Cross-Cultural Adaptation of Visual and Linguistic Syntax of Nescafé Commercial Advertising Films

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Abstract
This study examines how culture is adapted in ready-to-drink (RTD) beverage advertisements using multimodal analysis and cinematic language. Comparing Nescafé advertisements aimed at international and Indonesian markets, the research evaluates how verbal messages translate into visual elements and editing. A comparative qualitative method was applied to analyse the relationship between typography, mise-en-scène, cinematographic techniques, and sound rhythm. The findings indicate that localisation not only involves translating text from English into local slang but also reshaping the structure of visual reality. The international version uses highly dynamic editing techniques and surreal graphic elements to capture the audience's attention, while the Indonesian version uses continuous editing and warm lighting to uphold everyday realism and depict workers' collectivism and resilience. These results emphasise that localising audiovisual design requires balancing visual pace and cinematic reality in an advertisement, rather than simply translating language.

Keywords: *Multimodal Analysis, Cinematic Language, Advertising Film, Cross-Cultural, Mise-en-scène.*

INTRODUCTION

Modern advertising has transformed from a mere information tool into a strategic persuasive instrument that constructs perceptions and lifestyles through cinematic language. The success of an advertisement depends heavily on its ability to exploit audiovisual elements to build cultural resonance, where consumers not only buy a physical product but also "buy" meaning and social identity (Giannini, 2010). In the context of global brands, a major challenge arises in the audiovisual

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localisation process, namely how elements of cinematic language such as lighting, colour palettes, and *editing rhythms* are adapted to bridge differences in cultural values, particularly the shift from Western individualism to Asian collectivism.

Previous studies have explored the significance of advertising localisation, but with different focuses. Research by De Mooij (2019) emphasises the influence of cultural dimensions on global marketing strategies at a macro level, while Pérez-González (2014) focuses on the technical aspects of audiovisual translation in digital media. In contrast, Gambier & Pinto (2018) highlight the importance of transcreation in maintaining the relevance of intercultural messages. O'Hagan (2020) explores the evolution of short advertisements in the algorithmic ecosystem, and Hofstede et al. (2010) provide a foundational framework for comparing sociocultural values. This study expands on this discourse by conducting a specific dissection of "filmic syntax" and *mise-en-scène elements* comparatively between global and local versions, an area often overlooked by traditional marketing studies that tend to focus more on linguistic texts than visual aesthetics.

The main objective of this study is to identify how linguistic elements and cultural values are represented in the camerawork and *mise-en-scène* of Nescafé advertisements, and to demonstrate that effective audiovisual localisation demands a profound modification of the filmic structure. Specifically, this study compares the Global version of Nescafé advertisements ("Your Vibe/ Bikeifi") with the Indonesian localised version ("Siap Gas Lagi"(Ready to Go Again) with Raisa). Through this comparison, the research is expected to provide strategic guidance for creative practitioners on translating global values into visual aesthetics that align with local Indonesian cultural sensitivities.

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method with a comparative analysis approach and film semiotics. The researcher conducted in-depth observations of visual analysis units, including cinematographic techniques (image size and camera angles) and *mise-en-scène elements* (set arrangement, costumes, lighting, and acting). Data were analysed by juxtaposing *the Global and Indonesian versions shot by shot* to find patterns of visual language transformation. This method briefly explains how visual signs representing individualism and collectivism are identified and interpreted, and how these filmic technical differences influence audience perceptions in each cultural region.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Visual Semiotics and Audiovisual Localisation. This study draws on Visual Semiotics and Multimodal Analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2020), in which filmic elements such as camera distance (*social distance*), *camera angle,* and lighting function as grammar to produce social meaning. In Audiovisual Translation (AVT), cross-cultural adaptation requires adjustments to visual aesthetics (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021). Individualist cultures tend to respond to moving images that emphasise ego identity and spatial freedom, while collectivist cultures are more influenced by the visualisation of harmonious relationships and realistically grounded narratives within the cinematic space (De Mooij, 2019).

Many studies have examined the localisation of commercial advertising films. Pratama and Rahmawati (2022) examined cultural adaptation in FMCG television commercials in Indonesia, mapping shifts in collectivist values through traditional verbal narratives. Chen, Wang, and Liu (2023) examined the use of *Kinetic Typography* in short films, finding that dynamic text influences Gen Z audiences' attention. O'Connor and Zhao (2021) discussed audiovisual localisation on global *streaming platforms,* but their focus was still dominated by lexical translation accuracy. Meanwhile, a recent study by Susanto and Lee (2025) examined the pragmatic shifts in *slang use* in advertising campaign films but did not link this to spatial representation on screen.

