

Worksheet A

A. Pre-reading

Get students to discuss this in pairs. Write their suggestions on the board and then review their notes after they have read the text.

B. Key words

Encourage students to complete this activity as quickly as they can (to develop their text scanning skills). Tell them to underline the relevant words in the text, so that they can easily check their answers.

Key:

1. homogenous;
2. diverse;
3. ultra;
4. focal point;
5. boycott;
6. sensitive;
7. stationary;
8. flux;
9. for the good

C. Comprehension check

When they have answered the questions individually, ask students to check each other's answers in pairs. If there are any disagreements or questions they weren't able to answer, get them to look carefully at how the sentences fit into the overall context of the text before you give them the correct answers.

Key:

1. A;
2. B;
3. B;
4. A;
5. B

D. Discussion

Students can work either individually or in groups. 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.

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

Monitor the students' essay notes before they listen for the first time. Then compare their ideas with the ones in the conversation after their first listening.

B. Comprehension check

This activity helps students to practise listening for detail. See if they can fill in any of the gaps 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. Vocabulary: Collocations

Remind students that this is key marketing vocabulary, so they need to note these verb-preposition combinations in their personal vocabulary notebooks. Also, show them how their learners' dictionary can help with checking correct use of this kind of combination.

Key:

1. make/take;
2. make/take;
3. divide;
4. put;
5. fall;
6. give

D. Discussion

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

E. 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.

A Pre-reading

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? Write some examples, then read the article and compare your ideas with the ones mentioned in the text.

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Cultural perspectives on product adaptation

Attitudes and cultural perspectives can vary enormously both within regions and between countries. It is not only other countries that have to be considered. Many people perceive the United States as one homogenous environment. This is far from reality. It is a vast country comprising not only diverse geographical landscapes but diverse beliefs as well. These beliefs extend beyond a wide political spectrum (liberal to ultra 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 an issue in many countries, in Saudi Arabia any reference to a god outside a religious 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 a continuous state of flux or development. This development might or might not be for the good, but nonetheless it has to be understood.

Food

Food is a particularly difficult area for standardization. Fast food companies that have an international presence must vary their menus to take into account religion and local tastes.

Perception of numbers

The intrinsic 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 statements of a country's origins. 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 impact on brand names and the slogans used to promote brands. A successful brand name in one country could be a household joke or an obscenity in another.

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

B Vocabulary

Here are some definitions of words and expressions that are used in the first three paragraphs of the text. Find the corresponding words. They are in the same order as they appear in the text.

1. A place where the people and things are all the same can be described as a _____ environment.
2. varied and different (adjective) _____
3. extreme _____
4. a thing that is at the centre of activity _____
5. When you _____ a product, you refuse to buy it as a way of protesting.
6. When you are _____ to beliefs, you are aware of them and how strongly people feel about them.
7. When something is _____, it does not move or change.
8. continuous change and movement (noun) _____
9. When something is beneficial, we can say that it is _____.

C Comprehension check

Here are some sentences from the text. Match each one to the correct paraphrase: A or B?

1. *It is not only other countries that have to be considered.*
A. Differences don't just exist between countries – they also exist within the same country.
B. We don't need to consider other countries when we discuss cultural perspectives.
2. *Many people perceive the United States as one homogenous environment. This is far from reality.*
A. Many people consider the United States to be a country that is far from reality.
B. Many people wrongly think the United States can be discussed as if it were one single place.
3. *These beliefs extend beyond a wide political spectrum (liberal to ultra right-wing) to personal attitudes and behaviours.*
A. People's personal attitudes and behaviours are determined by their political beliefs.
B. People's personal attitudes and behaviours can be separate from their political beliefs.
4. *This development might or might not be for the good, but nonetheless it has to be understood.*
A. We have to understand this development whether or not we think it's a good thing.
B. Although this development is not easy to understand, we have to try.
5. *The intrinsic value placed on numbers is extremely important in certain cultures.*
A. The way in which numbers are used to count and calculate is very important in some cultures.
B. What numbers represent and symbolize is very important in some cultures.

