

Worksheet A

A. Pre-reading 1: Key words

Get students to check each other's answers in pairs. If there are any disagreements or unanswered items, you could wait until they have seen the words used in context in the reading text before you review the correct answers with the whole class.

Key: 1. *homogenous*; 2. *focal point*; 3. *boycott*; 4. *sensitive*; 5. *point of view*; 6. *stationary*; 7. *flux*; 8. *standardization*; 9. *mourning*; 10. *fraught with*; 11. *slogan*; 12. *an obscenity*

B. Pre-reading 2: Note-taking

Students can discuss this in pairs, groups or as a whole class. Put students' ideas on the board and refer back to them once they have finished reading the text.

C. Comprehension check

Tell students to underline or highlight the words and expressions in the text they used to decide on their answers.

Key: 1. F. "It is not only other countries that have to be considered." [paragraph 1, lines 2-3] The example of the USA shows that there can be variations **within** a country as well.

2. F. "Religion **can be** a focal point of a country's culture." [paragraph 2, line 1]. This means that it is not always the case.

3. T. "Equally, culture does not remain stationary. ... it is in constant flux or development." [paragraph 3, lines 3-4]

4. T. "In many countries, the number seven is considered lucky, but in Ghana, Kenya and Singapore it is considered unlucky." [paragraph 5, lines 7-9]

5. F. "Even within the country there can be misunderstandings when the local language is used. ... Even English-speaking nations have different words for the same item ..." [paragraph 7, lines 1-5]

D. Project

Students can work either individually or in groups. They should then give a short presentation to the rest of the class or, alternatively, you could set this as a written task.

If students are presenting products from their own country, they may have particular difficulty in explaining slogans. This is a good opportunity to point out some of the challenges presented by translation. Sometimes, a literal translation is not enough:

sometimes you also need to give some cultural background, explain a pun or play on words, etc.

E. Webquest

Entering "product names", "slogans" or "translation" into a search engine gives access to a lot of examples of translation problems.

Note: Many of these problems relate to sexual innuendo, so think about whether this could cause problems or embarrassment for the classes and individual students you are working with.

If you think you need to give students an idea of relevant examples, there are some interesting examples of the different market-specific adaptations of the Barbie® doll on the Mattel corporate website:

<http://investor.shareholder.com/mattel/releases.cfm?ReleasesType=Barbie%20News&Year=>

Sometimes attempts to customise products for specific markets can provoke controversy, for example the McDonald's "McItaly"® burger: http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap_travel/eu_travel_brief_italy_mcitaly

Worksheet B

A. Pre-listening

This activity helps students to practise listening for gist and note-taking. Review their notes after they have listened to the conversation for the first time.

B. Comprehension check

This activity helps students practise listening for detail and also provides them with a model for note-taking.

Encourage students to try to fill in as many of the gaps as they can from memory before they listen for a second time.

Key: 1. *industrial*; 2. *spur*; 3. *drinks and snacks*; 4. *special offer*; 5. *staple*; 6. *fruit and vegetables*; 7. *headache pills*; 8. *recession*; 9. *decrease*; 10. *impulse*; 11. *increase*

C. Discussion

If students are uncomfortable about revealing their own personal shopping habits, allow them to talk about someone they know or an imaginary person.

D. Project

Get students to work in groups and set a time in a future lesson for them to present their products and strategies. If students have difficulty in coming up with ideas for products, brainstorm with the whole class before you begin this activity and/or allow them

Worksheet A: Level 1 (Intermediate)

A Pre-reading 1: Key words

Here are some words and expressions used in the text that you are going to read in Exercise B. Match each word or expression to the correct definition. The answers are in the same order as they appear in the text.

