

# *Use of Turkish Cultural Components by Multinational Companies within the Scope of Understanding of Glocal Advertisements<sup>1</sup>*

*Glokale Reklamı Anlamak Açısından Çokuluslu Şirketlerin Reklamlarında Türk Kültür Ögelerinin Kullanımı*

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## **ABSTRACT**

*In global activities of advertisements, a standard approach to ignore local cultures is too weak to be successful. In line with the motto of "think globally, behave locally", multinational companies are essential to use cultural characteristics of nations where they ply a trade in their advertisements. Unless they take the nature of targeted nations and their cultural identity into account, the introduction of their products and their trade are not supposed to be successful.*

*Multinational companies trading in Turkey have intensively been using the components of Turkish culture in the introduction and advertisements of their products as consistent with the understanding of glocal advertisements.*

*In present study, Turkish cultural components used in the advertisements of multinational companies in Turkish TV channels will be determined and evaluated. In addition, such studies are needed for the continuity of Turkish culture.*

## **KEYWORDS**

*Glocal advertisement, Turkish Culture, Advertisement.*

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**ÖZ**

*Küresel reklam faaliyetlerinde, yerel kültürleri görmezden standart bir yaklaşımın başarılı olma şansı çok zayıftır. "Yerel davran, global düşün" sloganı doğrultusunda, çok uluslu şirketler kendi reklamlarında, ticari faaliyetlerini sürdürdükleri ulusların kültürel özelliklerini kullanmak durumundadırlar. Hedeflenen milletler ve onların kültürel kimliklerinin doğasını dikkate almadığı sürece, ürün ya da hizmetlerin tanıtımının başarıya ulaşması mümkün görünmemektedir.*

*Türkiye'de ticaret yapan çok uluslu şirketler de global reklam anlayışı ile uyumlu olarak ürünlerin reklamlarında Türk kültürünün bileşenlerini yoğun biçimde kullanmaktadırlar.*

*Bu çalışmada, Türk televizyon kanallarında gösterilmiş çok uluslu şirketlerin reklamlarında kullanılan Türk kültür bileşenleri tespit edilecek ve değerlendirilecektir. Ayrıca, bu tür çalışmalar Türk kültürünün devamlılığı için de gereklidir.*

**ANAHTAR KELİMELER**

*Global reklamcılık, Türk kültürü, Reklam.*

## INTRODUCTION: ADVERTISEMENT AND CULTURE

People live in an advertisement sea in this age defined as millennium. Potential consumers meet advertisements in any part of daily life such as watching TV, checking up their e-mails, driving car, listening radio or watching outside from their balcony in any part of daily life (Goldenberg et al, 2011: 63). From this perspective advertisement can be defined like this: Advertisement is the presentation of a product or service in exchange for money (Elden et al, 2008: 62). Today business enterprises can not survive without investing money on advertisement.

Advertisement is an environment where target audience communicates with product, service, institution or brand (Elden et al, 2008: 63) and it is one of the most important vehicles of capitalism. Today physical distance between producers and consumers has increased and because of this advertisement is a vital activity for products to find consumers not only internal market but also outside market.

As mentioned by McLuhan in his book *Medium is Message*, today everything can change its position and place on the world which has become a global village (Altay, 2005: 17). With developed transportation technologies, people can go everywhere easily in short times. Also products are sent every part of the world and consumers can find international products every part of the world. However, in order to compete with its local and international competitors, trades must realize different activities. The most important of these activities is advertisement. That is why; international trades or powerful local trades use famous people, footballers, singers, songs, daily life stereotypes of societies, cultural values, cartoons and similar features in advertisements.

For example, esprit in any type is a well-known method to lift effectiveness of advertisement. Esprit factors are used in %24.5 of whole TV advertisements in America and %35.5 of whole TV advertisements of British (Altunbaş, 2003: 149). Similarly in Turkey, esprit or comedians are used in TV advertisement largely such as Cem YILMAZ, Ata DEMİRER or Şahan GÖKBAKAR. Beside this Turkish televisions prefer actress or actors to lift effectiveness of their advertisements such as Hülya AVŞAR, Azra AKIN. For example, Azra AKIN and Hülya AVŞAR played in the advertisements of Pepsi-Cola and this is an example of star usage in advertisements. Another important strategy for presentation and sale of products is usage of cultural values in advertisements.

Culture is a multidisciplinary scientific study area (Güneş, 1995: 20) and it is live value. Culture is a wide and comprehensive frame that includes inestimable historical artifacts, behavior stereotypes of people in social life, feeding stereotypes, clothes, languages and religions.

In other words, advertisement is culture created by consumption society and it offers different lifestyles to people (Çamdereli, 2006: 38). It takes advantages of different values like culture when it presents these lifestyles.

Culture is the total of values which provide societies to survive and protect their special features and connect peoples in the structure of family. Because of transferring age to age, culture has become most important part of people's social life. Consequently, advertisers think that culture is a safe port for them.

