

**Czech University of Life Sciences Prague**

**Faculty of Economics and Management**

**Department of Languages**



## **Bachelor Thesis**

**English as a marketing tool in a non-English speaking  
environment –a case study of Ikea**

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# BACHELOR THESIS ASSIGNMENT

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Economics and Management

Thesis title

**English as a marketing tool in a non-English speaking environment – a case study of Ikea**

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## Objectives of thesis

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to evaluate and define the role of the English language as a marketing tool in non-English speaking environments, with a specific focus on the case study of Ikea.

Objectives:

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of English as a marketing tool for Ikea in non-English speaking environments.
2. To identify the linguistic and cultural barriers that Ikea faces when using English as a marketing tool.
3. To examine the strategies that Ikea employs to overcome these barriers and successfully market their products in non-English speaking environments.
4. To explore the perceptions and attitudes of local consumers towards English as a marketing tool for Ikea products in non-English speaking environments.

## Methodology

The work will be processed using descriptive and empirical methods.

**Content analysis:** This method is a systematic analysis of Ikea's English language marketing messaging. Content analysis will involve evaluating Ikea's marketing materials such as advertisements, flyers, social media posts and the language used in the messaging. This approach will help to evaluate the effectiveness of Ikea's language marketing strategy and how it resonates with its non-English speaking target audience.

**Case study:** Through a thorough case study analysis, Ikea's English language marketing strategy implementation in different non-English speaking markets will be investigated. The analysis can help gain insights into the challenges and opportunities encountered during the implementation process.

## The proposed extent of the thesis

30-40 pages

## Keywords

English language, marketing tool, non-English speaking environments, Ikea, business, culture.

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## Recommended information sources

- BATHIA, T. 2020. World Englishes and Global Advertising. In: Nelson, C. L., Proshina, Z. G., Davis, D. R. (Eds.) The Handbook of World Englishes. 2nd edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. ISBN: 9781119164210.
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### **Declaration**

I declare that I have worked on my bachelor thesis titled "English as a marketing tool in a non-English speaking environment – a case study of Ikea" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the bachelor thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break any copyrights.

In Prague on 14.03.2024

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I would like to thank PhDr. Martina Jarkovská, Ph.D. and all other persons, for their advice and support during my work on this thesis.

# **English as a marketing tool in a non-English speaking environment – a case study of Ikea**

## **Abstract**

This bachelor thesis aims to evaluate and define the role of the English language as a marketing tool in non-English speaking environments, with a specific focus on the case study of Ikea. The main objective of this work is to assess the effectiveness of English as a marketing tool for Ikea in non-English speaking environments. Partial objectives include identifying the linguistic and cultural barriers that Ikea faces when using English as a marketing tool, examining the strategies that Ikea employs to overcome these barriers and successfully market their products in non-English speaking environments, and last but not least, exploring the perceptions and attitudes of local consumers towards English as a marketing tool for Ikea products in non-English speaking environments.

**Keywords:** English language, marketing tool, non-English speaking environments, Ikea, business, culture.

# **Angličtina jako marketingový nástroj v neanglicky mluvícím prostředí - případová studie společnosti Ikea**

## **Abstrakt**

Tato bakalářská práce je zaměřena na zhodnocení a definování role angličtiny jako marketingového nástroje v neanglicky mluvícím prostředí, se zvláštním zaměřením na případovou studii společnosti Ikea. Hlavním cílem této práce je zhodnotit účinnost angličtiny jako marketingového nástroje společnosti Ikea v neanglicky mluvícím prostředí. Další cíle zahrnují identifikování jazykové a kulturní bariéry, kterým společnost Ikea čelí při používání angličtiny jako marketingového nástroje, prozkoumání strategií, které společnost Ikea používá k překonání těchto bariér a k úspěšnému prodeji svých výrobků v neanglicky mluvícím prostředí a v neposlední řadě prozkoumání vnímání a postoje místních spotřebitelů k angličtině jako marketingovému nástroji výrobků Ikea v neanglicky mluvícím prostředí.

**Klíčová slova:** Anglický jazyk, marketingový nástroj, neanglicky mluvící prostředí, Ikea, obchod, kultura.



# Table of content

<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2 Objectives and Methodology.....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 Objectives.....	12
2.2 Methodology.....	12
<b>3 Literature Review.....</b>	<b>13</b>
3.1 Introduction to the Global Marketing.....	13
3.1.1 Marketing Overview.....	13
3.1.2 Language and Global Marketing.....	13
3.2 Language as a Cultural Connector.....	15
3.2.1 English as a Global Language.....	15
3.2.2 The Influence of Language on Consumer Behaviour.....	17
3.2.3 Cultural Considerations in Global Marketing.....	18
3.3 Global Marketing Strategies.....	20
3.3.1 Market Entry and Localization.....	20
3.3.2 Importance of Language in Market Entry Decisions.....	22
3.4 Branding and Communication.....	23
3.4.1 Language Adaptation in Global Branding.....	23
3.4.2 Cultural Nuances in Global Marketing Communication.....	24
3.5 Consumer Behaviour in Non-English-Speaking Markets.....	26
3.5.1 Influence of English on Consumer Perception.....	26
3.5.2 Consumer Response to English Marketing Communications.....	28
3.6 Linguistic Strategies in International Advertising.....	29
3.6.1 Translating Global Brands.....	29
<b>4 Practical Part.....</b>	<b>32</b>
4.1 Introduction of the Ikea company.....	32
4.1.1 History of the Company.....	32
4.1.2 Expansion to other markets.....	33
4.1.3 Marketing Strategy and Promotional Campaigns.....	33
4.1.4 SWOT Analysis.....	34
4.2 Ikea company on the Czech market.....	35
4.3 SWOT Analysis of the IKEA Website in the Czech Republic.....	37
4.4 Comparison of IKEA Websites in the Czech Republic and France.....	38
4.5 Advertisement in IKEA in the Czech Republic.....	42
<b>5 Results and Discussion.....</b>	<b>44</b>
5.1 Results.....	44
5.2 Recommendations for Improvement of IKEA.....	45

<b>6</b>	<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>References .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>List of figures, tables, graphs and abbreviations.....</b>	<b>50</b>
8.1	List of figures .....	50
8.2	List of abbreviations .....	50

# **1 Introduction**

The paradox of global marketing: the need to communicate in a language that is widely understood but is also sensitive to the local linguistic and cultural environment. English, with its global reach and perceived neutrality, is often the language of choice for multinational companies. However, its use in non-English speaking countries presents a number of challenges and opportunities.

In today's globalised world, the strategic use of English as a marketing tool is becoming increasingly important for companies seeking to extend their reach beyond their native language. This undergraduate thesis, entitled "English as a marketing tool in a non-English speaking environment - the case of Ikea", aims to explore and understand the multifaceted role of English in international marketing, especially in the context of Ikea.

## **2 Objectives and Methodology**

### **2.1 Objectives**

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to assess and define the role of the English language as a marketing tool in non-English speaking environments, with a specific focus on the case study of Ikea.

Objectives:

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of English as a marketing tool for Ikea in non-English speaking environments.
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4. To explore the perceptions and attitudes of local consumers towards English as a marketing tool for Ikea products in non-English speaking environments.

### **2.2 Methodology**

The work is processed using descriptive and empirical methods.

Content analysis: This method is a systematic analysis of Ikea's English language marketing messaging. Content analysis involves evaluating Ikea's marketing materials such as advertisements, flyers, social media posts and the language used in the messaging. This approach helped to evaluate the effectiveness of Ikea's language marketing strategy and how it resonates with its non-English speaking target audience.

Case study: Through a thorough case study analysis, Ikea's English language marketing strategy implementation in different non-English speaking markets was investigated. The analysis can help gain insights into the challenges and opportunities encountered during the implementation process.