D Discussion

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.

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.

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 has to write an essay 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?* Discuss how he might answer this with your partner and write some outline notes for the essay.

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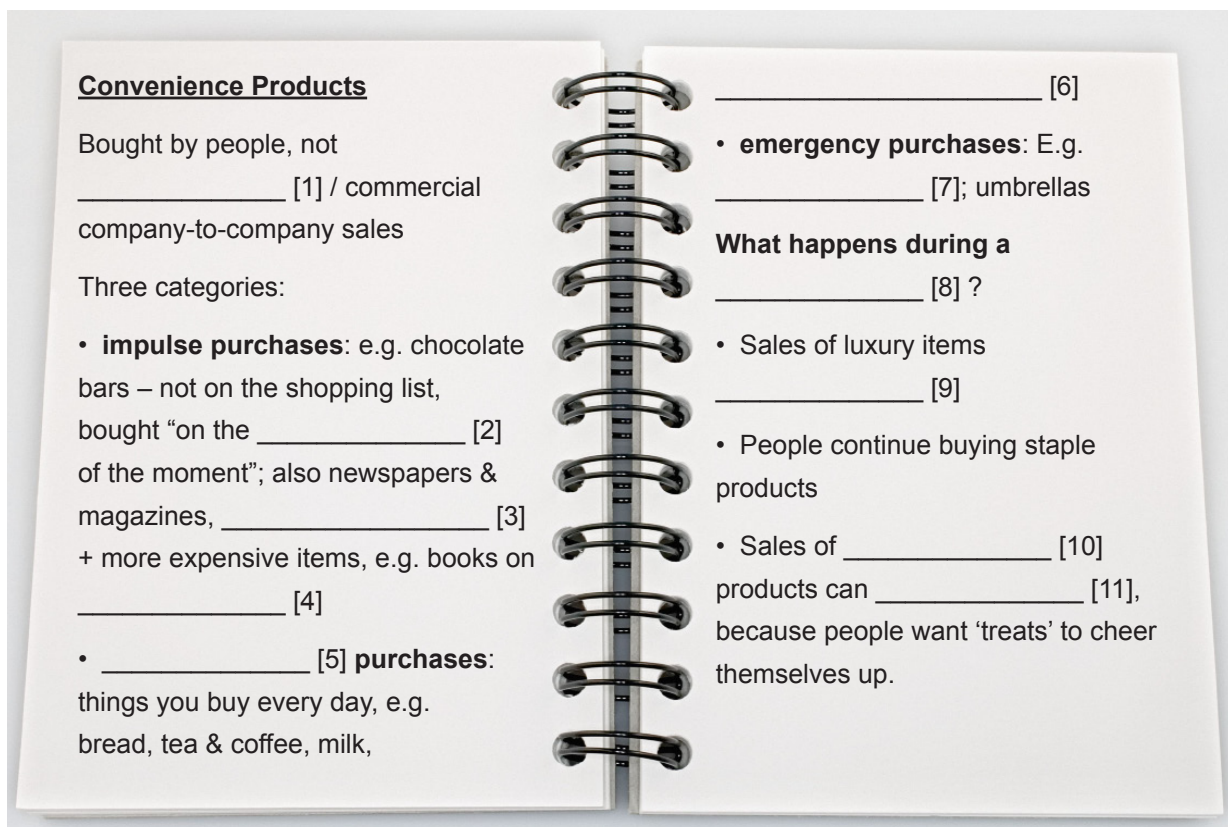
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Tim asks Carla for help with the essay. Listen to the examples and explanations Carla gives. Do they match yours?

B Comprehension check

Look at Tim's notes. Listen to the conversation again and fill in the gaps.



C Vocabulary: Collocations

Here are some expressions that are used in the dialogue. Fill in the gaps using the verbs in the box.

divide fall give make put take

to decide

to _____ [1] a decision or to _____ [2] a decision

to categorize

to _____ [3] something into different categories

to _____ [4] something into a category

What category does this _____ [5] into?

to define

to _____ [6] a definition of something

D 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?

E 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?

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?

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 ...