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Mikhail Kindruk
Science tutor M. V. Mishkevich
BSEU (MINSK)

INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL BACKGROUND OVER THE ADVERTISING COMMUNICATION IN JAPAN

The object of our research is the advertising aspect of business as a type of intercultural communication.

The subject of our research is the interdependence of culture and advertising in modern Japan.

The relevance of this work is due to the globalization of the business sphere, under which it is critical to take into account the cultural peculiarities any country in order to remain competitive in the global market.

The goal of my research is to identify and describe the cultural peculiarities of Japan and determine the degree of their influence on the Japanese advertising business.

There have been analyzed more than 200 cases of Japanese commercials, including the advertising campaign of the “White family” mobile plan made by Softbank operator, which is one of the most successful and effective campaigns in Japan over the recent years: its approximate cost-earnings ratio is about 1 to 25.

During the analysis, there was found a distinct correlation between advertising, mentality, trends and historically determined features of Japan:

1. It was revealed that the average duration of a Japanese commercial is about 17 seconds, that, like in Japanese *haiku*, may be due to the influence of Buddhism, which spread out the ideas of both minimalism and total immersion in one subject, its comprehensive consideration, contemplation and understanding.

2. Advertising in Japan is significantly influenced by manga and anime industries (Japanese-comics and their screen version): according to the results of our research, just over the half of the Japanese commercials (51%) use anime-style, costumed characters or give a superpower to the main character.

3. The western practice of such an advertising tool as the mascot (talisman character) which represents companies and organizations from the informal side,

has gained immense popularity in Japan: even the Japanese police have their mascot, whose name is Pipo-kun. It is assumed that this degree of popularity is associated with the polytheistic basis of Shinto, another traditional religion in Japan. As the statistics show, in the television commercials, mascots were presented in 32% of the cases.

Regarding to the results of our research there were found cultural peculiarities of Japan within the following dimensions and patterns established by Geert Hofstede, Edward Hall and Yuri Lotman:

1. The culture of collectivism. In 43% of the Japanese commercials, the main characters were presented as certain social groups: families, office workers, girls dancing in the same costumes, students, cheerleaders, etc.

2. High uncertainty avoidance index. In 74% of the commercials, the main roles are played by famous actors and pop idols, 9% of whom are Hollywood celebrities. This is due to the fact that an experience of someone famous who is familiar with a product makes it more credible in Japan than a detailed explanation of how effective it is.

G. Hofstede's other cultural dimensions, such as distance of power or muscularity, are exceptional, as they can only be mentioned in cases of social relations within an advertising plot.

3. The features of a high context culture. For example, the absence of information redundancy, as indicated by the average duration of a commercial; the prevalence of close-ups in order to better convey the non-verbal communication of characters; the predominance of image over functionality. In 80% of Japanese commercials, the functionality of a product is not affected while the emphasis is made on the memorability and associative connections of an advertising situation with the product or the company.

4. Moreover, the commitment of Japanese culture to auto-communication and the "I-I" model, established by Lotman, is proved by the fact that in 69% of cases, Japanese advertising is presented to the viewer in the form of desemantized but memorable images that make it almost impossible to identify the product until the speaker at the end of the commercial gives us the code, which can be either the name or an image of the product.

Japan is a unique country with its own culture, traditions and mentality that influence over the business cycle. However, the results of our research and the research methods used toward the Japanese advertising can also be successfully applied to advertising of any other country in order to identify its certain cultural peculiarities. This will help entrepreneurs to avoid cultural mistakes and increase their external competitiveness at the international market.