafija* is a calque from English *organic coffee*.

Local brands are localised and adapted in order to reach the target audience in each country, ideally by a person known by it, but at least in the target audience’s language. For example, the characters in adverts for the Bonux soap powder were given Latvian names: “Sveika, Lienīt!” [Hello, Lienīt!] and “Sveika, Dzintras tant!” [Hello, Aunt Dzintra!] (Santa, No. 11, 2011: 33). Food, hygiene products, cleaning products and detergents are closely linked to local tastes, traditions, culture and psychology, so their advertisements are localised most.

The English inscription on the label of the product contains Latvian translation of the product type in the promotional video for glocal brand Nivea’s micellar water MicellAIR: “MICELĀRAIS ŪDENS 0% ATLIKUMU”⁹ from English “MICELLAR WATER 0% residue”, thus bringing it closer to the target audience. A footnote in small print adds “0% ATLIKUMU: Apstiprina 87% lietotāju. Pētījums veikts 100 sieviešu grupā” [87 % of users approve. The study was carried out in a group of 100 women]. It is intended to show the good faith of advertisers and make the ad appear more credible and scientific, but cannot be read in the short time it appears on the screen.

1.5. Brand positioning

The translation of advertisements also depends on how the brand is positioned. For example, Baker, Sterenberg and Taylor write that Toyotas are positioned as everyday cars, in many countries they are linked to local values and even considered a local brand (Baker, Sterenberg, Taylor 2007: 451). Toyota is committed to reducing the negative impact of cars on the environment and to contributing to a more sustainable and inclusive society. This idea is at the heart of the 2020 commercial, the Latvian version of which is “Mēs esam ceļā, lai pārvarētu šķēršļus un nonāktu vēl tālāk, ar hibrīdu, ar “plug-in” hibrīdu, pilnībā elektrisko un ūdeņraža automobili. Ja, esot ceļā, aiz sevis neko un nevienu neatstājam, mēs dodamies uz priekšu kopā. Tālāk par nulli. Nulles

⁸ <https://www.dolce-gusto.lv/> (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E8SkT2Tyopc> (accessed 17.07.2021).

emisijas – Toyota ceļš pretī labākai pasaulei.”¹⁰ [We are on the way to overcoming obstacles and reaching even further, with a hybrid, a plug-in hybrid, a fully electric and hydrogen car. If we leave nothing and no one behind when we’re on the road, we go forward together. Beyond zero. Zero emissions. Toyota’s road to a better world]. The English version of the slogan of this ad is “Let’s go beyond zero”, which has been translated into Latvian by changing the structure of the sentence – “Tālāk par nulli” [Beyond zero] and has also been translated in the Estonian commercial, but left untranslated in the versions published in Spain, Italy and Cyprus. This is linked to the last factor taken into account when deciding on the need for localisation, namely the target culture’s typical attitude to global brands.

1.6. The target culture’s attitude to global brands

Target cultures are categorised as cultural individualists, global individualists, cultural sensitives and global sensitives (Baker, Sterenberg, Taylor 2007: 452). We will look in more detail at the cultural individualists, because Latvia is in this group. In cultural individualist countries (Australia, Austria, France, New Zealand, Russia, Spain, United Kingdom, USA), people are proud of their culture and have strong individual values. Translating advertisements for such a target culture requires localisation and creation of individual ties with local consumers. On the other hand, the fact that the Toyota advertisement for the Spanish market keeps the slogan in English may indicate that Spain is becoming more open to global influences.

Having considered brand typology and positioning and the characteristics of the target culture, we now explore the translation methods used for advertising texts.

2. Method of translation

2.1. Adaptation by replacement

The title of global brand Toyota’s Latvian website has been adapted, replacing the source text. The slogan and the last line of the commercial are quoted “Tālāk par nulli. Nulles emisijas — Toyota ceļš pretī labākai pasaulei”¹¹ [Beyond zero. Zero emissions. Toyota’s road to a better world] while the source text (the English-language website) contains the slogan in the title “Let’s go beyond zero” and the text “Toyota. Breaking through barriers and going beyond.”¹² The Latvian version includes the manufacturer’s com-

¹⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LW52gBH3svA> (accessed 17.07.2021).

