Intercultural communication in advertisement

A comparative analysis of Morsø’s advertisements and the influence of marketing strategies

Pia Poulin Gurre Hansen
281563
Bachelor thesis
Supervisor: James Bulman-May
May 2011

This bachelor thesis contains 53.189 characters without blanks.
Table of contents

Abstract .......................................................................................................................................................... 4

1. Introduction ........................................................................................................................................... 6
   1.1 Thesis statement ............................................................................................................................... 8
   1.2 Method ............................................................................................................................................... 8
   1.3 The selected material ....................................................................................................................... 8
   1.4 Delimitation of the thesis ................................................................................................................. 9

2. Cultural theory ....................................................................................................................................... 9
   2.1 Product syntax .................................................................................................................................. 9
   2.1.1 Summary ...................................................................................................................................... 11
   2.2 Semiotics .......................................................................................................................................... 11
       2.2.1 Saussure .................................................................................................................................... 12
       2.2.2 Barthes ...................................................................................................................................... 13
       2.2.3 Summary .................................................................................................................................... 14
   2.3 Hofstede’s value dimensions ............................................................................................................ 14
       2.3.1 Individualism vs. Collectivism ................................................................................................. 16
       2.3.2 Masculinity vs. Femininity ....................................................................................................... 17
       2.3.3 The functionalist approach and the interpretive approach ..................................................... 17
       2.3.4 Summary .................................................................................................................................... 18
   2.4 Hall – High and Low Context Communication .............................................................................. 19
       2.4.1 Summary .................................................................................................................................... 21

3. Analysis ................................................................................................................................................. 22

4. Analysis of the Danish advertisement ................................................................................................. 22
   4.1 Semiotics .......................................................................................................................................... 22
   4.2 The denotative level ......................................................................................................................... 22
   4.3 The connotative level ....................................................................................................................... 23
   4.4 The linguistic message .................................................................................................................... 23
   4.5 Hofstede.......................................................................................................................................... 24
   4.6 Hall .................................................................................................................................................. 25

5. Analysis of the English advertisement ............................................................................................... 26
   5.1 Semiotics .......................................................................................................................................... 26
   5.2 The denotative level ....................................................................................................................... 26
Abstract
When presenting a product to a consumer, it is necessary to take the culture of the consumer into account. This can be difficult even if you know your consumer well, but is even more challenging if you are targeting a market that you have no firsthand knowledge of.

This study will analyse two advertisements for Morsø iron stoves directed at different consumers. One advertisement targets Danish consumers and thereby the original Morsø market, the other targets UK consumers. In the study both the visual aspect of the advertisements and the linguistic aspect will be relevant to gain an insight into the similarities and differences between the two. From this, it is possible to determine whether Morsø adapts their promotion to the UK market or if they appeal to UK consumers in the same way as they do to the Danes.

This research question, which strategy is used by Morsø when introducing products into the UK market, will be examined in the following, and thereby, gain insight into the strategy applied by Morsø and the communication needed to present a product to two different markets. The study will be conducted using theories related to intercultural communication and to the specific field of research. The main theoretical focus will be partly on semiotics, which is the theory of how words, for example, can represent a cultural context, whereby a word is not just a simple description of something, but is also a source of information which can be interpreted. Furthermore, the focus will be on product syntax, which is very fitting since this theory deals with the issues of whether a product and the advertisement related to this product should be adapted or should remain in its original form, when introducing it to new markets. In addition, the above mentioned theories will be related to the specific cultural differences between Denmark and the United Kingdom.

From the analysis, it can be concluded that there are apparent differences between the two advertisements. This means that Morsø has approached the promotion of their iron stoves differently in the Danish and the UK markets. Furthermore, cultural characteristics that have been ascribed to the two countries by Geert Hofstede are reflected in the two advertisements. This would suggest that Morsø has taken the ascribed cultural differences into account in their promotion strategy.

From this, it can be concluded that Morsø applies a differentiated strategy in promoting their products to a foreign market.
(The abstract contains 2,094 characters without blanks)
(The thesis contains 53,189 characters without blanks)
Intercultural communication in advertisement: A comparative analysis of Morsø’s advertisements and the influence of marketing strategies

1. Introduction

Intercultural communication plays an important role in today’s society when it comes to the failure or success of a company in a foreign market. It is not simply a matter of having a good product but, it is the manner in which the product is presented to the consumer that helps determine whether or not the consumer will buy the product in question.

Cultural communication is defined as follows: “Cultural communications are deeper and more complex than spoken or written messages. The essence of effective cross-cultural communication has more to do with releasing the right responses than with sending the “right” messages.” (Hall & Hall, 1990:4). When choosing the strategy for venturing into a new market it is important to be aware of the receiving culture.

Culture is a broad definition of characteristics related to habits, norms and behaviour of a specific group of people. The term culture differs according to context, which is the main challenge when communicating to a new target audience. Norlyk (1999) states that “The appeal of the product lies in the mental representations and potential contexts it activates in the mind of the beholder” (Norlyk, 1999:85). Mental representations and potential contexts are very important in relation to the linguistic message. Furthermore, de Mooij states that products are “not culture-free, nor are the motivations of the people who buy them.” (Norlyk, 1999:85).

When introducing a product in a new market, the advertisement can be differentiated or standardised, meaning that the product will not necessarily need to be advertised in the same manner in different countries. This depends on the receiving culture or the company’s politics on advertisement. However, it is not only the advertisement that can be differentiated or standardised. The products themselves can also be adapted or standardised, this also depends on the product.

The definition of a standardisation strategy is “The use of similar or identical marketing communications across countries” and the definition of an adaptation strategy is “Marketing

---

1 http://www.denstoredanske.dk/Samfund_jura_og_politik/Filosofi/Menneskets_grundvilk%C3%A5r/kultur
communications messages and media that are changed from country to country to better suit the particular requirements of individual markets” (Pickton & Broderick, 2005:176).

According to Ted Levitt (in Pickton & Broderick, 2005), one argument for standardisation is globalisation and, as a result of globalisation, Levitt believes that differences between countries are superficial and even deep-rooted differences within and between different countries are less important because the world’s needs and desires have been permanently changed. As a result, people from different countries should have the desire to buy the same product for the same reasons, regardless of their different cultures. Another advantage would be that companies can attain economies of scale by employing standardisation of marketing communication (Pickton & Broderick, 2005: 176-177). Some products may be better suited for standardisation. This could be products which have a correlation between positive associations and a specific country’s reputation in a particular field. This could be a specific product and its country of origin e.g. chocolate from Belgium is associated with high quality. Furthermore, products that have a visual appeal are suitable for standardisation. This is to avoid the complex problem of attempting to translate words into different languages. The challenge is here to find the correct match between the exact words and the value connected to those words (Pickton & Broderick, 2005: 179) (de Mooij, 2005:42-44).