sensitive homogenous stationary boycott point of view focal point

1. a place where the people and things are all the same _____
2. The most important, interesting or attractive part of something is the _____.
3. When you _____ a product, you refuse to buy it as a way of protesting.
4. When you are _____ to beliefs, you are aware of them and how strongly people feel about them.
5. a way of judging a situation based on a particular aspect _____
6. When something is _____, it does not move or change

slogan mourning an obscenity fraught with flux standardization

7. continuous change and movement (noun) _____
8. The process of selling the same products in different countries and markets is known as a _____ environment.
9. the process or ceremony of expressing sadness because someone has died _____
10. When something is _____ problems, it means that it involves a lot of problems.
11. a short phrase that is easy to remember and is used to advertise something _____
12. something that is viewed as offensive _____

B Pre-reading 2: Note-taking

Sometimes companies have to adapt the products they make and sell to suit specific markets. What sort of changes might a company have to make? Note down some examples, then read the article and compare your ideas with the ones mentioned in the text.

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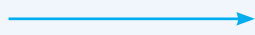
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Cultural perspectives on product adaptation

Attitudes and cultural opinions can be very different both within regions and between countries. It is not only other countries that have to be considered. Many people see the United States as one homogenous environment. This is not the reality. It is a huge country with diverse geographical landscapes and diverse beliefs. These beliefs extend

beyond a wide range of political opinions (liberal to very right-wing) to personal attitudes and behaviours.

Religion can be a focal point of a country's culture. For example, Nike was the goddess of victory in Ancient Greece. While that is not a problem in many countries, in Saudi Arabia any reference to a god outside a religious



Worksheet A: Level 1 (Intermediate)

context causes disapproval. As a consequence, some Saudis may boycott Nike sportswear products.

What these issues and examples suggest is that companies have to be sensitive to a region or country's cultural point of view. Equally, culture does not remain stationary. Like all aspects of life, it is in constant flux or development. This development might or might not always be positive, but nevertheless it has to be understood.

Food

Food is a particularly difficult area for standardization. Fast food companies that operate internationally must change their menus to take into account religion and local tastes.

Perception of numbers

The symbolic value placed on numbers is extremely important in certain cultures. In the West, we tend to consider the number 13 as unlucky. However, in Japan the number four is considered bad luck, whereas the numbers three and five are considered lucky. Therefore, packaging items in containers of four might not be received favourably in Japan. In many countries, the number seven is considered lucky, but in Ghana, Kenya and Singapore it is considered unlucky.

Perception of colours

Colour can have many meanings, especially among older generations. In Brazil, mourning is represented by the colour purple, in Mexico it is yellow, and it is dark red in Africa's Ivory Coast. As a result, companies may need to

consider the colour of their product and the packaging that accompanies it.

Language

Individual languages are complex. Even within the country there can be misunderstandings when the local language is used. Translating a language is often fraught with difficulties and misunderstanding. Even English-speaking nations have different words for the same item, as the list below shows:

British version	American version
Chemist/pharmacy	Drug store
Nappies	Diapers
Biscuits	Cookies
Crisps	Potato chips
Footpath	Sidewalk
Taxi	Cab
Lift	Elevator
Solicitor	Lawyer
Long-distance call	Trunk call

We need to consider the meaning of actual words and phrases and their translation. This will affect brand names and the slogans used to promote brands. A successful brand name in one country could be a joke or an obscenity in another.

Adapted from *Foundations of Marketing* by Jonathan Groucutt, pp. 169-171 © Palgrave Macmillan 2005

C Comprehension check

Do these statements match what is said in the text? Mark each statement true (T) or false (F).

1. People's cultural attitudes are mainly determined by what country they come from.
2. A country's culture is always determined by its religion.
3. A region or country's cultural perspective changes all the time.
4. Numbers are significant in some cultures, but whether a particular number is considered lucky or unlucky depends on the specific country.
5. Problems with language only occur when product names and advertising slogans need to be translated into a different language.

D Project

Think about your own country (or a country you know well). What advice would you give companies about adapting products for your country? Use the headings in the article and any other points you can think of and prepare a presentation.

E Webquest

Find examples on the internet of products that have been adapted for specific markets. Then prepare a presentation. Cover these points:

- What form did the product adaptation take?
- Why was the adaptation necessary?
- Was it successful?