¹¹ <https://www.toyota.lv/world-of-toyota/beyondzero> (accessed 17.07.2021).

¹² <https://www.toyota-europe.com/world-of-toyota/beyondzero> (accessed 17.07.2021).

mitment to a cleaner environment and a better world, while the source text emphasises overcoming obstacles and the cleanliness of cars' emissions as shown in the picture, a frame from the video with a water circle behind the cars.

Some advertising for global brand Coca-Cola talks about Spanish food (“Nothing can unite Spain better than ham and a Coca-Cola”¹³) and has been adapted by replacing cultural realia. In the Latvian translation, ham has been replaced by a paella, which the translators thought more Spanish: “Nekas nespēj vienot Spāniju labāk kā paelja un Coca-Cola.” [Nothing can unite Spain better than paella and Coca-Cola]¹⁴, although this sentence is intriguing: why did Coca-Cola imagine Latvians would be interested in what unites Spain?

2.2. *Adaptation by omission*

Advertising texts are sometimes adapted to the Latvian market by omitting part of the text. This is either because the information in the text is not relevant to Latvia or because a translation would sound awkward. For example, information not relevant to Latvia was cut from a glocal commercial for the brand Colgate Total showing a crowd waiting at a station for a delayed train, with the text “Sorry, folks, look like we’re stuck in for a while.”¹⁵ This scene was removed altogether because train delays and congestion are almost unknown in Latvia.

There is also an omission on the toyota.lv website. The original English text describes hybrids and plug-in hybrids and also battery-electric vehicles¹⁶, for which there is no demand yet in Latvia. Battery-electric cars are not mentioned on the Latvian website at all.

Awkward for translation is the text “For Mr. Right”¹⁷ in the Colgate Total advertisement. The Latvian translation therefore omits it, leaving only the phrase “Romantiskiem mirkļiem” [for romantic moments] (from the source English text “For sparks to fly”, where the idiom “sparks fly” is used to signify sexual attraction. The idiom is paraphrased in translation)¹⁸.

¹³ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXylCotS72M&cab_channel=Coca-Cola (accessed 17.07.2021).

¹⁴ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iyk4azi7S9s&list=PLD7B3A21BAC91054F&index=41&cab_channel=CocaColaBaltics&fbclid=IwAR0ulibMrSXAfz2up1qkIC0jhSmgmktwcmf2ZpeTklMURDhxoxvjA3TOHKY (accessed 17.07.2021).

¹⁵ <https://www.ispot.tv/ad/wBnd/colgate-total-advanced-are-you-totally-ready> (accessed 17.07.2021).

¹⁶ <https://www.toyota-europe.com/world-of-toyota/beyondzero> (accessed 17.07.2021).

¹⁷ <https://www.ispot.tv/ad/wBnd/colgate-total-advanced-are-you-totally-ready> (accessed 17.07.2021).

¹⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8PtfPEp9-s> (accessed 17.07.2021).

2.3. *Adaptation by sentence-structure change, omission and addition*

In a commercial for the global brand Colgate Total, the sentence “Give me the confidence of a totally healthy mouth.” is restructured by combining it with the previous sentence, “Colgate Total fights bacteria on teeth, tongue, cheeks and gums for 12 hours.”¹⁹ “Totally” is omitted and a comparison with conventional toothpastes added: “Pretēji parastajām zobu pastām *Colgate Total* pasargā no baktērijām zobus, mēli, vaigus un smaganas labākai mutes veselībai.” [Unlike conventional toothpastes, Colgate Total protects the teeth, tongue, cheeks and gums against bacteria for better oral health.]²⁰ As a result, the sentence gives confidence of the advantages of the toothpaste compared to its rivals, while the omitted information about the 12-hour effect is included in the written text on the screen.