However, there are arguments that support the need for adaptation of marketing communications. One argument is that one product might be suitable for one country, whereas it would be over- or under-designed for other countries. Furthermore, the consumer’s needs, the traditions and the usage of the product may differ between cultures and the use of standardisation could end up being a loss for the company instead of a profit. Therefore, the economies of scale would not have the desired effect on expenses. This is expressed by Marco Rivetti, chairman of Gruppo GTF, who states that “To be global means to recognise differences and be flexible enough to adapt to them” (in Pickton & Broderick, 2005:177). An example of this is the adaption of Nescafé in Norway. The associations to instant coffee had to relate to homely values to compete with the tradition of ground coffee that is brewed and kept hot on the stove all day (Pickton & Broderick, 2005:178). Another example is eating in Spain. Spain is a collectivistic culture and meals are considered to be a social event and

---

2 Globalisation is defined as “the idea that the world is developing a single economy and culture as a result of improved technology and communications and the influence of very large multinational companies” (Macmillan, 2002:603)

3 Economies of scale are the financial advantages that a company gains when it produces large quantities of products
this must be taken into account, when making advertisement related to food or another product, where the usage of the product is related to group activities. (de Mooij, 2005: 171-172).

1.1 Thesis statement
It is important for a company to consider whether or not their advertising and products should be differentiated or standardised in order to achieve success in the relevant market. As examples of advertisements, two adverts from the Danish company “Morsø Pejse” will be used. The role of intercultural communication in advertising between Denmark and the United Kingdom will be examined in this study.

By analysing and comparing these advertisements and looking at the advantages and disadvantages of standardised and differentiated products, the role of advertising will become clearer. This will help in answering the following research question: **Which strategy is used by Morsø when introducing products into the UK market?**

When answering this question it is necessary to look at the similarities and differences between the two advertisements, both in the linguistic messages and in the visual aspects. From this, it is possible to interpret whether Morsø uses a differentiated or a standardised approach to the British market.

1.2 Method
In the following, the theory used will focus on cultural differences in the advertisements between the Danish and the British advertisements. The theory and the advertisements will help gain insight into the intercultural communication between the two countries.

1.3 The selected material
The materials used in the thesis are two advertisements from the Danish company, Morsø. The advertisements are aimed at the Danish and the British market, respectively. Theories of semiotics and products syntax will be used to analyse the advertisements. Furthermore, the theories of Geert

---

4 Both adverts are from 2011 and can be seen in the appendices
Hofstede, and Edward T. Hall & Mildred Reed Hall, will be applied to supplement semiotics and product syntax.

1.4 Delimitation of the thesis
In the following, the focus is strictly on themes in the adverts that will make comparison possible, reflect the theories applied and will provide a deeper knowledge of cultural differences between Denmark and the UK.

This delimitation is necessary when dealing with a comprehensive field like intercultural communication within the scope of this thesis. Furthermore, only parts of the chosen theories will be applied to gain insight into the field of intercultural communication. This is relevant to the theory of Hofstede, where only two of his dimensions will be applied in the analysis. This also means that subculture will not be taken into consideration because this would certainly demand a different angle on the thesis and in-depth knowledge of subcultures in both Denmark and the UK.

2. Cultural theory

The cultural theory in the following sections will be applied to the analysis of the two advertisements. Product syntax is related to the introduction concerning standardisation versus adaptation strategies. The theory of semiotics is related to the signs and symbols used in advertising. The theory of Hofstede and Hall is applied to see, if what is considered to be the national culture, also dominates advertisements.

2.1 Product syntax
An important aspect of product syntax is the term creolization. Creolization is when a product that has a purpose in its original culture is taken into the receiving culture with a different purpose in order to fit in (Kragh & Djursaa, 2001:1303). This can be achieved if the consumer is encouraged to do this by the marketer. This is because creolization requires that the consumer takes an active part as a consumer. This can be done by using the “the receiving culture’s possible consumption context and their syntactical structures in promotional material” (Kragh & Djursaa, 2001:1301-1302). As
a result the product will have a different purpose compared to the original purpose in the sender’s cultural context.

The semiotic creolization model: \( P + C \rightarrow \text{PC} \) describe “the process of interpretation and adaption performed by the consumers” (Kragh & Djursaa, 2001:1303).

\( P \) represents the product and the associated marketing variables and \( C \) represents the cultural context. \( \text{PC} \) is the product that is now culturally integrated in the new context. It is now a product with a different purpose and therefore the product is a better fit in the receiving culture and the relevant cultural context.

**International market structures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global markets; same preferences across countries</th>
<th>Local markets; particular preferences in each country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( C_1 = C_2 )</td>
<td>( C_1 &gt; C_2 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Kragh et al. (1998), p. 317

(Kragh & Djursaa, 2001:1304).

In square 1, the countries share the same preferences. Therefore, it is a standardised marketing strategy that is employed. Under these circumstances, it is acceptable to sell the exact same product in different countries. Obviously, this is the best place to be situated due to economies of scale and the size of the total market (Kragh & Djursaa, 2001:1304-1305).

In square 2, the standardised marketing strategy is employed in countries with different preferences. This means that the product has to go through the process of creolization or it would be rejected by
the receiving culture. This approach can be described as a “take it or leave it” approach (Kragh & Djursaa, 2001:1304-1305).

In square 3, the locally differentiated marketing strategy that is aimed at the global market is employed. The result of this is differently integrated products. However, this is not the best square to be situated in. The problem here is that the product should appeal to the different receiving cultures since we are dealing with a global market, where the countries share preferences. In this case a standardised marketing strategy would have been a better choice. In the same way as described above, in relation to square 1 (Kragh & Djursaa, 2001:1304-1305).

In square 4, the locally differentiated marketing strategy is employed to sell the product at the local markets. The result of this is that the product is differently integrated in the receiving culture. In this square the marketer accepts that if the marketing strategy is not adapted there would be a high risk of the receiving culture rejecting the product (Kragh & Djursaa, 2001:1304-1305).

2.1.1 Summary
There are advantages and disadvantages related to both standardised and differentiated marketing strategies. In order to choose the best suited strategy, many different aspects need to be considered. Among these are the types of product, both the sending and the receiving culture and if we are dealing with a global or a local market. The figure shown under the section 2.1 is used to explain and provide an overview of the different possibilities related to choice of international marketing strategies depending on the international market structures. The term creolization is also an important aspect of product syntax. This is because it opens up for the possibility of a culture adopting some aspects of a products purpose, and thereby placing the product in a new and different cultural context than the original. It is therefore relevant to examine the advertisement to see if there are any differences in the advertisements and thereby in the communication between Denmark and the UK.

2.2 Semiotics
Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols and plays an important role in advertisement. This is because both signs and symbols have a strong influence on people’s associations and thereby their
interpretations of what they see in advertisements. However, these associations are related to culture.