You can also include examples of products that failed in specific markets because they were not adapted.

Worksheet B: Level 1 (Intermediate)

A Pre-listening

You are going to listen to a conversation about different product types between Tim, a business studies student who is working as an intern in the marketing department of a large chocolate manufacturing company, and Carla, the marketing manager.

Tim asks Carla to help him with an essay he has to write for his school business studies course which is titled: *Describe the main categories for classifying convenience products and give examples. How are sales of each category affected by general economic conditions?*

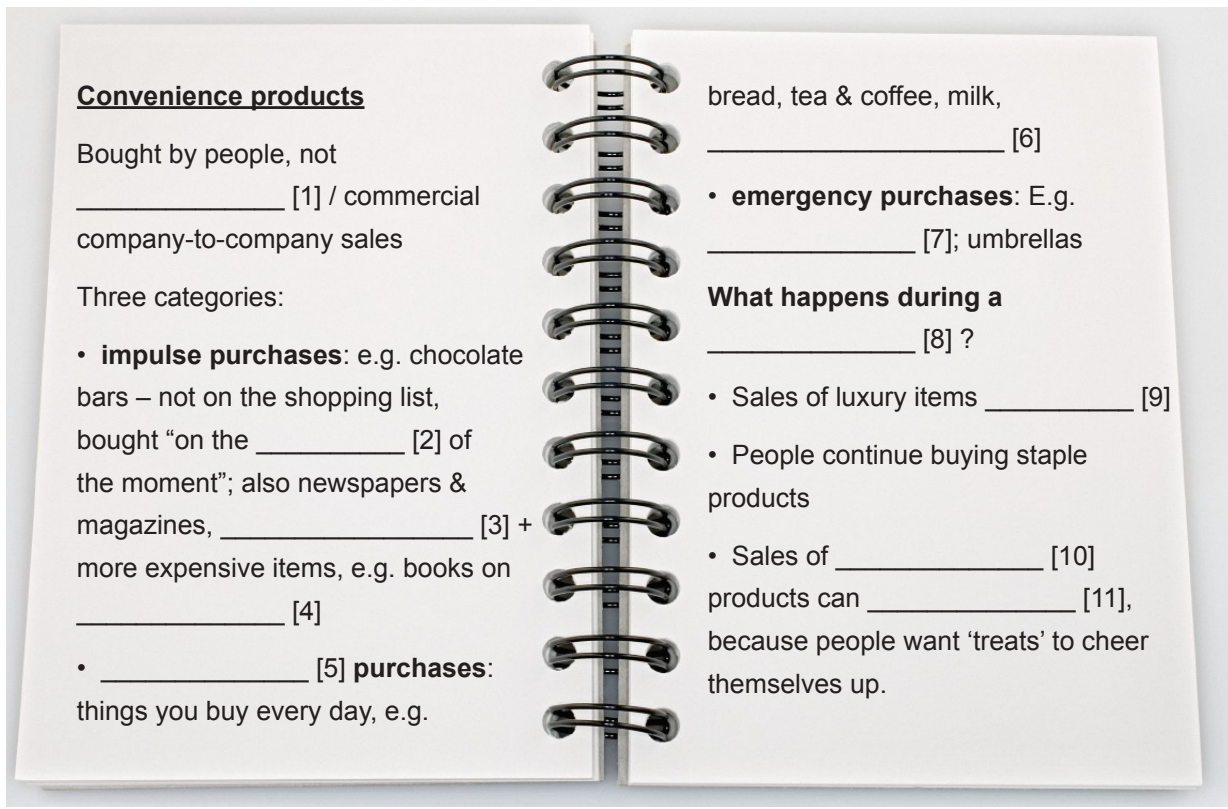
As you listen, make notes on Carla's explanation of different product types.

Handwriting practice area with horizontal dotted lines.

B Comprehension check

Look at Tim's notes and fill in the gaps from the words in the box.