## **3 Literature Review**

### **3.1 Introduction to the Global Marketing**

#### **3.1.1 Marketing Overview**

Define marketing as a social process by which companies and individuals exchange created value in order to satisfy their needs. That is, companies create value for consumers (in the form of a product or service) and develop a strong relationship with them in order to get value from them in return (cash) (Kotler, 1984).

The core activities of marketing include activities such as product development and promotion, market research to understand the needs and preferences of the target audience, building and maintaining a brand, establishing communication, organizing distribution, setting prices, and deploying service (Kotler, 1984). In addition, marketing aims to optimize the allocation of resources to increase profitability and market share, and to analyse and adapt to changes in the market environment and consumer behaviour.

In addition, marketing is aimed at optimizing the allocation of resources to increase profitability and market share, as well as analysing and adapting to changes in the market environment and consumer behaviour. Marketing has evolved from a focus on product, price, place and promotion to more holistic approaches that take into account the digital environment and customer experience (Kotler, 1984). Today, it utilizes data analytics, digital platforms, and social media to engage consumers.

Effective marketing strategies are consumer-centric and use market research to customize offers. The digital age has emphasized the importance of content marketing, SEO and social media engagement along with traditional methods. Branding, ethical marketing and social responsibility have become crucial factors for building trust and loyalty.

#### **3.1.2 Language and Global Marketing**

In the face of the globalization and the increasingly interconnected world, many firms attempt to expand their sales into foreign markets. International expansion provides new and potentially more profitable markets, helps increase the firm's competitiveness, and facilitates access to new product ideas, manufacturing innovations, and the latest technology. However, internationalization is unlikely to be successful unless the firm prepares in advance. Planning

is widely regarded as important to the success of new international ventures (Kelly-Holmes, 2016).

The purpose of the marketing plan is to create sustainable competitive advantages in the global marketplace (Hollensen, 2011). Global marketing is defined as the firm's commitment to coordinate its marketing activities across national boundaries to find and satisfy global customer needs better than the competition. This implies that the firm can:

- develop a global marketing strategy, based on similarities and differences between markets;

- exploit the knowledge of the headquarters (home organization) through worldwide diffusion (learning) and adaptations;

- transfer knowledge and 'best practices' from any of its markets and use them in other international markets (Hollensen, 2011).

In today's fast-paced society, globalization has become one of the most important things for any company. For many companies in growth, globalization means expanding business practices to countries across the globe. With this growing need, language and translation have become vital to a business's success. Language is a vital factor to bear in mind while internationalizing one's business, and it might seem like an obstacle at first. In fact, many entrepreneurs and small- and medium-sized enterprises are reluctant to extend their boundaries precisely because of language issues. Tackling questions of language and translation head-on gives one the edge when it comes to opening new markets and tapping into new opportunities. The translation process is particularly important in today's digital age. Globalization and widely available internet access for consumers enable brands to sell their products and services in any part of the world. E-commerce opens companies up to a much wider and more diverse audience. The kinds of elements affected by language include product descriptions, website content, reports, and documentation, so paying attention to the quality of your translations throughout the process is crucial. Quality will directly affect the impact of marketing strategies and actions, and clear and precise texts also help avoid any misunderstandings with suppliers or potential customers. Translation will, therefore, play a key role in successful expansion. Or rather, good-quality translation will play a key role in successful expansion, and it will help you make the most of new ventures into different markets. Also, the importance of language in marketing expressed in effective communication is essential in global marketing, and language is a fundamental aspect of communication. As Fatiha Guess Abi writes, the "meanings of a particular language

represent the culture of a particular social group. To interact with a language means to do so with the culture, which is its reference point” (Hollensen, 2011). Hence, language discrepancies in international market communication have implications far beyond mere translation errors; they have the potential to deter and offend consumers based on cultural sensibilities. There are also many examples in which incorrectly interpreted words can harm the entire marketing strategy.

When Coors decided to introduce its “Turn it Loose” beer campaign in Spain, executives did not seem to double-check whether the Spanish translation of this campaign name would be appropriate. It ended up being an expression that is typically interpreted as “suffering from diarrhoea” (Hollensen, 2011). Spanish consumers consequently avoided purchasing Coors beer for a period.

## **3.2 Language as a Cultural Connector**

### **3.2.1 English as a Global Language**

English plays an important role in connecting cultures and peoples of the earth. It is like a bridge that allows us to connect people among societies and helps to get acquainted with the cultures, traditions, and knowledge of other countries.

The English language has been fighting for the right to truly be considered global for a long time. Back in the 18th century, very few countries recognized English at all, because Latin dominated the scientific and religious fields, French was considered the language of diplomats, culture, and literature, Spanish was widely used in the field of trade, religion, and culture during this period (Crystal, 2003).

Jakob Grimm, the leading philologist of his time, commented that ‘of all modern languages, not one has acquired such great strength and vigour as the English’, and concluded that it ‘may be called justly a language of the world, destined to reign in future with still more extensive sway over all parts of the globe’ (Crystal, 2003). Subsequently, he was quoted by many writers and politicians.

In relation to so many of the major socio-cultural developments of the past 200 years, it can be shown that the English language has repeatedly found itself ‘in the right place at the right time’. No single one of these developments could have established the language as a world leader, but together they have put it in a position of pre-eminence, and together they maintain it (Crystal, 2003).

The reasons why this happened:

1. Political developments:

Most of the pre-twentieth-century commentators would have had no difficulty giving a single, political answer to the question ‘Why World English?’ They would simply have pointed to the growth of the British Empire (Crystal, 2003).

The United Kingdom and the United States were among the countries that won the First World War. And this led to the strengthening of English influence all over the world. The Versailles Peace Treaty was signed in English and French, which emphasized its importance.

The United Nations was formed after World War II, and English became the official language along with French, Russian, Arabic, Spanish and Chinese.

1. Access to knowledge:

According to Crystal (2003), by 1800, the chief growth areas, in textiles and mining, were producing a range of manufactured goods for export which led to Britain being called the ‘workshop of the world.’

The new terminology of technological and scientific advances had an immediate impact on the language, adding tens of thousands of words to the English lexicon. But, more importantly, the fact that these innovations were pouring out of an English-speaking country meant that those from abroad who wished to learn about them would need to learn English – and learn it well – if they wished to benefit.

2. International relations:

The language plays an official or working role in the proceedings of most other major international political gatherings, in all parts of the world.

3. The media:

The press, Advertising, Broadcasting, Cinema, Popular music, and Hollywood, jazz and rock 'n' roll, fascinated people so much that they dreamed of learning English in order to understand American culture.

4. International travel:

The opportunity to travel to speak with people in an international language.

5. Education:

English is the medium of a great deal of the world’s knowledge, especially in such areas as science and technology. And access to knowledge is the business of education.

6. Internet and Communication Technology:



The development of the Internet and social networks has accelerated the global spread of the English language. Most of the online content, including websites, social media platforms and digital publications, is written in English.

Some argue that the dominance of English can lead to the erosion of indigenous languages and cultures. Despite these concerns, English continues to be a vital tool for global communication, connecting people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Today, more than 1 billion people know English and about 360 million of them are native speakers. This proves that English is indeed a global language used to communicate with people outside of English-speaking countries (Crystal, 2003).

### **3.2.2 The Influence of Language on Consumer Behaviour**

Language can have a profound effect on organizational strategy, organizational behaviour and consumer behaviour.

The key element in communication that significantly affects consumer behaviour is language. It is a universal means of communication and broadcasting, has the ability to record decision-making, reasoning, perception, and helps to objectify reality in the consumer world (Bathia, 2020).

In the field of consumer behaviour, language can have a significant impact on consumer needs, preferences and purchasing decisions.