“Culture is the shared ability to recognize, decode and produce signs and symbols, so culture also is a combination of semiotic habits. Differences in semiotic habits delineate cultures” (de Mooij, 2005: 45).

As a result different cultures can have different associations to the same signs and symbols. To illustrate this, the meaning of colour can be used. The colour black is connected to mourning in the western world, whereas white is used to symbolise mourning in China. Furthermore, gestures can have various meanings depending on culture.

The sign that in the United States is interpreted to the meaning OK is not a universal sign. In France and Hungary it means zero, whereas in Japan it means money (de Mooij, 2005: 45-46).

2.2.1 Saussure

Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist, saw signs as being bound to cultural context. His theory is related to structuralism. In structuralism, culture is seen “as an ordered system or structure” (Baldwin, 2004:32). The coded meanings that are found within a culture are both produced and reproduced through social interaction (Baldwin, 2004:32). That is to say, that a sign is supposed to be interpreted in accordance to the frame of reference of the culture. Apart from this Saussure “saw language as a system of signs whose meanings are arbitrary” (Baldwin, 2004:34). In other words,
there is no connection between the signifier and the signified. The decoding of a sign is related to
the culture and not the sign itself (Frandsen, 2005:43). The signifier represents the content; this
could be a sound, printed word or image. And the signified is the expression, that is to say the
mental concept of the signifier. (Eggin
s, 1984:15) (Baldwin, 2004:53). As mentioned above, the
context is what helps to determine the meaning behind the decoding of signs.

The structure of the sign is the following:

Signifier + Signed = Sign

(Baldwin, 2004:53).

For instance, in the case of Morsø, the signifier can be an iron stove and the signified can be fire
and this equals heat.

Iron stove + fire = Heat

2.2.2 Barthes
Roland Barthes took the model containing the signifier and the signified and added connotation and
denotation.

The denotation is the meaning of the actual word. There may be many different words to say the
same thing. An example can be the word child. The word ‘brat’ also means child. The connotation
to the word brat, however, is negatively charged and the association is a child that misbehaves. The
same goes for the word boat. A dinghy is also a boat, whereas a yacht is a bigger and more
luxurious to many people.

The connotative and denotative levels found in images or texts are related to different levels of
meaning, some of the levels of meaning are somewhat neutral, whereas others are saturated with
social meaning. However, the meaning of these levels depends on the context in which they are
presented (Baldwin, 2004:53).

The adding of connotation and denotation can be related to postmodernism. The values and norms
that used to function as the frame of reference no longer have that function (Kjær, 2003:110).
Therefore, the consumer tries to use self actualisation, and what is consumed by the individual to
create a certain image and lifestyle. This means that the products are what makes up both the image and lifestyle and thereby supports the self actualisation of the individual. The consumers are now part of the process of creating their own life styles, whereas before marketing strategies was about anticipating the consumers’ needs (Frandsen, 2005:19).

2.2.3 Summary
The meaning of signs and symbols that is used in a culture and the manner in which these are recognised is very important to take into consideration. The decoding is an important aspect and can easily be the cause for misunderstanding or misreading in intercultural communication contexts. There are many signs everywhere in everyday life that are interpreted and thereby connected to certain values or lifestyles. In the analysis of the advertisements the sign and symbols will be analysed to examine the meaning of these and the values and/or lifestyles they could be related to.

The values perceived to be connected to a specific product are of great importance, because these values reflect different lifestyles and thereby different images or identities. The consumers today use products to create their own value and image, and thereby become a more active part in advertising and the process of defining their own identity.

Therefore, it is important to consider, which signs and symbols to use in advertisements, and to consider how these are decoded in the receiving culture.

2.3 Hofstede´s value dimensions
As mentioned before, the relevant value dimensions of Hofstede´s theory will be applied. Hofstede was one of the pioneers in the field of intercultural communication. The relevant value dimensions in this thesis are individualism vs. collectivism, and masculinity vs. femininity. Even though, only two of Hofstede´s dimensions will be applied, the dimensions of power distance and uncertainty avoidance will be explained briefly. The fifth dimension, long term vs. short term orientations, has been omitted due to the fact that Denmark was not included in the study of this dimension.

Power distance refers to how power is distributed among members of a culture. According to Hofstede and Bond, “...the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions...accept that power is distributed unequally” (Ting-Toomey 1999:72-69). Small power index values promote
egalitarianism, free flow of information and flat hierarchies. Furthermore, there is emphasis on equality, legitimate power, and if one is allowed to question superiors’ orders. With regard to high power index values, the values that are emphasised are acceptance of inequality among people, people expect to be told what to do by superiors, and it is not acceptable to question superiors’ orders.

When describing the dimension of uncertainty avoidance, Hofstede states, that in high uncertainty avoidance cultures: “what is different, is dangerous” opposed to in low uncertainty avoidance cultures, where “what is different, is curious” (Gudykunst 2003: 74). The two different points of view concerning what is different demonstrate the distinction between high and low uncertainty avoidance. In low uncertainty avoidance cultures there is an acceptance of informal rules regarding behaviour, innovative ideas and behaviour, conflict is not seen as a threat and work life is less predictable and less structured. People tend to not be in specialised jobs and the carrier mobility is high. Whereas in high uncertainty avoidance cultures, there is a tendency towards specialised jobs, people expect clear instructions, and the carrier mobility is low. Furthermore, conflict is seen as a threat. In general, deviant behaviour and innovative ideas disrupt the desired stability. Formal structure and rules are emphasised (Ting-Toomey 1999:71-72).

Denmark and the UK are both, according to Hofstede, placed in the lower end of the scale of power distance and uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede 1999: 26 & 113). Therefore, it can be expected that there would not be any significant differences between the two countries in relation to power distance and uncertainty avoidance.

One value dimension will always be predominant. However, this does not mean that everyone from an individualistic culture will display these values. It will be possible to find people with collectivistic values in an individualistic culture and vice versa (Gudykunst 2003: 79). This also applies to the other value dimensions.

In the following section, an explanation of Hofstede’s dimensions and a comparison of the scores will be provided in order to state the differences between Denmark and the UK. These dimensions are relevant because they provide guidelines to companies when engaging in intercultural communication. This could be when introducing a product into new receiver markets or when attempting to start a co-operation with a foreign company.
2.3.1 Individualism vs. Collectivism

Individualism and collectivism refers to whether or not there is focus on e.g. the goal of the individual or of the group. In individualistic cultures, there is a focus on “I”, the goals of the individual, self-efficiency and individual responsibility. As far as collectivistic cultures are concerned there is a focus on “we”, the goals of the group, relational interdependence, in-group harmony and in-group collaborative spirit (Ting-Toomey, 1999:67).