The most important thing in culture is to implement experiences (Güneş, 1995: 26). By thinking this sentence, local and international companies use frequently cultural details or features in their advertisements in order to presentation of their products and services or increase sales. International companies showing activity in Turkey use Turkish cultural features in their advertisement especially in the month of Ramadan.

Ramadan is a holy month in Islam teaching and in this month Muslims fulfills fasting as a religious activity. According to rules of fasting, Muslims can not eat and drink anything from setting up of sun to sunset. Religious rituals are experienced on the top level in Ramadan and naturally international companies wanting to increase their sales in Turkey use religious and Turkish cultural values in their advertisements.

For example, well-know and famous companies of the world such as Pepsi-Cola, Coca-Cola, McDonalds, Burger King etc. shape their advertisement in accordance with the strategy called Glocal.

### **1. GLOCAL ADVERTISING STRATEGY**

Glocal advertisement is an advertising strategy that includes cultural features of the countries where international companies want to present their products or services successfully to different consumers and also they want to increase their sales in these countries.

Glocal is a sentence produced by connecting the words of global and local and that is why it has semi-dimensional meaning as global and local. Actually, product is same product but presentation styles are different. Because

according to glocal advertising advertisements should have local detail or motif which belong that local country (Elden, 2005: 3). In Turkey defined as an eastern country, consumers are not indifferent to advertisements including cultural values of their own culture.

International companies make consumers feel proud by using local cultural features of their consumers in their products' or services' advertisements produced according to glocal advertising strategy (Şimşek, 2008: 37). Advertisers who are aware of this reality use common values or cultural features of that country in their advertisements in order to move consumers' feelings and thoughts (Chattopadhyay, 2007: 48). Therefore, these advertisers become successful about promotion and sales of that commercial product or service.

## **2. CONTENT AND METHOD**

In the content of this study, companies using local cultural values in their advertisements were taken into account as generality of the study. In this context, sampling of the study consists of advertisement of Pepsi-Cola which is one of the biggest companies of the drink sector. Advertisements of Pepsi-Cola analyzed in the study broadcasted in Ramadan 2012 and these advertisements were formed according to glocal advertising strategy. These advertisements were broadcasted on TV which is the most powerful and effective vehicle for affecting consumers (Goldenberg, 2011: 38).

For analysis of these advertisements, discourse analysis method of Teun van Dijk was used. Discourse analysis method focuses on the question of how messages in advertisements should be understood. There are two main methods in discourse analysis method. According to first method advertisers determine meaning of advertisements. On the other hand, according to second method, meaning of the advertisements is determined by audiences (Gökçe, 2001: 133-136). The study was realized on the basis of these two main methods.

## **3. ANALYSIS OF PEPSI-COLA RAMADAN ADVERTISEMENT PLAYED BY HULYA AVŞAR**

Ramadan is a holy month in Islam teaching and in this month Muslims fulfills fasting as a religious activity. According to rules of fasting, Muslims can not eat and drink anything from setting up of sun to sunset. In this month because of fasting whole day, Muslims break their fasts in well-organized and crowded dinner tables with delicious and special meals at dinners.

In Ramadan food and drink sales make peak and because of this, local and global companies want to increase their product sales at top levels and special advertisements are prepared for this month.

One of the advertisements of Pepsi-Cola prepared for Ramadan 2012 famous Turkish singer and actress Hülya Avşar took an active part.

According to scenario, Hülya Avşar is laying a place on riverside. She puts dishes being full of traditional Turkish tastes such as stuffed grape leaves, pasties etc. on white and blue tablecloths.

Beside these tastes, there are some special traditional tastes on the dinner table such as sweet pastry, pitta which is produced only for Ramadan and it is a kind of bread. After leaving dishes on the tablecloth, Hülya Avşar took out Pepsi-Cola from river which was left in river to get cold.

She left Pepsi-Colas taking out from the river on tablecloth. At the same time, another advertisement which was embedded to Pepsi-Cola advertisement about a well-known GSM company's prepaid minutes campaign is seen.

After this video, advertisement continues with the video about Turkish family who are ready to break their fasts. A with-haired grandmother said that "it is a perfect campaign" about the prepaid minutes campaign of GSM operator and she was recoiled by the voice of bomb which tells the breaking time of fasts. After this video, Hülya Avşar and Grandmother smile together. After a while, Hülya Avşar said people all around the tablecloth "have a good appetite" and advertisement ends by showing all people breaking their fasts with Pepsi-Cola.

### **3.1. Turkish Culture Images in the Advertisement**

**Month of Ramadan:** It is the name of a holly month for Muslims among 12 months.

**Fast:** It is religious worship that According to rules of it, Muslims can not eat and drink anything from setting up of sun to sunset.

**Fast-Breaking Tablecloth:** It is a tablecloth that Muslims break their fasts in well-organized and crowded dinner tables with delicious and special meals and drinks such as water, cola at dinners.

**Stuffed Grape Leaves:** It is delicious traditional Turkish meal that consists of rice and grape leaves.

Pasty: It is a kind of pasty that consist of ground meat, cheese and these materials are cooked in hot ovens.