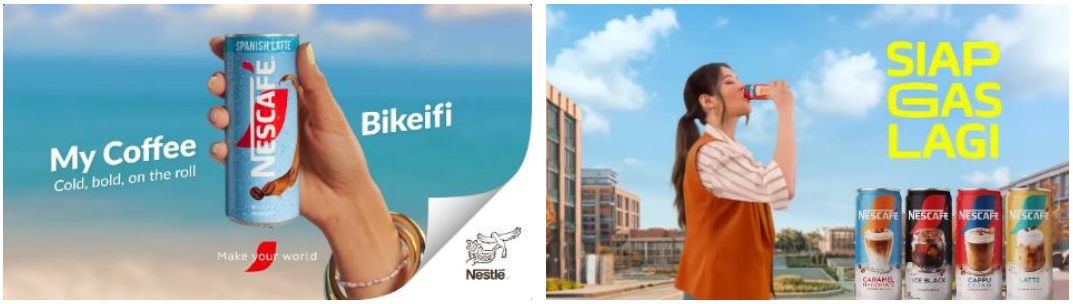
This review reveals a significant research gap. Most studies still separate linguistic analysis (such as slang use) from cinematic syntax analysis (such as editing rhythm and production design/mise-en-scène). This study aims to fill this gap with an integrated analytical framework that examines how linguistic elements (the phrase "Siap Gas Lagi"), setting aesthetics, and editing rhythm *interact* to adapt a global advertising film to the realities of Indonesian audiences.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a comparative qualitative approach with a multimodal analysis method (Machin & Mayr, 2012). The data corpus consists of two 30-second Nescafé RTD advertising films. The data collection process was carried out through an audiovisual transcription matrix (Taylor, 2016), where the image changes were analysed based on: (1) Linguistic & Audio Messages (spoken voice/music), (2) Visual Text (on-screen typography), (3) *Mise-en-scène* (setting, properties, lighting, actor gestures), and (4) Cinematic Syntax (editing rhythm and camera movement). We codified and interpreted the data using Hofstede's cultural dimensions framework.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

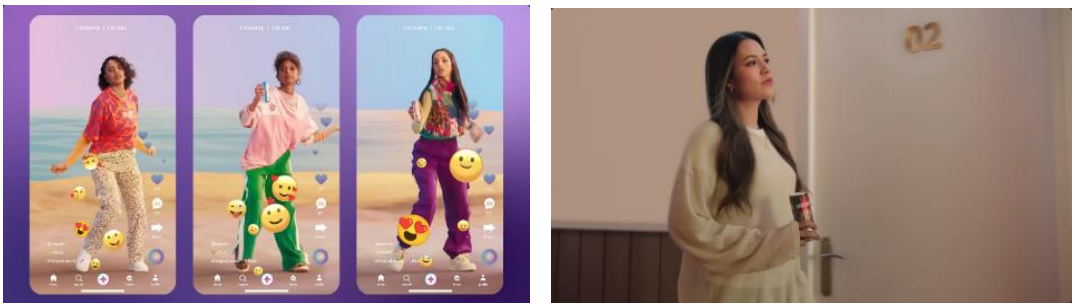
1. Linguistic Adaptation, Pragmatics, and Typographic Emotions. The fundamental difference between these two commercials lies in the lexical adaptation that influences their typographic execution. In the global version, the message "Your Vibe, in a can" represents existentialism (De Mooij, 2019). This is visualised through kinetic typography (fast-moving text) in neon colours, designed to reflect the impulsive energy of a young audience (Brown, 2021). In contrast, the Indonesian version uses the slang phrase "Ready to Accelerate Again" to respond to the hustle culture of commuting workers. Cinematically, this tagline appears in static sans-serif fonts alongside Raisa, balancing casual street language with the film's premium visual identity (Serafini, 2014).



a. b.

Figure 1. The ending differs between the global advertisement (a) and the local Indonesian advertisement (b).
(Source: a. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqXJwNdN8VA; b. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6R3F176RiFo)

2. Cinematic Syntax: Hyper-kinetic vs. Continuity Editing. Sequential analysis reveals extreme differences in visual rhythm (pacing). The global version uses a hyper-kinetic editing style with shots lasting under one second, combined with Dutch angles (tilted camera). This cinematic syntax targets audiences with short attention spans and a rebellious attitude toward traditional aesthetics (Bogucki & Deckko, 2020). In contrast, the Nescafé x Raisa commercial follows smooth continuity editing, gently tracking the actor's movement (following shot). The slow tempo and eye-level angle represent visual politeness and create room for an intimate parasocial relationship between the actors and their audience (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2020).



a. b.

Figure 2. Hyperkinetic editing (a) and continuity editing style (b)
(Source: a. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqXJwNdN8VA; b. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6R3F176RiFo)

3. *Mise-en-scène and the Construction of Spatial Reality.* The most visible cultural shift lies in mise-en-scène (scene arrangement). In the global version, the setting combines surreal elements and striking digital colour effects in its spatial layout. This production design approach offers urban viewers a visual fantasy of escapism (Chaume, 2020). In contrast, the spatial construction of the Indonesian version of the commercial relies heavily on everyday physical realism. The

minimalist production design displays factual spaces (organised office spaces, home interiors, and car cabins) with a warm colour palette. This visually emphasises that for a collectivist audience, drinking coffee is not a form of escape from reality, but rather a "fuel" that supports routines in the real world.



a.



b.