As a result from the focus on “I” and individual goals vs. the focus on “we” and the goals of the group there are some tendencies that are characteristic and predominant in both individualistic and collectivistic cultures. There are many values that differ in the two cultures. In collectivistic cultures, people are born into, not only their family, but also into an extended family. The social network is a kind of safety net, which one can rely on. This is in contrast to an individualistic culture. Here, one would more or less only have the immediate family or friends to rely on. However, in a collectivistic culture one would be obliged to help others when possible. Should one decline to help, he or she could disrupt group harmony (Hofstede, 1999: 67).

The concept of “loss of face” does not have the same meaning and consequence in both cultures (i.e. individualistic and collectivistic cultures). In the collectivistic culture, it affects not only the person, but also the group the person belongs to. In the individualistic culture, the loss of face does not have the same consequences. Here it is more or less only the person that is affected. For the most part, it concerns the self-respect of the individual.

Another aspect in this context between individualistic and collectivistic cultures is the importance of relationship or task. With regard to individualistic cultures the task prevails over the relationship, which is the opposite compared to a collectivistic culture. Due to the social network and focus on “we” and group harmony the relationship prevails over the task (Hofstede, 1999: 67).

Apart from this there is also a connection between high- and low-context and individualistic and collectivistic cultures. Low-context is often linked to individualistic cultures whereas high-context is linked to collectivistic cultures. This will be elaborated on in section 2.4.

According to Hofstede, both countries are considered to be individualistic cultures. (Hofstede, 1999: 53).
2.3.2 Masculinity vs. Femininity

This value dimension refers to the gender roles in a culture, in other words, which characteristics are ascribed to men or women. Furthermore, the masculine and feminine values also influence the workplace. In feminine cultures the gender roles overlap. However, this is not the case in masculine cultures where values such as power, assertiveness, ambition and competition among colleagues and focus on performance are emphasised over the more feminine values such as caring, stress on equality, solidarity and quality of work life (Gudykunst, 2003: 77-79) (Ting-Toomey, 1999:72-74). This is supported by Hofstede, who states:

“...in masculine cultures women are assigned the role of being tender and taking care of relationships. In feminine cultures, in contrast, both men and women engage in these behaviours” (Gudykunst, 2003: 78).

According to Hofstede, there is great difference between the UK and Denmark. The UK is seen as a more masculine culture as opposed to Denmark with its more feminine culture (Hofstede, 1999: 84).

2.3.3 The functionalist approach and the interpretive approach

There are two main approaches related to intercultural communication that are relevant in this thesis; the functionalist approach (also called social science) and the interpretive approach.

The functionalist approach identifies cultural variations and assumes that there are patterns, which can be found through studies, which can create a frame of reference that can be used for understanding cultural characteristics. To find these patterns, the chosen method would be quantitative, which implies the need for big samples, which make it possible to gain an insight into a larger population. The typical methods are surveys and statistics and the goal is to generalise the results to the population. The quantitative approach is based on a standardised form of analysing the society, which implies that the questions are the same to everyone that participates in the survey. This means that the questions are not culturally sensitive. Therefore, the questions may not be interpreted in the same way by all the participants. Another issue when looking for patterns is that the patterns you find may not always represent the general population, e.g. a country but may represent only the participants in the sample (Martin & Nakayama, 2003:48-53).
The interpretive approach suggests that people are co-authors of their own reality. This means that the best way to gain access to reality is through people and their understanding of their own life. The best way to study e.g. the political opinion of an individual is through conversation and not statistics and surveys. The qualitative methods are observations, field studies and interviews. With the qualitative method, it is possible to obtain a deeper understanding of the thoughts and opinions of the individual. The goal is not to generalise to a population but to gain information about a specific group that is being studied. Thereby, the qualitative study is more sensitive to the group in question than the quantitative study. The main issues with interpretive studies are, as the name implies, that the researcher is depending on interpretations. One issue is that the individual being studied is communicating his or her own understanding of reality. This means that the information given can be very specific to one individual, but not necessarily to others. The other issue is the role of the researcher. The presumptions of the researcher can have an influence on the interpretation of the information. Furthermore, the interaction between the researcher and the participants can influence the outcome of the research (Martin & Nakayama, 2003:48 & 53-58).

2.3.4 Summary

As seen, there are some similarities between Denmark and the UK and both are recognised as individualistic cultures. On the other hand, they are also very different when it comes to masculinity vs. femininity, where Denmark is regarded as feminine and the UK as masculine. In the analysis of the advertisements semiotics signs of differences and similarities as described above will be compared.

The critique related to the functionalist approach is the fact that many today see culture as dynamic and therefore it changes over time. This raises the question whether or not the five dimensions of Hofstede still are relevant. According to Gudykunst, Hofstede´s dimensions”still appear to provide reasonable descriptions of the predominate tendencies in the cultures studied” (Gudykunst, 2003: 81-82). When analysing a culture by applying Hofstede´s theory it is important to be aware of the fact that it is the national culture with focus on the predominant tendencies that is described in his theory. Furthermore, it is important to be critical and aware of the possible implications of his functionalist approach.
2.4 Hall – High and Low Context Communication

In 1990, Edward T. Hall and Mildred Reed Hall published a study called *Understanding cultural differences*. With the use of in-depth interviews the purpose was to identify cultural differences that could affect international corporate relations between countries. This means that the theory refers specifically to cultures in the business world (Hall & Hall, 1990: xx).

Hall’s theory of context communication is high context communication (HCC) and low context communication (LCC). The concept of *context* is described as;

“Context is the information that surrounds an event; it is inextricably bound up with the meaning of the event.” (Hall & Hall, 1990:6).

This means that the information cannot be considered separately from the event and the two become the context.

HCC is characterised by being indirect and often ambiguous. Furthermore, HCC is also linked to collectivistic cultures (Gudykunst, 2003: 62). This is due to the role-oriented style and it means that there the social roles of the participants, are emphasised (Guirdham, 2005:61). In collectivistic cultures there is also an emphasis on the relationship, e.g. the relationship prevails over the task (Hofstede, 1999: 67). Furthermore, a person from a HCC culture tends to communicate with both verbal and non-verbal codes. This is difficult to decode if the other person does not share the same experiences and assumptions. In HCC cultures people are expected to be informed and have enough background information to keep up with the conversation (Djursaa, 1995: 2). LCC is characterised by being more direct, clear and precise and is linked to the individualistic cultures (Gudykunst, 2003:62). The more personal style, which has an emphasis on the personal identity, and not the social position, means that the difference in status is not considered to be important. In other words, LCC is less formal than HCC communication (Guirdham, 2005:61). In LCC cultures there are no or little assumptions about shared experiences. This is why misunderstandings occur in communication between people from respectively HCC cultures and LCC cultures. People from low context cultures have difficulties decoding what is said in a HCC culture due to the lack of ability to decode the manner of high context communication (Djursaa, 1995: 2-3). They simply miss some of the coded message, in both verbal and non-verbal communication.