- headache pills
- impulse
- spur
- decrease
- industrial
- recession
- staple
- drinks and snacks
- special offer
- fruit and vegetables
- increase



Worksheet B: Level 1 (Intermediate)

C Discussion

When economic conditions are bad, people often like to buy little 'treats' to cheer themselves up.

Do you – or people you know – do this? Apart from chocolate, what other products (or services) fall into this 'treat' category?

D Project

Choose three products or services, one from each of the three categories: impulse, staple and emergency purchases. Decide on a marketing strategy for each of them. Who are your target customers? How would you sell them? What slogan would you use?

Listening transcript: Level 1 (Intermediate)

Tim, a business studies student who is working as an intern in the marketing department of a large chocolate manufacturing company, is talking to Carla, the marketing manager, about different products categories.

Carla: OK, what's the exact essay question?

Tim: The question is: *Describe the main categories for classifying convenience products and give examples. How are sales of each category affected by general economic conditions?*

Carla: Right, well, I suppose the first thing you need to do is to define 'convenience products'.

Tim: Well, they're the sort of product that people buy regularly, without really thinking about it much.

Carla: Yes, that's right. It's important that you mentioned that it's 'people' who buy them. In other words, they're consumer products, and not industrial and commercial products that companies sell to other companies. OK, well, normally we divide convenience products into three main categories: staple purchases, impulse purchases and emergency purchases. Now, which of these three categories would you put our ordinary low-cost chocolate bars into?

Tim: I suppose they're an impulse purchase. People in meetings here are always talking about impulse buyers and impulse purchases.

Carla: Yes, they are. So, how would you define an impulse purchase in your essay?

Tim: It's when you decide to buy something straight away, without thinking about it beforehand. It isn't on your shopping list.

Carla: Exactly. We often talk about people buying something 'on the spur of the moment' – that means the same thing. And apart from our chocolate, what other products can you think of that fall into this category?

Tim: Hmm. Things like newspapers and magazines. Drinks. Snacks. The sort of things you buy at a railway station or airport.

Carla: Yes, that's right. But you can also buy more expensive things on impulse, too. For example, when you're in a bookshop and you decide on the spur of the moment to buy a book because it's on special offer. OK, now what about staple purchases? How would you define those?

Tim: I suppose they're the kind of things you buy more or less every day. Bread, tea, coffee, milk, fruit, vegetables, things like that.

Carla: Yes, exactly. Of course, that list you just gave applies to the UK where we are, but in different countries, the staple products might be different.

Tim: You mean, for example, that in some countries rice is a staple, rather than bread and potatoes?

Carla: Exactly. And what about emergency purchases? It's pretty obvious what this means, but can you think of any examples?

Tim: Well, maybe something like aspirin tablets which you buy when you suddenly have a headache.

Carla: Yes, that's right. Another very British example of an emergency purchase is umbrellas. You never know when it's going to rain here, so many shops have those small umbrellas on display right near the entrance. When I see those umbrellas in shops, I always remember that I'm living in England!

Tim: And what about the second part of the question. *How are sales of each category affected by general economic conditions?*

Carla: Well, let's imagine that there are problems with the economy, like there are now. What do you think happens to sales of staple products in a recession?

Listening transcript: Level 1 (Intermediate)

Tim: They'll stay the same or even go up. People have to buy basic food products even when the economy is bad.

Carla: Yes, I agree. People buy fewer luxury items in an economic recession but they carry on buying staple products. And what about impulse products?

Tim: Do sales of impulse products decrease because people don't want to spend their money on things that aren't absolutely necessary?

Carla: You would think so, but it's not always true. During the last economic recession, sales of our chocolate bars actually *increased*. Can you guess why?

Tim: I'm not sure.

Carla: Well, there's a lot of evidence that when economic conditions are bad, people often like to buy little 'treats' to cheer themselves up. They don't buy expensive luxury items, but if it's something really cheap, like a chocolate bar, people will buy it in order to feel less miserable.

Tim: So, bad news for the economy is good news for this company.

Carla: Well, that's one way of looking at it ... But there are all sorts of other problems ...