Language can have an impact on consumers' brand preferences and purchase decisions. Consumers from different linguistic have differences in their demands and preferences for products, brands, and services (Torelli and Stoner, 2019). Understanding and adapting to the linguistic and cultural characteristics of consumers can better meet their needs and boost their purchase intentions.

On the other hand, language can work in advertising and marketing. Language has a huge impact on advertising. Advertising has great power over our everyday choices. A bright name or a flashy slogan can make a product unique. There are many tools that marketers use to write ads that influence consumer choices (Bathia, 2020). Advertising can evoke different emotions, convince, and encourage action, and all this is thanks to a huge and diverse language.

In the context of globalization, cross-cultural communication is made more important (Peng and Wu, 2019). In the process of international market expansion, the differences in

language and culture will have an impact on business negotiations and customer relations and so on. With the diversity and internationalization of the market, providing multilingual services and localized experiences becomes an important strategy to attract consumers (Zegers and Auron, 2022).

### **3.2.3 Cultural Considerations in Global Marketing**

The importance of culture to the international marketer is profound. It is an obvious source of difference and some cultural differences are easier to manage than others. In tackling markets in which buyers speak different languages or follow other religions, for instance, the international marketer can plan in advance to manage specific points of difference. Often a greater problem is to understand the underlying attitudes and values of buyers in different countries. The concept of culture is broad and extremely complex. It encompasses virtually every part of a person's life (Hollensen, 2011). The way in which people live together in a society is influenced by religion, education, family and reference groups. It is also influenced by legal, economic, political and technological forces. There are various interactions between these influences. We can look for cultural differences in the ways different societies communicate: different spoken languages are used, and the importance of spoken and other methods of communication (e.g., the use of space between people) will vary. The importance of work, the use of leisure and the types of reward and recognition that people value vary from culture to culture. In some countries people are highly motivated by monetary rewards, while in other countries and cultures social position and recognition are more important. Having identified the most important factors of influence from the cultural environment on the firm's business and analysed those factors, the international marketer is able to take decisions about how to react to the results of the analysis. Less attractive markets will not be considered further (Hollensen, 2011). On the other hand, in the more attractive markets, marketing management must decide to what extent adaptations to the given cultural specifics are needed for example, punctuality. In the most low-context cultures – the Germans, Swiss and Austrians, for instance – punctuality is considered extremely important. If you have a meeting scheduled for 9.00 a.m. and you arrive at 9.07 a.m. you are considered 'late'. Punctuality is highly valued within these cultures, and to arrive late for a meeting (thus 'wasting' the time of those forced to wait for you) is not appreciated. By contrast, in some southern European nations, and within Latin

America, a somewhat looser approach to time may pertain. This does not imply that one group is 'wrong' and the other 'right'. It simply illustrates that different approaches to the concept of time have evolved for a variety of reasons, over many centuries, within different cultural groups. Culture can and does influence the business sector in different parts of the world to function in distinct ways.

As more and more firms operate globally, an understanding of the effects of cultural differences on ethical decision-making becomes increasingly important for avoiding potential business pitfalls and for designing effective international marketing management programs (Neeley, 2017). Culture is a fundamental determinant of ethical decision-making. It directly affects how an individual perceives ethical problems, alternatives, and consequences. In order to succeed in today's international markets managers must recognize and understand how ideas, values and moral standards differ across cultures, and how these in turn influence marketing decision-making.

Some countries, such as India, are well known for 'requiring' small payments if customs officials are to allow goods to enter the country (Hollensen, 2011). While this may be a bribe and illegal, the ethics of that country seem to allow it (at least to a certain extent). The company is then left with a problem: does it bribe the official, or does it wait for normal clearance and let its products sit in the customs warehouse for a considerably longer time?

Fees and commissions paid to a firm's foreign intermediate or to consultant firms for their services are a particular problem – when does the legal fee become a bribe? One reason for employing a foreign representative or consultants is to benefit from their contacts with decision-makers, especially in a foreign administration (Hollensen, 2011). If the export intermediary uses part of the fee to bribe administrators there is little that the firm can do.

Thus, every culture – national, industry, organizational or professional – establishes a set of moral standards for business behaviour, that is, a code of business ethics. This set of standards influences all decisions and actions in a company, including, for example, what and how to manufacture (or not), what wages are appropriate to pay, how many hours personnel should work under what conditions, how to compete and what communication guidelines to follow. Which actions are considered right or wrong, fair or unfair, in the conduct of business and which are particularly susceptible to ethical norms is heavily influenced by the culture (Hollensen, 2011).

### **3.3 Global Marketing Strategies**

#### **3.3.1 Market Entry and Localization**

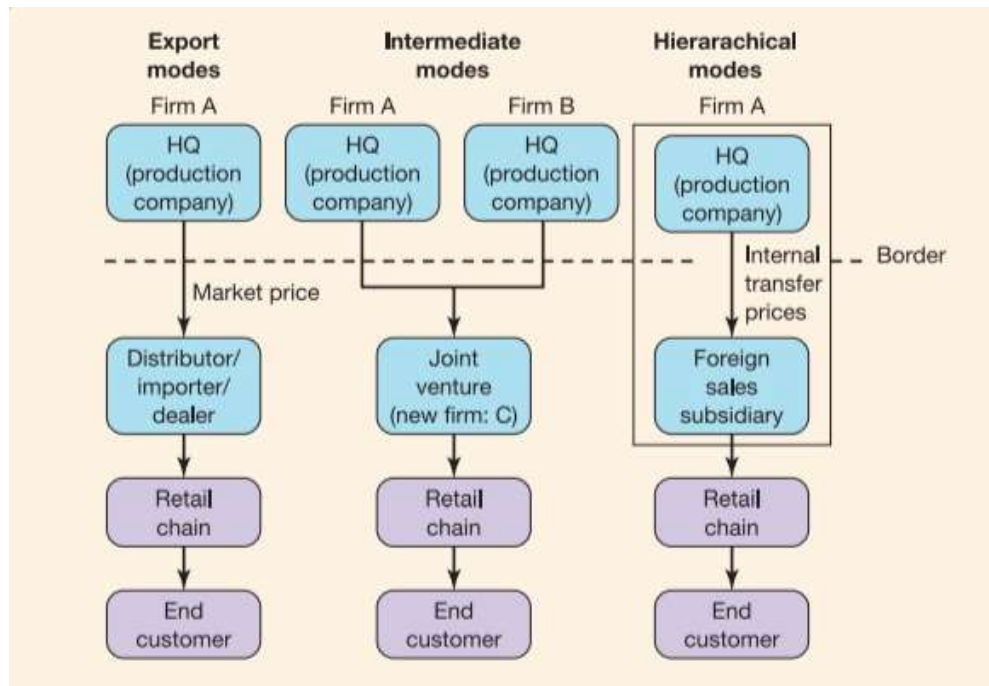
In today's globalized business environment, entering new markets is a strategic imperative for many companies (Hollensen, 2011). However, entering a market is not just about launching a product or service in a new geographic region, but a complex process of understanding and adapting to local culture, consumer behaviour, and language.

An international market entry mode is an institutional arrangement necessary for the entry of a company's products, technology, and human capital into a foreign country or market (Hollensen, 2011).

According to many studies, there is no perfect market entry strategy, so different market entry methods may be used by different firms entering the same market and/or by the same firm in different markets. Petersen and Welch (2002) found that a firm often combines methods to enter or develop a particular foreign market.

Figure 1 shows three examples representing the main types of market entry modes. Such as export modes, intermediate modes, and hierarchical modes. By using hierarchical models, transactions between independent actors are substituted by intra-firm transactions, and market prices are substituted by internal transfer prices. There are many factors to consider when choosing the appropriate mode of market entry. These factors (criteria) vary with the market situation and the firm in question (Hollensen, 2011).