Both Denmark and the UK are considered to be LCC. However, Djursaa believes that there is a difference between the UK and Denmark.
“I would not claim that Britain is as high-context as Japan or the Arabian countries. But I would claim that it is sufficiently higher than her neighbours to create problems” (Djursaa, 1995:3).

In the following, the UK will be referred to as a HCC culture. The UK is not considered to be a high context-culture compared to Japan, however, when it comes to LCC, the UK it is higher placed compared with Denmark, which is why this distinction is made.

These problems in communication occur when the Danish LCC culture attempts to communicate with the HCC culture of the UK\(^5\). The reluctance to say “no” face-to-face is characteristic of HCC cultures. In some HCC countries like Japan it concerns not loosing face. It is considered impolite to say “no” face-to-face and moreover, the risk of one or the other loosing face is avoided by saying “maybe” (Djursaa, 1995:3). Danish businessmen often have trouble decoding the English “no”. According to the English respondent, ref. 50: “We don’t like saying no, especially if we like somebody” (Djursaa, 1995:4). As the Danish respondent, ref. 19 states “I don’t think I ever received a “no” to my face...by letter yes, no problem – but not face to face” (Djursaa, 1995:4). Furthermore, the indirect manner of communicating in the UK is not decoded correctly by many Danes. E.g. “If there is no chance of business, we tend to say, look, there is a very remote chance of business. If we find there is a chance of business, we say we have to have a closer dialogue” (Djursaa, 1995:3). This is due to the use of understatement where “the less said – the better” (Katan, 2004: 292).

What is the solution to this problem regarding the misunderstandings between the Danish and the British business men? According to Varner and Beamer it is possible to learn more about the other culture. This often leads people to adjust their expectations and as a result they modify their own behaviour. E.g. “When Vittorio Sanches goes to Chicago on business, he refrains from touching the businessmen he meets because he knows that businesspeople from the United States touch each other less frequently than Latins do.” (Varner and Beamer, 2005:189). Furthermore, Varner and Beamer stress the importance of understanding, what is accepted as the norm in another culture. As a result the situations leading to misunderstandings between two different cultures may appear to be less offending due to the understanding of what and why the misunderstanding occurred (Varner and Beamer, 2005: 188-189).

\(^5\) There will not be made any distinction between the United Kingdom and Britain.
Djursaa states that “In fact, given half a chance, the Danes seems to take to the English high-context like ducks to water ...” (Djursaa, 1995: 5). So here the solution is to learn and adapt to the other culture as Varner and Beamer also suggest. However, people from other LCC countries also have problems with decoding the English HCC communication. According to Djursaa, it is the English who should adapt to LCC culture and thereby eliminate the misunderstandings. This is because it is simply easier for the English to build a bridge of communication to a LCC culture by using words such as “no” in a direct and clear communication compared to the challenge it can be for a LCC culture to learn how to decode, what may seem to them as being, an indirect message (Djursaa, 1995:5).

2.4.1 Summary

Denmark is a LCC culture, whereas the UK is also considered to be a LCC culture, however, compared to Denmark the UK context communication resembles a HCC culture. It is important to remember that the UK is not HCC culture compared to Japan. However, as small as the difference seems to be it should not be ignored, because it is the cause of misunderstandings and wrong impressions between Danish and English businessmen. The solution to the problem is for LCC cultures to learn how to decode the indirect and implicit communication from a HCC culture. However, another solution could be that the HCC culture could communicate in a more direct manner, when dealing with a LCC culture. The adaptation to the other culture should lead to fewer misunderstandings. In this case, understatements in the English HCC style are dealt with more specifically.

With the in-depth interviews, Hall uses the interpretive approach to his study, as did the Djursaa. However, when categorising a country as either high or low context there is always a possibility of defining the categories too narrow. According to Hall & Hall, “Scientists in the intercultural field are vulnerable to distortions from two directions. First, they are subject to the implicit perceptions of their own culture. Whether willingly or unconsciously, they look at any new culture through eyes conditioned from birth to see things in a particular way. Second, scientists are frequently taught theories, assumptions, and hypotheses that may create barriers between the observer and the culture being studied” (Hall & Hall, 1990: xx).
3. Analysis

In the following sections, the two advertisements will be analysed by using the theory of semiotics, and the theories by Hofstede and Hall. Finally, the two advertisements will be compared using the theory of product syntax. Regarding the interpretations of the advertisements, it can be challenging to “correctly” interpret the Danish advertisement, because it will be interpreted from an emic approach, due to the author’s Danish origins. Obviously, in relation to the English advertisement the emic approach is not a possibility. Therefore, the etic approach is applied in analysing the English advertisement. The etic approach means that the analysis will have to rely on external information concerning intercultural communication in the UK.

4. Analysis of the Danish advertisement

4.1 Semiotics
Barthes´ theory of semiotics will be applied to the analysis of the Danish advertisement. Not only related to the image, but also the linguistic message in advertisement. In the analysis of both advertisements, the focus is on the interior design and lifestyle, because these aspects are important to consider when analysing cultural differences. Product syntax will be applied to both the advertisements in section 6.5.

4.2 The denotative level
In the Danish advertisement, we see a round white staircase with a woman sitting at the bottom of the staircase. The woman is not smiling, but still there is a hint of a smile on her face. She has long blond hair and is dressed in a black leather jacket and some sort of tight black pants with matching black boots. On the wall, there is a black and rectangular iron stove. It appears to be built into the wall. Below the iron stove, there is a white decorative object. To the right in the advertisement, there is the corner of a white chair of some sort and there is also a pile of books and what appears to be an empty bookcase. Furthermore, the colours black and white dominate the advertisement. The visible fire in the iron stove breaks the domination of the black and white colours. The setting is very modern, fairly simple and the iron stove has a central placement in the advertisement.
4.3 The connotative level

The connotative level is very much related to the context of the advertisement and who is the receiver thereof.

There is not a lot of text in the Danish advertisement, which is why the visual aspect is important to decode. As mentioned earlier, the focus will be placed on lifestyle and interior design when decoding the advertisement.

The fairly modern and simple composition with the colours black and white helps to draw attention to both Andrea Larson\(^6\) and the iron stove, because almost everything else is white. The writing in orange and the fire emphasises the simple composition and provides an overview of the message in the advertisement. We cannot see much of the interior design in the advertisement, but the impression is that we are in a home with strong characteristics of minimalism. There are no visible ornaments and this correlates with the well-known minimalistic Nordic interior design.