Figure 3. Set with surreal elements (a) and factual space set (b) (Source: a. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqXJwNdN8VA; b. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6R3F176RiFo)

Table 1. Comparison and meaning of messages

Cinematic & Multimodal Element	Global/Middle East Version "Your Vibe/Bikeifi"	Indonesian Version (Nescafé x Raisa – "Siap Gas Lagi" (Ready to Go Again))	Cultural & Cinematic Language Interpretation
Sound & Linguistic Messaging	Spoken word/rap format with fast rhymes. Stomping electronic beat. Lyrics/text focus on escapism and personal vibe "Your Vibe".	A melodic pop song format (Jingle) by Raisa. Lyrics use motivating street slang about daily routine "Siap Gas Lagi"(Ready to Go Again).	**Existentialism vs Resilience:** The global audio version encourages individualism and ego identity. The Indonesian audio version uses *slang* to respond communally to the hustle culture of commuting workers.
Visual Text (Typography)	Uses kinetic typography (fast-moving, vibrating text, aggressively changing size) with flashy neon colours.	Uses static typography with clean sans-serif fonts and smooth fade-in transitions, aligned with the presence of the main actors.	**Emotional Typography:** Kinetic text represents the impulsive energy and rebellious aesthetic of youth. Static text bridges the gap between slang ("gas") and the stable image of a premium brand.

Cinematic Syntax (*Editing* Style)	Hyper-kinetic editing. Very fast cuts (under 1 second). Extreme transitions, frequently combined with Dutch angles (tilted camera).	Continuity editing. Smooth camera movement following the actor (following shot). Camera angle at eye level.	**Cognitive Rhythm:** The hyper-kinetic style targets audiences with short attention spans. Continuity editing and eye-level shots represent visual politeness and build a warm parasocial relationship.
Mise-en-scène & Spatial Construction	An urban setting blends surreal elements and computer graphics effects. Anonymous actors in colourful *street-style outfits move freely without social hierarchy.*	Strong physical realism. The settings depict factual spaces (offices, home interiors, car cabins). Predominantly warm colour palette (warm tone/golden *hour*).	**Escapism vs. Factual Realism:** The global version offers a visual fantasy of escapism. The Indonesian version emphasises that coffee is the "fuel" for physical routines in the real world, supported by warm colours that symbolise togetherness.

Source: author's work.

From the multimodal transcription results in Table 1, localising the Nescafé commercial in Indonesia involved not only spoken translation but also a complete overhaul of the cinematic language structure. This transformation is very evident in the interaction between linguistic messages and mise-en-scène elements. In the global version, the phrase "Your Vibe" appears through a fast electronic beat and is visualised with kinetic typography. This aligns with the mise-en-scène, which combines an urban setting with neon-coloured surrealist graphic elements. This approach semiotically offers a fantasy of escapism *and* freedom of expression, strongly imbued with the values of individualism (De Mooij, 2019).

In contrast, the Indonesian version makes a sharp pragmatic shift by adopting the automotive *slang* "Siap Gas Lagi" (Ready to Go Again). This phrase represents the working class's collective resilience amid routine and hustle. To support this everyday narrative, the director *discarded* surreal elements and returned the spatial construction to the physical realism of everyday life, such as office and private-car settings, shot with a warm colour palette (Bordwell et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the cinematic syntax was drastically modified to suit the cognitive rhythms of local audiences. The global version uses *hyper-kinetic editing* with a tilted camera angle (*Dutch angle*) to create a sense of extreme spatial dynamics. However, when adapted for Indonesian audiences, who are closely associated with values of politeness and collectivism, the commercial shifted to continuity editing (Pérez-González, 2014). Slow, flowing camera movements (following shot) with an eye-level point of view not only provide visual comfort

but also help construct an intimate parasocial relationship between Raisa and the audience (Horton & Wohl, 1956).

Through this modification of the *editing rhythm* and purification *of the mise-en-scène*, Nescafé shows that effective localisation of commercial films requires linguistic (*slang*) and cinematic elements to work harmoniously to represent the cultural reality of its target audience (Gambier & Pinto, 2018).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study concludes that successful cultural adaptation in audiovisual advertising depends not only on accurate lexical translation, but also on the ability to translate linguistics into cinematic syntax and *mise-en-scène.* Nescafé successfully localised its commercial film in Indonesia by slowing the editing pace, restoring physical realism to its settings, and turning impulsive typography into visuals that exude friendliness and communal resilience: "Siap Gas Lagi" (Ready to Go Again). For commercial film practitioners and advertising agencies, avoid *copying and pasting* scene templates from global campaigns. Local directors must be free to revamp the editing style, colour palette, and production design so the advertisement film can resonate with the cognitive rhythms and cultural values of the target audience.

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