Figure 1 Example of the different market entry modes in the consumer market



Source: Hollensen (2011)

Expanding into international markets requires businesses to utilize the essential strategy of market localization. This process involves customizing a product or service to fit the specific culture and market of a targeted locale and requires more than just translating language (Hollensen, 2011). It requires deep comprehension and reverence for the consumer, economic, legal, and cultural nuances of that specific region.

To successfully localize a brand, there are several key points to consider (Hollensen, 2011). Firstly, to establish a market in a particular country, it is necessary to know the local culture, norms, values, traditions and preferences, which increases the chance that the brand will resonate with the local audience. Secondly, translation and multilingual support in the local language are crucial in localization, including the adaptation of content and messages, customer support, user guidelines and marketing tools. Third localisation includes compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. Fourthly it requires understanding the behaviour of local consumers, how they make purchasing decisions (Hollensen, 2011). The main challenge for a global brand is to find the right balance between local and global consumers. With the right approach, market entry and localisation will lead to increased customer interest, brand loyalty, and ultimately lead to business success in the global marketplace.

### 3.3.2 Importance of Language in Market Entry Decisions

The importance of language in market entry decisions is an important aspect that companies should consider when entering new, especially international, markets. Language plays an important role in understanding, communicating and interacting with target markets.

Different languages are used in different ways and with a variety of effects. Managers of all nationalities know how to speak to best effect to their compatriots. Lewis (2006) has studied how people in different countries are ready to perceive information about a product, what tools should be used and how long a presentation will keep their attention (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Audience expectations during presentation

U.S.	U.K.	GERMANY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ humor</li> <li>◆ joking</li> <li>◆ modernity</li> <li>◆ gimmicks</li> <li>◆ slogans</li> <li>◆ catch phrases</li> <li>◆ hard sell</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ humor</li> <li>◆ a story</li> <li>◆ "nice" product</li> <li>◆ reasonable price</li> <li>◆ quality</li> <li>◆ traditional rather than modern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ solidity of company</li> <li>◆ solidity of product</li> <li>◆ technical information</li> <li>◆ context</li> <li>◆ beginning—middle—end</li> <li>◆ lots of print</li> <li>◆ no jokes</li> <li>◆ good price</li> <li>◆ quality</li> <li>◆ delivery date</li> </ul>
attention span: 30 mins	attention span: 30–45 mins	attention span: 1+ hour
FRANCE	JAPAN	SWEDEN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ formality</li> <li>◆ innovative product</li> <li>◆ "sexy" appeal</li> <li>◆ imagination</li> <li>◆ logical presentation</li> <li>◆ reference to France</li> <li>◆ style, appearance</li> <li>◆ personal touch</li> <li>◆ may interrupt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ good price</li> <li>◆ USP</li> <li>◆ synergy with corporate image</li> <li>◆ harmony</li> <li>◆ politeness</li> <li>◆ respect for their company</li> <li>◆ good name of your company</li> <li>◆ quiet presentation</li> <li>◆ well-dressed presenter</li> <li>◆ formality</li> <li>◆ diagrams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ modernity</li> <li>◆ quality</li> <li>◆ design</li> <li>◆ technical information</li> <li>◆ delivery dates</li> </ul>
attention span: 30 mins	attention span: 1 hour	attention span: 45 mins

(continued)

Source: Lewis (2006)

Language helps to understand consumer damage in different situations; it is closely intertwined with culture, which is necessary to understand humour, taboos, and preferences; it helps to understand how customers make buying decisions and relate to foreign brands.

Adapting marketing to the local language is not just a literal translation but communicating brand values in a way that resonates with people of a particular culture. Adaptation should be visible in product descriptions, slogans, advertising campaigns, and digital content (Lewis, 2006). Language proficiency can be a competitive advantage that allows for a deeper connection with the audience. In addition, consumers tend to trust brands that communicate in their native language.

The importance of language cannot be overemphasized, as it serves as a bridge to understanding new markets, networking, and localizing products and services.

### **3.4 Branding and Communication**

#### **3.4.1 Language Adaptation in Global Branding**

Brand language is the most important cog in the wheel of branding. It is how a company describes its products and the company itself. When developing a brand language, a lot of attention is paid to the choice of words and phrases, as well as tone. These help to differentiate the brand from other competitors. This is crucial in building a brand's reputation and image, especially if it plans to enter the international market (Yoni, 2020).

While most advertised brands are familiar to many consumers, it is unwise on the part of brands to ignore large multilingual communities. It is difficult for current and future brands to find creative ways to communicate their diverse messages to a multitude of consumers.

The success of brand marketing depends on consumer perceptions. It is important that they relate to the brand and that the brand provides them with a solution for their specific need. Brand engagement is necessary because every interaction a consumer has with the brand has an impact.

Advertising text has the ability to attract, influence, or turn away consumers. Negative consumer perception hurts a company's brand and profits. It's a matter of finding the right words to use to engage the audience (Yoni, 2020). For the international market, localization, that is, translating the website, brand name, and all marketing and advertising campaign materials into the local language, is the most effective brand marketing strategy. Localization creates a local brand image while maintaining the brand's international identity (Yoni, 2020).

Creating a new brand image in the local market involves market research. In addition to analysing consumer demographics, brands must also research the culture of the market they want to explore. It is very important to use the correct local language as well as images, as incorrect wording or images that will not be understood in the country of localization can lead to a significant drop in sales. For example, Pampers, when first advertising in Japan, used the same campaign as in the U.S. The product packaging featured a stork bringing a baby to a family. However, the company did not expect its sales to plummet. They later found out that Japanese consumers were not familiar with storks bringing babies, in Japan they believe babies come from giant peaches (Alesi, 2023).

Small language changes have an impact on marketing effectiveness. Advertisers are spending millions of dollars to create tools and strategies to make their presence known in global markets, but the budget to develop a sustainable, effective, data-driven way to create better text for marketing materials must also be considered.

A strong brand voice is a memorable personality trait. “Just like strong personalities help people to stand out from crowds, a distinct brand voice can set your company apart from the competition. When your company has a personality that stands out, customers are more likely to recognize it and choose you” (Lionbridge, 2019).

### **3.4.2 Cultural Nuances in Global Marketing Communication**

In the intricate landscape of global marketing communications, an exploration of cultural nuances reveals profound insights into how cultural layers deeply influence business behaviours and strategies. These layers encompass the broad spectrum of national culture, industry-specific business culture, and individual company cultures, each playing a pivotal role in shaping the decision-making processes and interaction styles within international business environments (Hollensen, 2011). The acknowledgment of these layered cultural influences is paramount for the development of sophisticated global marketing strategies. Such strategies must be adept at navigating the complexities of effective communication and negotiation across the diverse cultural landscapes that define the global market.

A cornerstone in understanding the dynamics of cultural interaction in global communication is the differentiation between high-context and low-context cultures, a framework introduced by anthropologist Edward T. Hall (1976). This crucial distinction underlines the imperative for marketing communications to be intricately designed to



resonate with the cultural orientation of the target audience. In high-context cultures, where communication relies heavily on implicit messages and the understanding of non-verbal cues, marketing efforts must prioritize relationship-building and subtlety. Conversely, in low-context cultures, where messages are conveyed directly and explicitly, clarity and succinctness are valued. Grasping this nuanced approach is vital for crafting marketing messages that not only reach but also engage diverse audiences in meaningful ways, thereby achieving the intended marketing outcomes.

Role of cultural sensitivity in marketing and negotiation efforts. It posits that a deep understanding and respect for local customs, manners, and social norms are crucial in fostering successful international business engagements (Hollensen, 2011). Through illustrative examples, such as the cultural connotations associated with the use of hands in different cultures, the necessity for marketers to possess a profound cultural acumen is highlighted. This level of insight is essential to circumvent misunderstandings and offenses that could undermine business relationships and impede marketing success.