The eye catchers are the staircase with the woman and the iron stove in the wall. The woman gives the impression of being a strong, independent and confident woman wearing modern clothes. Many Danes may recognize her as Andrea Larson and know that she is a Danish interior designer. She has participated in two Danish television programmes. If the iron stoves from Morsø are associated with Andrea Larson, it could help to create a positive association to a potential customer, especially if the particular customer favours her ideas. When included in the advertisement, she comes to represent a certain lifestyle. As mentioned above, this lifestyle is first and foremost minimalistic, yet also representing a sense of individualism, independence and control. Whether or not the woman is recognised as a stylist or not, the characteristics mentioned are apparent. The visual aspect is reflected in the linguistic message.

4.4 The linguistic message

In the linguistic message of the advertisement, it is clear that the factual information about the iron stove is very straight to the point, only introducing name and price of the product. This may be because iron stoves are fairly common in Danish households, and therefore the use of the iron stove

---

\(^6\) Andrea Larson is a well-known Danish interior designer
does not need to be explained. In the following, the focus is on the part of the linguistic message, which portrays lifestyles and appeals to the emotions of the receiver.

The Danish advertisement attempts with one sentence to communicate a lifestyle or a value, which an iron stove from Morsø can represent. The text on the top left corner of the advertisement “mig og min Morsø”, leaves the impression of a proud ownership. Andrea Larson represents the individualistic culture, where independence, personal strength, power, and control are seen as positive characteristics and qualities. She is a symbol of a strong, confident, and independent woman. So therefore, the statement “Mig og min Morsø” captures all of the above mentioned values and correlates with the minimalistic composition of the advertisement. The warmth of the fire in the iron stove breaks the dominating white colour and softens the impersonal impression of the home. The fire could also represent that the postmodern individual has control over nature. The white colour seems to support the overall impression of the minimalistic advertisement. This is portrayed both in the visual and linguistic aspects of the advertisement.

4.5 Hofstede
In the Danish advertisement, Hofstede’s dimensions of individualism vs. collectivism and masculinity vs. femininity will be applied.

Denmark is characterised as an individualistic and feminine culture. The individualistic aspect is also apparent when looking at the advertisement. The woman represents the individualistic culture; there is no family or group of people portrayed, as it properly would have been the case, if the advertisement were meant to appeal to a collectivistic culture.

The feminine aspect of the advertisement is portrayed by the woman. She gives the impression of being an independent, strong and self-confident woman, which are typical values in feminine culture since the gender roles overlap each other, as explained in section 2.3.2. (Askehave, 2006:12) (Hofstede, 1999: 96 & 103).
4.6 Hall

The theory of HCC and LCC will be applied in relation to the volume of the linguistic message in the advertisement. As mentioned in section 4.4, there is very little information expressed in a coded and explicit manner in the Danish advertisement.

![Text triangle diagram](image)

‘Text’ triangle (Katan, 2004: 247)

The above model of the ‘text’ triangle will be applied in the analysis. It consists of two triangles where one represents text and the other context, and together they constitute a square. On the left side of the model, representing HCC, the message consists of more context than text. Moving to the right through the model, the context is replaced by text. The right side of the model represents LCC (Katan, 2004: 247). A HCC country, would according to the theory encode the visual part of the advertisement and the use of text would be limited. Obviously, the opposite is the case in a LCC country (Hall & Hall, 1990:6).

According to this theory, Denmark is considered to be a LCC culture. Nevertheless, there is no correlation between the minimalistic and short linguistic message in the Danish advertisement and a LCC culture. In fact, it appears that advertisement has more of the characteristics connected to a HCC culture. This is because the overall message is encoded in the visual part of the advertisement and consists of very little text in relation to the context.
5. Analysis of the English advertisement

5.1 Semiotics
Barthes’ theory of semiotics will be applied to the analysis of the English advertisement. Not only related to the image, but also the linguistic message of the advertisement. The advertisement is meant for the English market and is therefore placed in an English context. Here, the focus is also limited to lifestyle and interior design.

5.2 The denotative level
The English advertisement consists of three pages. On the first page, there is a fireplace with the built-in iron stove as the eye catcher. Above the mantelpiece, there are two empty picture frames and a cup. In front of the fireplace, there is a v-shaped firewood basket. On the white carpet there is a filled cup, a book, and slippers. They are laying next to a grey couch with a white blanket on the armrest. A lamp is placed between the fireplace and the couch. The visual composition on page one is the same as on page three.

Page two of the advertisement has a free standing iron stove as the eye catcher. To the left of the iron stove, there is firewood basket with slippers in front of it. To the right of the iron stove, there is a small round table with some flowers, a small lamp, a bowl and what could be an old milk bottle. Next to the table, there is a grey couch with a blanket over the armrest and an open book lying on the couch.

5.3 The connotative level
The objects in the room (i.e. the cup, a book, and slippers) indicate that someone has been reading a book in front of the fireplace. The atmosphere is cosy and seems to be the perfect place to relax after a long day. The blanket adds to the cosy atmosphere. The placement of the iron stove in the fireplace, and the empty picture frames and the cup on top of the fireplace are all indicators of the English context in the advertisement (Norlyk, 2006:85).

The common characteristics of the English style is described as rooms with plenty of colours, patterns, family photos, ornaments, flowered rugs and carpets, and traditional-style furniture in dark
wood (Askehave, 2006:81-82) (Norlyk, 1999: 82). However, the colours are very subtle in this advertisement, which suggests that it is a home, where the minimalistic style of interior design has been adapted. In the English advertisement there are ornaments and carpets. However, these are very subtle. The carpets and the ornament should help the English consumer to identify with the living room in the advertisement (Norlyk, 1999:82).

The book and the cup indicates that the home is not just for show, but could represent a real living room, where an individual could enjoy a good book and a cup of tea. The focus in the advertisement is on the cosy and calm setting, which portrays the sense of a homely atmosphere. The way the blanket is carelessly thrown over the armrest and the placement of the cup on the floor (page one and three) further emphasises the homely atmosphere of the advertisement. The lifestyle represented in the advertisement could therefore be interpreted as the homely lifestyle, where the home is an important way of expressing personality. This is supported by parts of the linguistic message, which will be examined in the following.

5.4 The linguistic message

The English advertisement contains more text compared to the Danish advertisement. On the top of the advertisement on page one the following text is written; “indulge that burning desire”. The words indulge and burning desire encourages the individual to release any inner desires one might have or to treat oneself to something special.

In addition to this, the sentences, “this Morsø stove can put the crackle and glow of a real log fire right at the heart of your home.” refers back to the homely lifestyle portrayed in the visual aspect. Words such as crackle, glow, real log fire, and heart of your home emphasises the warm and cosy atmosphere related to the mentioned lifestyle. The many references to fire, burning, crackle, log fire, and play with fire could be a reference to the connection between the warmth and the homely lifestyle.