Ramadan Pitta: It is a kind of bread made specially only for Ramadan that includes eggs and sesame or not.

Sweet Patsry: It is a kind of traditional sweet that belong Turkish culture.

Turkish Family: it is big family in which father, mother, grandfather, grandmother and children, grandchild live together.

Fast mortar: It is a mortar which is used to declare people the breaking time of their fasts (Şimşek, 2006: 110-132).

Have a Good Appetite: It is a traditional statement that is said before all eating by Turks.

#### **4. ANALYSIS OF PEPSI-COLA RAMADAN ADVERTISEMENT PLAYED BY AZRA AKIN**

One of the advertisements of Pepsi-Cola prepared for Ramadan 2012 famous Turkish singer and actress Azra Akın who was selected as winner of beauty contest of world and Turkey took an active part. Advertisement starts with the song of Halil İbrahim Sofrası by Barış Manço.

According to scenario, grandmamma with her scarf, mother, father and grandchild sit on a fast tablecloth near a lake.

Twin girls wear blue and white clothes because of main colors of Pepsi-Cola. Grandfather who is a proud Turkish father is waiting the breaking time of their fast on which fast mortar will be fired.

Azra Akın invites grandfather to fast-breaking tablecloth by saying “come in” grandfather. Azra Akın shows Turkish hospitality with her sentences. Grandfather specified two conditions in order to sit fast-breaking tablecloth. First one is to be fired of fast mortar and second one is to necessity of Pepsi-Cola on the tablecloth.

At this point of advertisement, twins show waterfall in which Pepsi-Colas are falling down to lake and they shouted happily. After this audiences see that waterfall turned into a huge Pepsi-Cola source.

At the background of advertisement, audiences hear again the song of Halil İbrahim Sofrası. Azra Akın took one of the Pepsi-Cola bottles from the

lake and put it on fast-breaking tablecloth. Grandfather is shocked after these events and starts to shoot as “this is a miracle”.

One of the young people started to mention about well-known GSM Company’s prepaid minutes campaign. Grandfather is again shocked because of campaign and Azra Akın try to persuade grandfather about the reality of campaign by saying “you believe falling of Pepsi-Cola bottles from the waterfall and why don’t you believe prepaid campaign of GSM Company. Azra Akın cited this sentence from the Turkish philosopher Nasreddin Hodja and she modified the sentence according to scenario. At the end of the advertisement, speaker defined the campaign as a Ramadan miracle and a crowded fast-breaking tablecloth is shown on the screen.

#### **4.1. Turkish Cultural Images in the Advertisement**

**Halil İbrahim Tablecloth:** Halil İbrahim is the prophet İbrahim. Because of prophet İbrahim’s being generous and offering so much his guests, Halil İbrahim Tablecloth is a common statement in Turkey. It tells generosity of Turkish people (www.sorularlailamiyet.com: 2012).

**Fast-breaking Tablecloth:** It is a tablecloth organized for breaking of fasts for Muslims at the time of sunset namaz. Muslims break their fasts by eating, drinking delicious meals, sweets, pastries and drinks.

**Scarf or Veil:** It is worn by Muslim women particularly in the presence of non-related adult males because of Islamic rules.

**Turkish Family:** It is big family in which father, mother, grandfather, grandmother and children, grandchild live together.

**Fast mortar:** It is a mortar which is used to declare people the breaking time of their fasts.

**Proud Turkish Father:** Elder man of home whose sentence are accepted as a rule and nobody can protest him in home and family.

**Turkish Hospitality:** Turks give a huge priority and importance to their guests and Turks want to do everything in order to make happy their guests. This behavior is called Turkish Hospitality (Şimşek, 2006: 110-132).

**Nasrettin Hodja:** He is a well-known Turkish sapient and he lived in Akşehir/Konya. He is one of the most important examples of humorists (www.msxlab.org, 2012).



## CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

It is undeniably true that international companies who use local cultural factors and details of local countries in their products' or services' advertisement make right in terms of increasing their sales. Because this kind of advertisement clearly increase their sales rates in different countries' markets and at this point advertisement has gained a vital role for international companies.

In order to become successful advertisement, it must draw attentions of target groups. Because of this, international companies use local cultural features and details in their advertisements in order to draw attentions of target groups. People are so sensitive traditional meals and tastes in most important holly month of Islamic world. International companies are aware of this reality and that is why they use Islamic motifs and Turkish cultural motifs, tastes and other cultural details in their advertisements in Ramadan 2012.

According to analysis of advertisements Pepsi-Cola used so many Turkish cultural features in their Ramadan 2012 advertisements in which Hülya Avşar and Azra Akin took active roles. According to researcher, advertisement strategy of Pepsi-Cola has become so successful and other companies from different sectors can get advantage against their competitors by using glocal advertising strategy.



EXAMPLES TO THE CULTURAL IMAGES IN THE ADS OF  
PEPSI-COLA IN RAMADAN 2012



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