The analysis further ventures into the realm of global culture's impact on youth, noting a discernible trend towards cultural homogenization among younger demographics, largely influenced by global brands and media. This emerging homogeneity presents a dual-edged sword for marketers aiming to capture the attention of younger audiences across different cultures. On the one hand, it offers a shared cultural platform from which to launch global marketing initiatives; on the other hand, it challenges marketers to maintain local relevance amidst the overarching global narrative. This dynamic underscores the evolving nature of global marketing, where leveraging common cultural threads to foster a broader engagement must be balanced with honouring the unique cultural identities that resonate with local audiences (Hollensen, 2011).

The complexity of ethical decision-making in international marketing contexts is also scrutinized, highlighting how varying cultural perspectives can influence perceptions of what constitutes ethical behaviour. This aspect underscores the challenges marketers face in upholding ethical standards while navigating the diverse cultural and regulatory landscapes of global markets (Hollensen, 2011). Principled approach to marketing that respects local norms and values, emphasizing the importance of ethical integrity as a cornerstone of successful global marketing strategies.

The discourse further explores the strategic balance between adaptation and standardization in global marketing efforts. It posits that striking the right balance between

customizing marketing strategies to accommodate local cultural nuances and maintaining a degree of standardization for brand consistency is key to effective global communication. This balanced approach ensures that marketing efforts are both resonant and relevant across different cultural contexts, thereby enhancing the brand's global appeal without compromising its core identity.

Additionally, the transformative role of education and technology in facilitating cultural convergence is examined. These drivers are instrumental in knitting together a more interconnected global society, reshaping economic activities, and media consumption patterns. This convergence poses unique challenges and opportunities for global marketers, who must adeptly navigate the dual realities of a unifying global culture and the persistent distinctiveness of local cultures (Hollensen, 2011). The ability to develop marketing strategies that are both globally appealing and locally pertinent is emblematic of the nuanced understanding required in today's complex global marketing landscape.

The exploration of cultural nuances in global marketing communications reveals a complex relationship between culture, communication, and marketing on a worldwide stage (Hollensen, 2011). This analysis highlights the critical need for businesses to develop a profound understanding of these nuances to successfully engage with and appeal to a diverse range of global audiences. Embracing a holistic approach to global marketing, defined by an adherence to cultural sensitivity, ethical considerations, and a strategic balance between adaptation and standardization, is essential for overcoming the challenges presented by the global market landscape. Such an approach not only facilitates effective communication across cultural divides but also ensures sustained success in international business ventures (Hollensen, 2011).

### **3.5 Consumer Behaviour in Non-English-Speaking Markets**

#### **3.5.1 Influence of English on Consumer Perception**

The influence of the English language on consumer perception is a multifaceted subject, explored in various studies and articles. A key aspect is the impact of language on e-commerce and consumer behaviour. For instance, a comprehensive study by Nimdzi (2020), known as "Project Underwear," highlights the importance of understanding and having accessible knowledge in one's native language when making purchasing decisions

online. This emphasizes the critical role of language in the global market and the necessity for businesses to localize content to effectively reach diverse consumer groups.

Different cultures have unique ways of interacting with products or websites, and their user experience varies accordingly. For example, consumers in Norway, Denmark, and India adapt better to content and products offered only in English, while consumers in Taiwan and South Korea show less interest in products not localized in their mother tongue. This cultural diversity and relationship to technology significantly affect how people interact with products and websites.

In countries like Japan, Thailand, and Russia, consumers are very receptive to localized products of international brands, influencing their final choice. In contrast, people in Nordic countries are less sensitive to localized products, finding it easier to purchase something available in a language they understand, such as English.

Additionally, 55% of consumers worldwide prefer to make their purchases online only in their native language. This statistic indicates a strong influence of the mother tongue on buying decisions. If consumers cannot understand the description of a product, they are unlikely to engage with it, demonstrating the importance of multilingualism for businesses looking to reach a wider audience.

American consumers are particularly less receptive to content available in languages other than English, possibly because English is often seen as the dominant language in international business. However, cultural influence also plays a significant role in their consumption choices.

Localizing products in consumers' native languages is essential for extending a brand's international outreach. Companies failing to do so risk losing a large part of their target consumer base. Offering content in various languages can differentiate a business from competitors and reach new target markets that may not be familiar with the products.

For further academic insights and detailed studies on this topic, it's recommended to explore academic journals and articles related to consumer behaviour and the psycholinguistic effects of marketing communications (Tiushka, 2024).

### 3.5.2 Consumer Response to English Marketing Communications

In the dynamic field of marketing communications, the effectiveness of language choice, specifically the use of English versus localized content, plays a pivotal role in influencing consumer behaviour and preferences. This analysis delves into the impact of English in capturing attention and conveying marketing messages, alongside consumer preferences for English compared to localized marketing content.

English, often regarded as a global lingua franca, is widely used in international marketing. Its prevalence stems from its perceived universality and the assumption that it can reach a broad audience effectively. However, recent studies and consumer trends suggest a more nuanced reality. The effectiveness of English in marketing is not merely a function of its global reach but also depends on the target audience's cultural and linguistic background.

Research indicates a significant preference among global consumers for marketing content in their native languages. About 55% of consumers worldwide prefer to buy from websites that provide product details in their native language. This preference is not limited to non-English speaking countries. In Sweden, known for its high English proficiency, 80% of online shoppers still prefer conducting business in their native language. This trend underscores the importance of cultural relevance, and the comfort consumers find in engaging with content in their mother tongue.

The impact of using only English is evident in consumer behaviour (Tiushka, 2024). English-only websites are often overlooked by 87% of customers making purchase decisions. Even among those proficient in English, 65% choose to read content in their local language. This preference is further highlighted by the fact that 56% of shoppers consider getting product information in their chosen language more critical than its price. In non-English speaking demographics, the preference for localized content is even more pronounced. For instance, 87% of non-English speaking individuals are unlikely to make purchases from an English-only website, and in China, a substantial 95% of online shoppers exclusively use websites in their native language.

The effectiveness of localized marketing campaigns further validates these preferences. Localized advertising campaigns have been found to outperform their English counterparts in click-through and conversion rates by 86% (Tiushka, 2024). This statistic is

a clear indicator of the enhanced engagement and effectiveness achieved through localization.

From a marketing standpoint, these findings highlight the critical importance of understanding and adapting to local languages and cultures. While English has its merits as a widely understood language, its effectiveness is evidently limited when it comes to deeply engaging with a diverse global audience (Tiushka, 2024). Localization goes beyond mere translation; it involves cultural adaptation and contextual understanding, which are key to resonating with consumers on a more personal and relevant level.

In conclusion, the preference for localized content over English in marketing communications is a reflection of the diverse linguistic and cultural landscape of the global market. Brands looking to maximize their reach and impact must prioritize localization in their marketing strategies, recognizing that effective communication is not just about the message but also how and in what language it is conveyed. This approach not only captures attention and conveys messages more effectively but also fosters a deeper connection with the target audience, ultimately driving engagement and conversions (Tiushka, 2024).

### **3.6 Linguistic Strategies in International Advertising**

#### **3.6.1 Translating Global Brands**

Expanding on the insights from "English in Product Ads in Europe," it becomes evident that the strategic use of English in advertising is not merely a linguistic choice but a comprehensive marketing strategy that taps into the globalized nature of consumer culture. This strategy reflects a broader understanding of globalization's impact on consumer identity, preferences, and perceptions across non-English speaking markets. Examination of linguistic strategies through the lens of European advertising campaigns serves as a microcosm for understanding the global brand adaptation process in various linguistic and cultural contexts.