Page two of the advertisement states “Play with fire”, which points towards the freedom to do what you want, and the freedom to play. Furthermore, on page three “Fire your imagination” represents the freedom to play, as mentioned above. Again, the focus is on the fire itself and how it can be used as a symbol and a statement to describe who you are and what values are important to display.
in your home. The mentioning of the focal point in “Morsø stove bring an incredible focal point to any room” calls attention to the English context of the advertisement (Norlyk, 1999:85).

As described in section 5.3 the visual impression leaves a sense of a cosy homely atmosphere. The text appears more energetic. One reason for this could be that the visual aspect should be recognisable to all receivers because it relates to the UK context, as described in section 5.3. The text, on the other hand, seems to invite the individual to take an active part in interpreting the iron stove according to their own personality and wishes. This is emphasised by the use of the words; indulge, play, imagination, and desire. Furthermore, the sentence “Whether you’re looking for timeless beauty or contemporary chic” is a reference to interior design and style. The relation between design and lifestyle correlates with the diversity of the product.

5.5 Hofstede
As with the Danish advertisement, only two of Hofstede’s dimensions will be applied in the following.

The UK is characterised as an individualistic and masculine culture. The individualistic aspect does not seem apparent in the visual aspect of the advertisement. The linguistic part, on the other hand, is directed at the individual by inviting the receiver to take part in the creative process. Thereby, the focus is on the personal interpretation of the product.

The masculine culture seems to be represented by the warmth and cosy atmosphere in the English advertisement. The reason for which this could be interpreted as masculine is because the gender roles in these cultures are more traditional. Men deal with facts and women deal with feelings, and furthermore, men are supposed to be assertive, and ambitious, whereas women are supposed to be tender and focus on the care-taking of relationships. This would imply that the emotional well-being of the family, here represented by the home, could be considered to be the domain of the woman (Hofstede, 1999: 96 &103).
5.6 Hall
As mentioned in section 4.6 in the analysis of the Danish advertisement, the theory of HCC and LCC will be applied in relation to the volume of the linguistic message in the advertisement. As mentioned in section 5.4, much is expressed through the linguistic message in the English advertisement. Naturally, the same model, the text triangle, is applied in the following paragraph.

According to Djursaa, the UK is considered to be a HCC culture. Nevertheless, there is no correlation between the large volumes of text seen in the linguistic message in the English advertisement and a HCC culture. The overall message is encoded in both the visual and the linguistic part of the advertisement. This is more characteristic of a LCC culture than a HCC culture. Therefore, the UK is placed to the right in the model and is more comparable with a LCC culture.

6. Product syntax

Below, the advertisements will be analysed according to product syntax. First, the Morsø products will be described with reference to whether they are differentiated or standardised to the UK market. Second, the themes analysed above: semiotics (interior design and lifestyle), individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity and finally LCC vs. HCC cultures will be compared for Denmark and for the UK.

6.1 Products

Even though the product is not a focus of this thesis, it is important to look at whether the product is standardised or differentiated, when using product syntax.

“Vi tilpasser ovne til det engelske marked. Alle vores modeller har lavere ben - når de sælges på det engelske marked, men samtidig har vi flere ovne vi sælger på det engelske marked, som vi slet ikke sælger i DK. Nogle brændeovnsmodeller er udviklet til det engelske marked.” (Uddrag af mail fra Morsø).
The quotation above implies that Morsø finds it necessary to adapt their products to the English market. Thereby, Morsø recognises that the UK is a local market with particular preferences, which are different from the Danish preferences.

6.2 Interior design and lifestyle in the advertisements
In the Danish advertisement, the main visible feature is the clear minimalistic style, which is represented in the colours, black and white, and in the entire style of the room. The English advertisement is understated as well, but the ornaments and the objects like the cup and the slippers make it appear cosier. This gives it a more homely feel compared to the Danish advertisement. The main similarities in the interior design between the two advertisements are clearly the very simple and, as mentioned, understated feel of the rooms. This relates especially to the English advertisement, since it is to be expected that the design was more colourful and decorated with more ornaments. This could imply that the Nordic design tradition has been applied to the English context. This may be a coincidence, but could also have been done on purpose to underline the Danish origin of the product. The appeal to the consumer in Denmark and the UK seems to be different. The homely feel in the UK advertisement is important because it supports the emotions related to the comfort of your own home. The appeal to the Danish consumer seems more related to the independent lifestyle; hereby it follows, that your home should be a representation of your personality (e.g. Mig og min Morsø). This will also be important when choosing, which iron stove to install. The choice will probably rely on whether or not it fits into a personalised home.

The issues related to defining and decoding lifestyles are complex and, the reason for this is that a picture or a text (in this case) can only communicate a general feel and a general message. The final interpretation of these messages is up to the receiver. This means, that even though Danes may recognise minimalism as a typical Nordic style, they might not find it in their own taste, which implies that the message communicated is not the message received.

6.3 Individualism vs. collectivism and masculinity vs. femininity in the advertisements
In the Danish advertisement, both the visual and the linguistic message correlate with individualism. The fact that Andrea Larson is portrayed in the Danish advertisement could be because she is supposed to represent the individualistic culture. This means, that she personifies the
individualistic culture in Denmark, and thereby becomes a symbol of individualism. Whether or not she portrays a specific lifestyle would depend on the interpretation of the receiver. In the English advertisement, individualism is not apparent in the visual aspect of the advertisement. However, it plays a role in the linguistic message. The receiver is encouraged to take an active part in defining the lifestyle. In contrast to the Danish advertisement, people are not portrayed in the English advertisement, it is therefore characterised by being made anonymous. Maybe this is also to allow the receiver to make his or hers own interpretation of the overall message.

To determine the characteristics of a culture, based on the above mentioned, may be difficult. Individualism could have different appeals to different people, especially when dealing with two different cultures. It is not apparent whether or not this is the case with these two advertisements. However, the two different representations of individualism could be a reflection of interpretations of individualism in the two receiving cultures.

According to Hofstede, Denmark is predominantly a feminine culture – this aspect is recognised in the Danish advertisement. The woman in the picture is portrayed as strong and independent, both visually and in the linguistic message, which reflects the fact that gender roles in feminine cultures are not very traditional: “In masculine cultures, women can be shown to be though; in feminine cultures men can be shown to be tender” (de Mooij, 2005: 178).

The English advertisement has more masculine features, not because the pictures are that masculine, but because the homely and cosy atmosphere can be interpreted as influenced by a woman’s touch “In the British context, you sit in front of the fireplace with friends and family, you have a jolly time and endless cups of tea. You are momentarily sheltered from the hassles of the outside world. You feel good and you belong. Your home is your castle” (Askehave, 2006:83). By this, the home can be interpreted as a private domain associated with emotional needs of the family, and the emotions are considered to be a feminine domain in masculine cultures.