2.4. *Literal translation*

Sometimes advertisements reach their goal by translating text literally. The advertisement for the global brand V.I.Poo toilet spray uses coarse humour since Santa Claus, when delivering presents, also makes a trip to the toilet. The English text “Every Christmas when all others sleep Santa leaves a present but not the one you’d think. Just spray, trap odours and go. And keep your presents under wraps.”²¹ is translated literally, the only change being a plural form of the noun “dāvana”, a present: “Katrū gadu Ziemassvētkos, kamēr visi guļ, Ziemassvētku vecītis noliek dāvanas, bet ne tikai tādas, kā jūs domājat. Vienkārši izsmidzini, paslēp smakas un dodies. Dāvanas lai paliek iepakotas.”²² There is also a mistake in the translation: the verb “to go” has several meanings including “to use a toilet”, but the use of the correct verb would make this ad too coarse and unacceptable to the viewer. The expression “under wraps” does not mean “iepakots”, “wrapped”. “Under wraps” means “secret”. The sentence therefore means “keep the fact you did a poo in their toilet secret” while using the words “present” and “wrap” which are reminiscent of Christmas, making it an interesting example of how some things simply cannot be translated. The only sentence where an explication is required in translation is “V.I.Poo like a VIP”. It has a wordplay preserved in the Latvian translation “Ar V.I.Poo esi V.I.P.” [with V.I.Poo be a V.I.P.].

¹⁹ <https://www.ispot.tv/ad/wBnd/colgate-total-advanced-are-you-totally-ready> (accessed 17.07.2021).

²⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8PtFPEp9-s> (accessed 17.07.2021).

²¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbZOhN0acD8> (accessed 17.07.2021).

²² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2MSawZ_cgxM (accessed 17.07.2021).

2.5. Usage of a synonym

The English commercial for the Coca-Cola 2019 campaign starts with “Shawarma spins around the world...”²³. This Turkish word is not widely known in Latvian, so none of its many versions (*šaurma*, *šaverma*, *šavarma*, *šuarma*) is used in the translation. The most commonly used synonym, “kebabs” (a borrowing from Arabic) is used: “Kebabs riņķo apkārt pasaulei...” [kebab circles around the world...]²⁴. Most English do not understand the word *shawarma* either and call it *doner*.

2.6. Abstraction level change

A statement used in Coca-Cola advertising, “Mexican food is everywhere and nothing will get in its way”²⁵, is quite strong but less specific than its Latvian translation “Meksikāņu ēdiens ir visur un nav tādas sienas, kas to spētu iegrozīt” [Mexican food is everywhere and no wall can hold it back]²⁶. This is a clear reference to the wall Trump wanted to build for hundreds of kilometres along the border between Mexico and the United States. This emphasises the ad’s message that food and Coca-Cola unite people wherever they come from.

The same Coca-Cola commercial features a softened, more abstract translation: “Kad pasaule lemj ar galvu, tā var kļūt sašķelta” [When the world decides with its head, it can become divided]²⁷, while the original “When the world decides with its head it becomes divided”²⁸ is balder and stronger.

2.7. Glocalisation

Glocalisation is the application of products’ values to the expectations and cultural peculiarities of the local market. This can be illustrated from the winter 2018 IKEA catalogues in various countries. A British chair advertisement depicts a table with two

²³ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXylCotS72M&ab_channel=Coca-Cola (accessed 17.07.2021).

²⁴ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iyk4azi7S9s&list=PLD7B3A21BAC91054F&index=41&ab_channel=CocaColaBaltics&fbclid=IwAR0ulibMrSXAfz2up1qklC0jhSmgmktwcmf2ZpeTklMURDhxoxvjA3TOHKY (accessed 17.07.2021).

²⁵ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXylCotS72M&ab_channel=Coca-Cola (accessed 17.07.2021).

²⁶ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iyk4azi7S9s&list=PLD7B3A21BAC91054F&index=41&ab_channel=CocaColaBaltics&fbclid=IwAR0ulibMrSXAfz2up1qklC0jhSmgmktwcmf2ZpeTklMURDhxoxvjA3TOHKY (accessed 17.07.2021).

²⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iyk4azi7S9s&list=PLD7B3A21BAC91054F&index=41&ab_channel=CocaColaBaltics&fbclid=IwAR0ulibMrSXAfz2up1qklC0jhSmgmktwcmf2ZpeTklMURDhxoxvjA3TOHKY (accessed 17.07.2021).