The importance of linguistic strategies extends beyond the use of English to include the broader concept of transcreation—the creative adaptation of marketing messages to maintain their emotional and cultural resonance with the target audience. This process involves more than direct translation; it requires a deep cultural immersion to tailor messages that evoke the intended feelings and responses in each specific market. Successful global

brands often employ a mix of English and local languages in their campaigns, a technique known as code-switching, to maximize reach and relatability. This bilingual or multilingual approach caters to the diverse linguistic proficiency levels within a target market, ensuring broader accessibility of the advertising message.

The role of consumer ethnocentrism in shaping responses to English in advertisements. In markets with strong nationalistic sentiments or a preference for preserving the local language and culture, the excessive use of English may backfire, leading to negative consumer reactions. This aspect underscores the necessity for global brands to conduct thorough market research to understand the cultural dynamics and language attitudes of their target audiences before devising their advertising strategies.

The effectiveness of using English in non-English speaking markets also hinges on the brand's sector and the product's nature. For instance, high-tech products, fashion, and luxury goods may benefit more from the association with English due to the language's global and modern connotations (Geritsen, Nickerson, Korzilius, 2010). In contrast, products deeply rooted in local culture and traditions may resonate better with consumers when advertised in the local language, emphasizing authenticity and heritage.

In light of these considerations calls for a strategic blend of global and local elements in brand messaging—a concept known as glocalization. Glocalization emphasizes the importance of adapting global brands to fit local cultures, values, and languages while maintaining a coherent global brand identity (Sternkopf, 2005). This balance is crucial for engaging consumers on a global scale without losing the local relevance and connection that drive brand loyalty and consumer preference.

By integrating these observations, the study detailed in "English in Product Ads in Europe" underscores the pivotal role of linguistic strategies within the intricate process of adapting global brands for international markets. It argues persuasively for a strategic and subtle employment of language as an essential element of global marketing tactics, adept at achieving a harmonious equilibrium between worldwide allure and local appeal. This sophisticated approach to linguistic planning is crucial not only for the success of international advertising efforts but also for fostering the long-term expansion and global triumph of brands across varied market landscapes (Gerritsen et al., 2010).

The analysis extends to the complex dynamics of cultural adaptation and the strategic use of English to strengthen a brand's global identity while ensuring resonance in the local market. This deeper research reveals the multi-layered strategies that global brands use to

optimize the appeal and effectiveness of their advertising across different cultural landscapes.

The strategic nuance of choosing English for product advertising is highlighted, which goes beyond mere global appeal to include considerations of cultural fit and market-specific consumer expectations. It highlights how brands carefully evaluate the cultural connotations of using English in each target market, tailoring their approach to mitigate potential cultural clashes while enhancing the brand's universal appeal. This careful calibration between global and local elements is critical to creating culturally sensitive advertising, avoiding the pitfalls of cultural homogenization and ensuring messages are locally appealing.

The study delves into the psychological impact of the use of English in advertising on consumer perception and behaviour. It examines how the English language can serve as a marker of cosmopolitanism and innovation, potentially changing consumers' perceptions of a brand's value, quality and status. This psychological aspect adds another layer to the strategic use of language in advertising, where the choice of English language can subtly influence consumer attitudes and decision-making processes, potentially leading to higher perceived value and therefore a willingness to pay more for the advertised product.

Examines the operational aspects of implementing linguistic strategies in international advertising, discussing challenges and best practices for managing brand consistency in markets with varying levels of English proficiency and cultural openness to foreign languages (Gerritsen, Nickerson, 2007). He highlights the importance of comprehensive market research, including linguistic audits and cultural analysis, to inform the development of advertising content that is both globally consistent and locally relevant.

The analysis also examines the role of digital media in expanding the reach and impact of English-language advertising. With the increasing globalization of media consumption, digital platforms offer brands unique opportunities to use English creatively and interactively, attracting younger, more digitally savvy audiences who are often more receptive to English in a globalized context. This digital dimension highlights the evolving nature of international advertising strategies, in which language choices are increasingly dependent on the global reach of digital media and the changing language preferences of connected global audiences (Gerritsen, Nickerson, 2007).

## **4 Practical Part**

The practical part of the thesis looks at IKEA's global marketing strategy with a focus on the Czech market and a comparative analysis of the company's websites in different countries. Starting with an introduction to the history of IKEA, we trace the history of the company to understand its growth and global approach. This lays the foundation for analysing IKEA's marketing strategies and advertising efforts, emphasizing the balance between global appeal and local relevance. The SWOT analysis provides insight into IKEA's strategic positioning, while a deep dive into the company's operations in the Czech Republic emphasizes the brand's adaptability in a non-English-speaking environment. By comparing IKEA's websites in different countries, we assess how the brand adapts its digital presence to the needs of different audiences, emphasizing the role of English as a key marketing tool.

### **4.1 Introduction of the Ikea company**

#### **4.1.1 History of the Company**

The trading company IKEA was registered on the 28th of July, 1943 in Sweden by Ingvar Kamprad, the story of IKEA is an amazing journey from a small mail order business to a global retail giant in the furniture industry. The company was named after himself, the farm he lived on and the parish he came from: Ingvar Kamprad Elmtaryd Agunnaryd (Ikea, 2024). IKEA originally sold general consumer goods for example pens, watches, nylon stocking, but in 1948 shifted its focus to furniture, emphasizing affordability, functionality and design. The products were made by local craftsmen in the vicinity of Kamprad's hometown, which played a key role in the successful establishment of IKEA. This turnaround laid the foundation for IKEA's future success and global recognition.

The company became even more famous in 1951, when the first IKEA furniture catalogue was published, and in 1953 the first showroom was opened in the Swedish town of Elmhult, where customers could evaluate the quality and choose furniture before buying. This was a significant and innovative step, considering that at that time most furniture stores only offered catalogues to customers (Ikea, 2024).

However, one of IKEA's most important contributions to the furniture industry was the introduction of the do-it-yourself concept in 1956 (Ikea, 2024). The main idea was to give customers the opportunity to buy furniture in disassembled form, which reduced the



costs of transportation, storage and sales, as well as the pleasure of assembling the furniture themselves.

IKEA's ideology is to bring the brand into millions of homes by offering smart, functional, durable, affordable and sustainable home improvement solutions to people with big dreams and slim wallets. It's important to them to help people find comfort at home and make a difference in their lives (Ikea, 2024).

#### **4.1.2 Expansion to other markets**

IKEA's international expansion began in the 1960s with the opening of stores in Norway and Denmark (Ikea, 2024). Over the decades, IKEA has grown to operate more than 450 stores in 52 countries in 50 countries.

In international business, localization is the art of adapting products, services and marketing strategies to the specific needs and preferences of the target market (Accelingo, 2024). It involves a balance between standardization, which provides consistency and brand recognition, and adaptation, which provides a deeper connection with local consumers.

IKEA has successfully overcome this dichotomy of standardization and adaptation by adopting a hybrid approach that provides a delicate balance between the two strategies. The company adheres to the core design principles and values that underpin its global identity, such as a commitment to creating affordable and stylish furniture that consumers can assemble themselves. However, IKEA also makes strategic changes to meet local preferences and market conditions (Accelingo, 2024).

#### **4.1.3 Marketing Strategy and Promotional Campaigns**

Ikea's marketing strategy accompanies its success because it is original and distinctive. Ikea's strategy reflects their cultural heritage, from their national colours to their meatballs. This infuses all elements of their identity with a sense of self-confidence that maintains their identity in a highly competitive market. In their marketing strategy, the company effectively combines the elements of affordability and sustainability to ensure success. The company also pays great attention to the way furniture is arranged in their stores, strategically placing the most appropriate pieces in mock-up rooms to encourage impulse purchases and inspire decor (Simplilearn, 2023). One of the most successful

marketing moves is downloading a 3D modelling app to imagine a dream home, and the app can also suggest interior ideas.