It should be underlined that masculinity and femininity as described by Hofstede, point to the predominant tendency by careful when concluding that an advertisement appeals to a so called “fixed culture”. If viewing masculinity and femininity on a scale, there will be different degrees of the cultures, and even though Hofstede’s scores countries according to the predominant tendency, the score does not translate into how little differences between countries should be understood and
translated. This means that a cultural score is not a complete description of the masculinity or femininity of a national culture.

6.4 High and low context in the advertisement

It is very interesting to see, that the text and context of the two advertisements seems to contradict the theoretical expectation, that Denmark is a LCC culture and the UK is a HCC culture. Quite the contrary, the Danish advertisement contains very little text and the English advertisement is very focused on the linguistic part of the message. As mentioned, this could be explained by the fact, that Morsø iron stoves are well-known Danish products, and do not need to be explained in detail to the Danish consumer, where the UK consumer might need a little more information to get acquainted with the product.

6.5 Cultural integration and strategic positioning of Morsø

The products are differentiated in the two markets, and so are the advertisements. They appeal to different consumer values as described above. Even though, there are some similarities between the two advertisements the differences are more apparent. From this we can conclude, that Morsø applies a differentiated strategy when promoting products to the UK market. Morsø finds it necessary, for the success of the products, to adapt both marketing and the product selection in the UK. In conclusion, Morsø’s strategy can be placed in square 4 of the model presented in section 6.1, which means that they apply a locally differentiated marketing strategy, where they accept that there are particular preferences in each country.
7. Conclusion

Culture is a complex system of norms and habits, which means that it is necessary to look carefully at which representations are chosen for the material of a promotional campaign. The first strategic decision a company has to make when introducing a product into a foreign market is related to the standardisation or differentiation of the marketing strategy. This should be reflected in the preferences of the receiving culture.

By studying and comparing the two advertisements from Morsø, representing the Danish and the UK market, the question to be answered in this thesis was as follows: Which strategy is used by Morsø when introducing products into the UK market?

The interpretation of signs and symbols is a vital aspect of advertising. The purpose is that the receiver decodes the advertisement. However, to assume that signs and symbols are interpreted the same across a country is to overstate the homogeneity of a culture.

Some features have been found in the respective advertisement, which corresponds with the knowledge of the Danish and the English cultures. Nevertheless, the final interpretation always depends on the individual receiver.

Nevertheless, there are distinctive features in the two advertisements, which supports that both interior design and lifestyle are interpreted differently in the two countries. These features differentiate the countries, where the Danish advertisement represents the independent and strong individual, and the English appeals to the domestic lifestyle.

When dealing with national culture as a non-native (i.e. an outsider), it is naturally important to be observant of the general tendencies, which is why Hofstede’s dimensions propose another interesting angle in this field.

By pointing out that a culture is either individualistic or collectivistic, you can accuse Hofstede of generalising and oversimplifying culture, but the fact is that the simplified categorisation of a culture can be a useful starting point for a company when venturing into a new market.
An individualistic culture is attributed to both the UK and Denmark by Hofstede. This means that, the appeal to the consumer should be directed at the individual. When looking at the strategy applied by Morsø, it is evident that they also consider the consumer to be a person, with a strong sense of personal taste. The fact that the individual is the target for the advertisements presented implies that you need to be able to include the receiver in the interpretation of the product. This inclusion is evident in both advertisements; however, it is reflected in different manners.

The categorisation of masculine and feminine cultures relates, not only to gender role, but also to workplace relations, the use of status symbols and the responsibility for practical and emotional needs. This is why a feminine culture, which according to Hofstede can be found in Denmark, is not easily applied to a single visual and linguistic statement, e.g. an advertisement. Despite this, Morsø has produced an advertisement for their product, which contains clear references to the feminine culture. The masculine cultural features are more related to traditional gender roles than the feminine, which is why it is interesting that the English advertisement portrays a more cosy setting. With the UK being placed in Hofstede’s dimensions as a masculine culture, the emphasis on the comfort of the home could indeed reflect that traditional gender roles, places the responsibility of the home and the emotional well-being of the women.

This means that Morsø has succeeded in appealing to the respective markets that is, if Hofstede’s cultural dimensions are regarded as valid descriptions of the predominant cultures in Denmark and the UK.

In conclusion, it can be determined that there are apparent differences between the two advertisements. Furthermore, the placements of the two countries in two of Hofstede’s dimensions seem to be reflected in the advertisement. This could imply that Morsø has taken these cultural differences into account. Only when analysing Hall’s context of theory it was difficult to see any accordance with the advertisement. This discrepancy between the theory and the studied material could be caused by the fact that the UK market is not so acquainted with the product. However, in the Danish context, Morsø has been part of the Danish market since 1853, and therefore, little information is needed.

On the basis of the analysis, it can be concluded that Morsø applies a differentiated strategy when promoting iron stoves in the UK market.
9. Bibliography

Primary reading:


Kjær, Bodil,(2003) *Ordbogen over ismer*. forlaget Sesam


denstoredanske.dk: Danmarks åbne encyklopædi, Gyldendal

**Secondary reading:**

10. Appendices

10.1 Appendix A: The Danish advertisement
MIG OG MIN MORSØ

DEN NYE MORSØ S.

Morse S80 KUN 16.495,-

Nu introducerer vi Morse S. En helt ny serie af sådanne, hvor design og modernitet løbesel er i fokus – uden at gå på kompromis med de dyre, der har gjort Morse til danskernes fører i brænderitiden siden 1813.

Læs mere om Morse og sø gælende papirhåndlere, der har Morse S-80 udstillet, på www.morsoe.com

Gør livet varmere
Indulge that burning desire.

The smokeless-approved Morso range.

Whether you’re looking for timeless beauty or contemporary chic, this Morso stove can put the crackle and glow of a real log fire right at the heart of your home. And because it can bring over 80% energy efficiency and almost no smoke emissions, that even includes smokeless zones.

To find out more about the Morso range and details of your nearest retailer visit www.morsoe.co.uk or call 01788 564 410.
Play with fire.
(Even in smoke-free zones)

The revolutionary ‘greener’ 6100 series.
Thanks to an advanced cleanheat system and unique combustion techniques, it leaves you free to play with fire wherever and whenever you wish.
Find out more about the new 6100 series and receive your free 96-page hardback book explaining how Morso has inspired designers since 1854.
Visit www.morsoe.co.uk or call 0845 017 9848.

morno
The original cast iron stove
Burns wood. Loves trees.

Fire your imagination with a ‘smokeless approved’ Morsø.

Not only does this Morsø stove bring an incredible focal point to any room, it can bring over 80% energy efficiency and almost no smoke emissions. That’s why it’s approved even for smokeless zones.

To find out more about the Morsø range and details of your nearest retailer visit www.morsoe.co.uk or call 01768 854 410.