²⁸ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXylCotS72M&ab_channel=Coca-Cola (accessed 17.07.2021).

chairs with the title “Because two’s company”²⁹, emphasising that the nicest way of spending time is with a special person. The American catalogue shows more of the same chairs with the title “So your guests brought guests?”³⁰, in Russian this advertisement has the title *Чтобы гости приходили с друзьями* [To let guests come with friends]³¹. Advertisements for Americans and Russians welcome uninvited guests, while the picture of chairs in the Latvian catalogue has the title “Jo vairāk viesu, jo liksmāka ballīte” [The more guests, the merrier the party] (IKEA Winter 2018 Catalogue), without particularly accentuating the presence of uninvited guests.

2.8. Replacement of the original text

There are cases where the original advertisement itself is adapted to the target culture. One example is the 2012 advertisement for the Nordic and Baltic brand DnB NOR (currently Luminor bank in the Baltic States). In a comical ad featuring the popular American actor George Clooney and Danish theatre actress Julie Agnete Vang, Clooney says “I’ve been going online looking for places for us in Saulkrasti” The translation is given in subtitles: “Es internetā meklēju mums abiem māju Saulkrastos.” [I’ve been looking on the internet for a house for both of us in Saulkrasti]³² In the same advertisement for a Norwegian audience, Clooney says the place name Lillestrøm.³³ He speaks in English without Norwegian subtitles. In 2012 Norwegian viewers voted this commercial the best advertisement on TV. It had more than 1½ million YouTube hits within a week (Browning 2012: 206).

Brands, and the translations of texts defined by them, determine the characteristics of the advertising language.

3. Language in translation

3.1. Grammatical forms

At the morphology level, the use of different grammatical forms is significant. The translated text may be recoded to fit the new cultural environment, retaining some

²⁹ https://onlinecatalogue.ikea.com/GB/en/IKEA_Catalogue/?_ga=2.91533210.102062958.1544369562-462726906.1510333186#/pages/142 (accessed. 09.12.2018).

³⁰ https://onlinecatalog.ikea-usa.com/US/en/IKEA_Catalogue/?_ga=2.150763318.105856571.1546180802-462726906.1510333186#/pages/142 (accessed 31.12.2018).

³¹ https://onlinecatalogue.ikea.com/RU/ru/IKEA_Catalogue/?index&cid=ot|ru|bluebar|201709221113519474_1&_ga=2.52725544.102062958.1544369562-462726906.1510333186#/pages/112 (accessed 09.12.2018).

³² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CjJRQxQ8ETg&ab_channel=PortalsAprinkis (accessed 17.07.2021).

³³ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_8TGTKdrIY&ab_channel=Eblax (accessed 17.07.2021).

foreign elements that are then adjusted to fit the new context. This can be done by using feminine or masculine endings in Latvian. For example, the names of the cars are left unchanged, but the last letter of the name determines whether the car is advertised as feminine or masculine in Latvian. In the translated advertisements we find “jauns Ford” [a new Ford]³⁴ (masculine), “jaunais Hyundai Santa Fe” [the new Hyundai Santa Fe] (Klubs 2019 No. 4: 7) (masculine, even though Santa Fe looks feminine in Latvian because it ends in -e), but contrastingly “jaunā Nissan Micra” [the new Nissan Micra] (Ieva 2013, No. 38: 11) (feminine) and “jaunā Ford Puma” [the new Ford Puma]³⁵ (feminine). However, “10-miljonais Ford Fiesta” [the 10 millionth Ford Fiesta]³⁶ is masculine although Fiesta has the feminine ending -a.

In addition, keeping the names of foreign products unchanged is having an impact on the usage of names in Latvian. An emerging trend is not even to decline names of Latvian products. The TV commercial offers to celebrate the New Year *ar Rīgas šampanietis* [with Riga champagne] (TV3 17.12.2020., 20:44), not *ar Rīgas šampanieti* where -i is the correct case ending.

3.2. Borrowings in translations

At the lexical level, borrowings are widely used in translations. They include both borrowings already in established use and those whose use is not yet stable. Among the stable ones are abbreviated international clothing size scales “XS” (from English extra small) and “XL” (from English extra large) used in the translated advertisement for the global brand Nescafé Dolce Gusto’s coffee machine Piccolo XS. The ad title in English, contrasting the large range of choice to the smallness of the machine: “XL in choice – XS in size,”³⁷ is translated as “XL iespējas – XS izmērā” [XL possibilities – in XS size]³⁸, preserving the antithesis. The idea expressed in the title with the borrowing “XL” is comprehensible from the image: it is possible to make the many different types of the coffee shown in the picture in the coffee machine.