As for the advertising campaign, Ikea representatives are very active on digital marketing platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. Their online presence is impressive: more than 30 million likes on Facebook, 1 million followers on Instagram, 5.3 thousand followers on Twitter and 41.2 thousand followers on YouTube. IKEA's promotional campaigns are known for their creativity and humour, often emphasizing the brand's Swedish heritage (Simplilearn, 2023). These campaigns aim to connect emotionally with consumers, highlighting the practicality and aesthetic appeal of IKEA products.

#### **4.1.4 SWOT Analysis**

A SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool used to identify and understand the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats related to a business project or venture. The swot analysis of the company IKEA was performed in this part.

Strengths:

- **Strong brand personality:** IKEA has created a unique and consistent brand personality. Minimalistic Scandinavian design, affordable prices and an innovative approach to furniture.
- **Wide product range:** IKEA offers a wide range of products to suit different customer segments, tastes and budgets.
- **Global presence:** With over 400 stores in more than 50 countries, IKEA has established a strong global presence. This international presence allows the company to cater to local tastes and preferences while benefiting from brand recognition worldwide.
- **Commitment to sustainability:** IKEA's focus on sustainability and environmental responsibility has resonated with customers and helped differentiate the brand from competitors (The Strategy Story, 2023).

Weaknesses:

- **Difficult assembly process:** Although IKEA's flat-pack ready-to-assemble products help reduce transportation and storage costs, some customers find the assembly process difficult or time-consuming.

- Perceived product quality: Because of the company's focus on affordability, some customers may perceive IKEA products to be of lower quality than more expensive alternatives.
- Limited customization: IKEA's standardized design and production methods may limit the level of customization available to customers.
- Dependence on large store formats: IKEA's traditional reliance on large stores outside the city may not be as convenient for customers who prefer to store in the city (The Strategy Story, 2023).

#### Opportunities:

- Entering emerging markets: IKEA may target untapped markets, especially in Asia, Africa and South America, to expand its global presence and meet the growing demand for affordable and stylish home furnishings.
- Customization and Personalization: Offering customers more options to customize and personalize their furniture will help attract new customers.
- Collaboration with designers and artists: By collaborating with renowned designers and artists, IKEA can introduce exclusive limited-edition collections that will help create excitement in the market (The Strategy Story, 2023).

#### Threats:

- Fierce competition: IKEA faces strong competition from both traditional furniture retailers and e-commerce platforms.
- Economic downturns: Economic downturns or recessions may result in reduced consumer spending on products such as furniture and home accessories.
- Raw material price fluctuations: IKEA relies heavily on raw materials such as wood, textiles and metals to manufacture its products. Fluctuations in the prices of these materials could increase production costs and potentially affect IKEA's profitability and competitiveness (The Strategy Story, 2023).

## **4.2 Ikea company on the Czech market**

In 1991, IKEA opened its first store in the Czech Republic, opening a new chapter in a new market. The opening of the store was a strategic move to develop the Central European

market and give Czech consumers access to stylish, affordable and functional products. Since 1991, expanding its presence in the country, IKEA has opened 4 stores 2 in Prague, 1 in Brno and Ostrava to meet the growing demand for its goods. Since 2016, the expansion has been supported by the launch of an e-marketplace allowing customers to shop online and utilize a home delivery service, in line with IKEA's global strategy to increase its digital presence and accessibility to customers.

IKEA has adapted its range of products and services to the needs and preferences of people in the Czech Republic. IKEA has adapted its product range to meet the needs and preferences of the Czech Republic's inhabitants, for example, by offering smaller furniture for the compact spaces often found in Czech apartments. Ikea also makes efforts to attract local suppliers and producers of goods, which helps to support the local economy, as well as to reduce transportation costs and environmental impact (Ikea, 2024).

IKEA in the Czech Republic uses targeted marketing, the goal is to boost brand recognition and bring in customers. Campaigns often highlight how affordable IKEA's items are. They also demonstrate the good quality and style of the products. IKEA aims to appeal to what Czech people want and cherish. It's common to see IKEA's seasonal deals. They also organize events for families and contribute to environmental sustainability. All these aim to engage the local people and bring more visitors to IKEA's stores and website.

Through its landscape and possible steps, IKEA competes with domestic and global furniture manufacturers in the Czech market, constantly improving its product range and customer service. The growing inclination of Czech customers towards e-commerce is both an obstacle and a platform for IKEA to gradually expand its online presence and distribution network (Nedelya, 2021). The growing focus on sustainability and environmental responsibility is also an opportunity for IKEA to strengthen its brand reputation in the Czech Republic. By emphasizing its green initiatives, minimizing waste and promoting energy-efficient products, IKEA will be able to satisfy the growing number of green consumers in the country.

As we look to the future, the horizon looks very optimistic for IKEA in the Czech business landscape. The company's relentless efforts to expand its digital presence, combined with an unwavering commitment to environmental responsibility and community involvement, puts IKEA in a good position to meet the changing needs of Czech customers. Continuous infusion of resources in areas such as product innovation, customer interaction

and operational competence will be key to IKEA's long-term expansion and triumph in the Czech Republic (Nedelya, 2021).

### **4.3 SWOT Analysis of the IKEA Website in the Czech Republic**

The swot analysis of the website of IKEA company was performed in this part.

Strengths:

- User-friendly interface: easy navigation and search allows you to quickly find the desired product. It is also possible to see how the product may look in the interior.
- Wide range of products: the range of Ikea in the Czech Republic has more than 1000 different products, includes a description, image and technical specifications, which helps the buyer to make informed decisions and actions.
- Online convenience: after the pandemic, shopping from home has become especially attractive for people in the Czech Republic, saving time and avoiding crowds.
- Multilingual support and localization: the Ikea website is adapted to the Czech market, and language localization makes it accessible and relevant to locals (Ikea, 2024).

Weaknesses:

- Not complete translation of the website into Czech: not all videos that are featured on the website are translated into Czech, this may deter shoppers who are not familiar with other languages.
- Dependence on internet access: purchases are only made by shoppers who have access to the internet, potentially excluding a segment of the population less accustomed to online shopping (Ikea, 2024).
- Potential for technical glitches: website oversights and glitches can interfere with shopping and negatively impact sales.

Opportunities:

- Growth in e-commerce: the growing trend of online commerce, about 70% of Czechs are or have ever shopped online. This offers IKEA a great opportunity to expand its customer base in the Czech Republic.

- Digital marketing: the use of social media, email newsletters and so can attract more visitors to the website, increase brand awareness, which will increase sales.
- Online service: online customer service, such as chat support and virtual consultations, can help customers be more confident in their purchase (Ikea, 2024).

Threats:

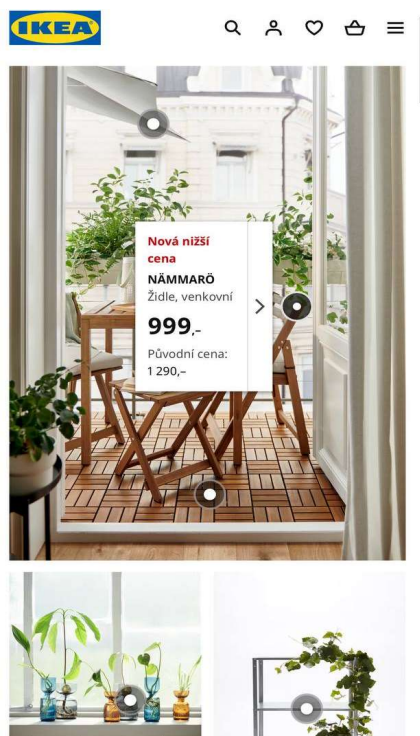
- Competition: the site faces competition from other Czech online furniture stores.
- Cybersecurity risks: handling customer data and transactions requires robust cybersecurity measures to maintain customer confidence (Ikea, 2024).

#### **4.4 Comparison of IKEA Websites in the Czech Republic and France**

At first glance, comparing the websites of the same company in different countries may seem to be identical, but digging deeper, you can find many differences.