Other borrowings have acquired the status of term. The 2020 advertisement for the global brand Toyota contains a borrowing from English: “*plug-in*” *hibrīds* [plug-in hybrid]. The database *termini.gov.lv* includes the term “*plug-in*” *hibrīda tehnoloģija* [plug-

³⁴ <https://iauto.lv/akcijas/349-ford-noliktavas-izpardosana-ar-atlaidi-lidz-pat-9-500-eur/> (accessed 17.07.2021).

³⁵ https://ford.lv/?cm_id=12134388955_122539084491_493206764335_kwd-413618233_c_g_&gclid=CjwKCjwKCAiAu8SABhAxEiwAsodSZBo1EUprYhP7XdUwLfNxn0dhCjdqs6uHArVkJwBNjYJ_yaWElh7kN7hoCdNIQAvD_BwE (accessed 17.07.2021).

³⁶ <https://ford.lv/ford-vesture> (accessed 17.07.2021).

³⁷ dolce-gusto.com.sg (accessed 18.02.2021).

³⁸ facebook.com/NescafeDolceGustoLV (accessed 18.02.2021).

in hybrid technology] with the synonym *pie strāvas tīkla pieslēdzama hibrīdtehnoloģija* [hybrid technology that can be connected to the power grid], which is too long for use in an advertisement. The use of the borrowing “*plug-in*” *hibrīds* is gaining ground in the language: it is in quotation marks in the advertising text next to the Toyota commercial³⁹, but the Toyota website has abandoned them.⁴⁰

Ads also contain word combinations that are not stable terms, but occasional formations in the source text. Thus the advert for a global brand, “Drink Coca-Cola”, uses English “fusion food”, which is in quotes even in English⁴¹. Fusion food has been defined as food prepared by combining traditional Western techniques and ingredients with those used in the Eastern cuisine (collinsdictionary.com). In Latvian translation, these dishes are referred to by an occasional formation, the untranslated borrowing “*fusion*” *virtuve* [“fusion” cuisine].⁴² There is an abstraction change as well, as *food* is more concrete than *cuisine*.

Borrowings found in hybrid texts and denoting elements of other cultures already known in Latvia can enter the language from advertisements: *Blekseil* (advert for the internet shop 220.lv on TV3, 18.11.2020, at 21:40), also *Black Friday* (Top shop advert on LTV1, 09.11.2020, at 9:24).

A recent Latvianisation is *rutīna* [routine] used in adverts for facial care products, which has been less successful. Perhaps the word combination *sejas kopšanas rutīna* [facial care routine] could be acceptable, but usages like *tvirtumu piešķiroša rutīna*,⁴³ [firmness routine] sounds negative because the Latvian word *rutīna* means “a trite, conservative way of behaving”.

The English language model is used to create chains of adjectives, for example “sniedz kino cienīgu 8K izšķirtspēju” (Samsung Galaxy S21 5G and S21+5G ad⁴⁴) from “with beyond cinematic 8K resolution”⁴⁵

³⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LW52gBH3svA> (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁴⁰ <https://www.toyota.lv/world-of-toyota/beyondzero> (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁴¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXylCotS72M&ab_channel=Coca-Cola (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁴² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iyk4azi7S9s&list=PLD7B3A21BAC91054F&index=41&ab_channel=CocaColaBaltics&fbclid=IwAR0ulibMrSXAfz2up1qklC0jhSmgmktwcmf2ZpeTklMURDhxoxvjA3TOHKY (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁴³ <https://www.drogas.lv/lv/pretnovecoshanas-serija> (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁴⁴ https://www.samsung.com/lv/smartphones/galaxy-s21-5g/?cid=lv_paid_ppc_google_f1h21_e-commerce_ao-e-comm-sem-_text_f1h21_cold&gclid=CjwKCAiAsOmABhAwEiwAEBR0ZvHFc331hCQYZvbq93mV3VB7GtUDJu6pCPQB9QXLKh27o4-IRw7UjxoCyHkQAvD_BwE (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁴⁵ <https://www.samsung.com/uk/smartphones/galaxy-s21-5g/> (accessed 17.07.2021).

3.3. Fashion words

Under the influence of English, words *revolucionizēt*, *revolūcija* [to revolutionise, revolution] are being used more and more often. For example the advertisement for global brand Samsung: “Izstrādāts, lai revolucionizētu video un fotogrāfiju funkcijas” [Developed to revolutionise video and photography functions] (Samsung Galaxy S21 5G and S21+ 5G ads⁴⁶) is a translation with explicitation from “Designed to revolutionise video and photography”⁴⁷. In turn, “kas izraisīs revolūciju fotogrāfijā” [which will lead to a revolution in photography] (advertisement for Samsung Galaxy S21 Ultra 5G)⁴⁸ is a translation with a cohesion change from “to create a revolution in photography”. The adjective *revolucionārs* [revolutionary] in the word combination “revolucionārās Fairy putas” [the revolutionary Fairy foam] is used in the advertisement for global brand Fairy (LTV1, 13.10.2020, at 20:38).

Fashion words are also adjective *episks* [epic] and adverb *episki* [epically]. Avoiding the use of the adjective *episks*, the translator translated the English “epic” in the global brand Samsung’s advertisement as impression-rich: “Made for the epic in everyday”⁴⁹ becomes “Radīts iespaidiem bagātai ikdienai” [Created for an impression-rich daily life]⁵⁰, also “Epic. In every way” becomes “Iespaidiem bagāts. Visādā ziņā” [Impression-rich. In every way]⁵¹. However, in the television advertisement, the translation of the adverb “epic” is “Episki” (Galaxy S21 ad TV3, 17.01.21., at 20:58), also on Samsung’s Facebook page: “Viens vārds – episki!” [One word: epic!] (Galaxy S21 ad on Facebook). The adjective *episks* means “majestically calm; broad” (tezaurs.lv) in Latvian, but it has acquired the meaning “extremely good” from English (epic: extremely good (informal) (dictionary.cambridge.org)). In 2019, the word *episki* gained the title *nevārds*, a type of word that should be avoided, it was categorised as a new crutch word, a word devoid of meaning (satori.lv). The use of the word *episki* in advertising contributes to its rooting in the language.

⁴⁶ https://www.samsung.com/lv/smartphones/galaxy-s21-5g/?cid=lv_paid_ppc_google_f1h21_e-commerce_ao-e-comm-sem-_text_f1h21_cold&gclid=CjwKCAiAsOmABhAwEiwAEBR0ZvHFc331hCQYZvbq93mV3VB7GtUDJu6pCPQB9QXLKh27o4-IRw7UjxoCyHkQAvD_BwE (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁴⁷ <https://www.samsung.com/uk/smartphones/galaxy-s21-5g/> (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁴⁸ <https://www.samsung.com/lv/smartphones/galaxy-s21-ultra-5g/> (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁴⁹ <https://www.samsung.com/uk/smartphones/galaxy-s21-5g/> (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁵⁰ https://www.samsung.com/lv/smartphones/galaxy-s21-5g/?cid=lv_paid_ppc_google_f1h21_e-commerce_ao-e-comm-sem-_text_f1h21_cold&gclid=CjwKCAiAsOmABhAwEiwAEBR0ZvHFc331hCQYZvbq93mV3VB7GtUDJu6pCPQB9QXLKh27o4-IRw7UjxoCyHkQAvD_BwE (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁵¹ <https://www.samsung.com/lv/smartphones/galaxy-s21-ultra-5g/> (accessed 17.07.2021).

3.4. *Play on words in translated advertisements*

Wordplays can be observed in translated advertising texts at semantic level. Maintaining wordplays in advertisement translations is difficult. However, sometimes when there are similar words in Latvian, literal translation is enough to reproduce the wordplay. Global brand Colgate Total's toothpaste ad maintains the play on the name of the toothpaste in translation. In order to achieve this, a literal translation is used at the beginning of the text: "Vai esi totāli gatava?"⁵² from English "Are you totally ready?"⁵³ In Latvian, the word combination is not logical and euphonious in itself, the word *totāli* means "extremely" (tezaurs.lv), and a similar word combination in a different text would be poor style. However, the use of the adverb *totāli* is justified in this text because it refers back to the toothpaste advertised. Also the final sentence of the text, the ad slogan, is translated literally, "Esi totāli gatava dzīvei" from "Be totally ready for life." The adverb "totally"/*totāli* is used three times in both the source and target text, plus an extra one in Latvian: in a sentence that the original text does not even contain: "Lai Tu būtu totāli gatava" [So that you are totally ready].

The word play is used in the advertisement for global brand Voltarol, where a woman calls her dog, saying "Archie, let's go exercise", but the dog mishears it as "extra fries?", much more desirable. "Oh no, exercise."⁵⁴ Two versions were offered by the translator, both using words that sounded similar in Latvian: the first – "Ārčij, pastaiģa! - Kur pastēte? Ak, nē! Pastaiga..." [Archie, walkies! –Pâté? Where? Oh no, walkies...], and the second – "Ārčij, laiks pasportot! - Laiks brokastot? Ak, vai! Ne jau sportot..." [Archie, time for sport! – Time for breakfast? Oh no, not time for sport...]. The very rare EN name Archie has been kept in LV.

3.5. *Complexity of translated advertising texts*

Advertising texts should not be difficult to understand. David Ogilvy, former owner of Ogilvy advertising agency and author of countless adverts, wrote in his book "Ogilvy on Advertising" that the text of advertisements must be written in short sentences, and paragraphs should also be short. If one of his employees wanted to use an oversophisticated word in the text, Ogilvy advised him to take a bus to the countryside and spend a week on a farm. If the word still seemed appropriate for him on his return, then Ogilvy would let him use it (Ogilvy 1985: 81). Although this seems exaggerated in today's world, hard-to-understand advertisements may still be rewritten for clarity.

⁵² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8PtFPEp9-s> (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁵³ <https://www.ispot.tv/ad/wBnd/colgate-total-advanced-are-you-totally-ready> (accessed 17.07.2021).

⁵⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqFupRXh174> (accessed 17.07.2021).

Advertising should be in a language that is readily understood. Advertisements directed at professionals, such as doctors, may be made differently. Different terminology and professionalisms are essential there. In some cases, advertisements addressed to non-specialists also try to use sophisticated words to encourage confidence in the specific value or quality of the product.

A peculiar, uncharacteristic solution for advertising texts is offered in the advertisement for the body care lotion from the glocal brand Dove Derma Spa, where the text is written using easy vocabulary, but a more technical term and also Latin name is in a footnote, thus making the text more scientific: “Derma Spa produkti strādā dziļi ādas šūnu līmenī* un piepilda tās ar barojošām un mitrinošām vielām. *ādas raga slānī (stratum corneum)” [Derma Spa products work deep, at skin cell level* and fill them with nourishing and moisturising substances. *epidermis (stratum corneum)]. In English, the Latin term *stratum corneum* is used to give a scientific impression: “...moisturising deeply (within the stratum corneum) for improved skin firmness and elasticity.”⁵⁵

Here is an example of an ill-translated title. It is a global brand Siemens ad: “Iebūvējiet labu gaumi ar jaunajām Siemens cepeškrāsnīm.” [Install good taste with the new Siemens ovens.] (Ieva, 2016, No. 18: 64). “Installing” good taste is nonsense.

Conclusions

Both global and glocal advertisements are adapted in translation. Adapted ads can also contain text fragments literally translated. Adaptation by substitution is more frequently observed in global brand advertisements. Advertisements of both global and glocal brands feature adaptation by omission.

The translated texts of all types of brands are characterised by borrowings and calqued sentence structure, but they are more common in the translated texts of global brands, and from there they also penetrate the language. Under the influence of English, fashion words enter Latvian from translations.

The language of advertising in Latvia, including the language of translated advertising, is fully developed. It helps to fulfil advertising functions by attracting attention, stimulating the imagination, making the product memorable and encouraging purchases.

⁵⁵ <https://www.dove.com/za/collections/dermaspa.html> (accessed 17.07.2021).

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