Comparing IKEA sites in the Czech Republic (Figure 3) and France (Figure 4), one can notice different advertising offers adapted to local customers and their needs. The structure of the site also has slight differences in the arrangement of buttons.

Figure 3 IKEA Advertising in the Czech Republic



Source: Ikea (2024)

Figure 4 IKEA Advertising in France



Source: IKEA (2024)

The most obvious difference is the absence of the possibility to change the language on the French site (Figure 6), Czech Ikea is more loyal to this factor and provides the possibility to change the language to English (Figure 5). The ability to change the language to English increases traffic and purchasing power, as English is an international language, and people who do not know the local language, will be able to shop in Ikea.

Figure 5 Language selection option on the Czech website



Source: IKEA (2024)



Figure 6 No language selection option on the French website

Manger chez IKEA

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**Vous êtes dans la boutique en ligne de la France**

 [Changer de pays](#)

Source: IKEA (2024)

In France and the Czech Republic, Ikea is introducing a program called Ikea for Business (Figure 7). Ikea for Professionals, the French Ikea website offers professional planners, designers and companies to cooperate, consult and assist in the selection of furniture, as well as offering special offers and discounts. Ikea for business in the Czech Republic, offers companies with corporate orders and space arrangement.

Figure 7 IKEA for Business



## **IKEA for Business**

**At' už plánujete zařídit jakýkoli prostor,  
můžeme vám pomoci**

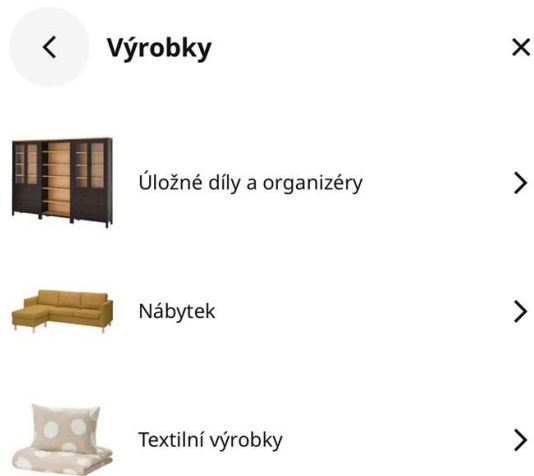


Source: IKEA (2024)

## 4.5 Advertisement in IKEA in the Czech Republic

If we analyse the company's website and their advertisement, we can see that their position is the same as many other companies that work for the international non-English speaking market, they sell, advertise, and communicate with customers in the language of the country they are in (Figure 8).

Figure 8 Shop product



Source: IKEA (2024)

All special offers and promotions in writing are also in Czech (Figure 9), but it is possible to translate the site into English, which allows people who do not speak the local language to also see everything offered and place an order. As for banners and advertising on the street, of course there will no longer be such an opportunity, and everything will be only in Czech.

Figure 9 Advertisement



Source: IKEA (2024)

Video advertisement accompanied by an English song “This will be” Natalie Cole in Czech Ikea website, YouTube (YouTube, 2024), and TV tells us the story of a family that lives in a pile of stuff and thanks to Ikea they manage to cope and tidy up their apartment. Listening to the words of the song:

“This will be an everlasting love  
This will be the one I've waited for”

We can assume that these words are addressed to Ikea itself, for furniture and for comfort in a quick time. Also, music in English in advertising tells us about the globalization of the company, which allows to reach a wide range of consumers and affects the trust of people in the company. Song in English can evoke certain emotions and associations in the audience (IKEA, 2024)

## 5 Results and Discussion

### 5.1 Results

The practical part of this thesis comprehensively examined IKEA's use of English as a marketing tool in a non-English speaking environment, focusing on the Czech Republic.

The results of this study showed that IKEA is good at using English to maintain its global identity, but also remembering to fit into local cultures. By blending English with local characteristics, IKEA can communicate with many people, maintaining its worldwide image while respecting different cultures.

The SWOT analysis emphasized that IKEA's strengths are its extensive global presence and commitment to sustainability. However, it also highlighted challenges such as the complexity of product assembly and potential cultural inconsistencies. IKEA's operations in the Czech Republic demonstrate the brand's ability to overcome these challenges by demonstrating a customized approach that considers local preferences and market dynamics. These findings highlight the complexity of operating in a global retail environment where strengths need to be leveraged effectively to mitigate inherent weaknesses.

The examination of IKEA's market strategy in the Czech Republic serves as an example of the brand's strategic flexibility, demonstrating its ability to adapt product offerings and marketing strategies according to local consumer preferences and market conditions. The case highlights the effectiveness of IKEA's localized marketing approach, which has been instrumental in establishing its market presence and driving consumer engagement in the Czech Republic.

When looking at IKEA's websites in the Czech Republic and France, the author of this work noticed small but important differences. These changes show that IKEA pays attention to making sure each country's website fits what people there are looking for and like. This careful approach to making each website feel right for each country is smart.

Overall, this study shows how IKEA speaks to the world and at the same time takes care to be locally relevant. It's as if IKEA knows how to be a friend everywhere, adapting to what each place needs and likes.

## 5.2 Recommendations for Improvement of IKEA

Based on the findings and discussions in the practical part of the thesis, the author of this work offers several recommendations for IKEA to further improve its operational and marketing strategies, especially in non-English speaking countries such as the Czech Republic.

**Improve localized content:** Although IKEA effectively uses English to maintain a global brand identity, there is an opportunity to make this strategy better. IKEA should continue to enhance localized content to ensure that all marketing materials, including the website and advertising campaigns, are fully adapted to the local language and cultural nuances of each market.

**Simplify the assembly process:** IKEA could develop clearer and more precise instructions, possibly using augmented reality (AR) applications, to guide shoppers through the assembly process and offer professional furniture assembly services.

**Expand personalization options:** The company could offer more personalized products. This could include modular furniture that buyers can design according to their preferences, or a wider selection of styles, materials and colours.

**Deepen cultural integration:** IKEA must continue to invest in understanding the cultural dynamics of each market. This involves not only translating from one language to another, but also getting to know the local culture and art. Products in this format can be produced in limited quantities and create even more excitement around the brand.

## **6 Conclusion**

This thesis is based on the strategic use of English as a marketing tool for IKEA with a focus on its impact on non-English speaking environments, especially in the Czech Republic. By analysing IKEA's global and local marketing strategies, advertising campaigns, cross-country website comparisons, and customer interactions in the Czech market, the author of this work has gained valuable insights into the effectiveness and challenges of using English in global marketing.

The study shows IKEA's ability to use English to maintain its global brand identity and, also adapt it to local markets. The SWOT analysis emphasizes IKEA's sustained presence around the world. However, it also revealed challenges such as the complexity of product assembly and the need for cultural adaptation.

To summarize, the strategic use of English combined with an understanding of country and market culture represents a dynamic model of global branding. The IKEA study offers valuable insights for multinational companies seeking to navigate the complexities of global expansion while maintaining strong local ties. As the global marketplace continues to evolve, these insights will continue to be relevant for all brands seeking to strike the right balance between universal strategy and local specificity.

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## **8 List of figures, tables, graphs and abbreviations**

### **8.1 List of figures**

Figure 1 Example of the different market entry modes in the consumer market.....	21
Figure 2 Audience expectations during presentation.....	22
Figure 3 IKEA Advertising in the Czech Republic .....	39
Figure 4 IKEA Advertising in France.....	40
Figure 5 Language selection option on the Czech website.....	40
Figure 6 No language selection option on the French website .....	41
Figure 7 IKEA for Business.....	41
Figure 8 Shop product .....	42
Figure 9 Advertisement.....	43

### **8.2 List of abbreviations**

SEO: Search Engine Optimization

SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats