Tampere University

Laura Suihkonen

OF BLOODY CUPS AND BLUE LIQUID
The Social Acceptability of Lunette's Website's Marketing in the Middle East

TIIVISTELMÄ

Laura Suihkonen: Verisistä kupeista ja sinisestä nesteestä: Luneten nettisivumarkkinoinnin sosiaalinen hyväksyttävyys Lähi-idässä
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Tässä pro gradu -tutkielmassa tarkasteltiin suomalaisen kuukuppivalmistaja Luneten global English -sivujen markkinointiviestintää. Tutkielman tutkimuskysymyksenä oli, onko Luneten nettisivujen markkinointiviestintäsisällössä kirjallisia ja visuaalisia elementtejä, jotka koettaisiin kulttuurisesti loukkaaviksi tai tabuiksi Lähi-idän kulttuureissa ja jotka näin ollen haittaisivat Lähi-itään vietyjen sivujen sosiaalista hyväksyttävyyttä ja käyttäjäkokemusta (UX). Nämä elementit vaatisivat erityistä huomiota käyttäjäkokemussuunnitteluprosessissa (UXD), jossa sivujen sisältö muokattaisiin kulttuurisesti sopivaksi lokalisaation ja transkreaation keinoin. Tutkimuksen toinen tutkimuskysymys oli, riittääkö global English -sivuston sisältö kattamaan ilman kulttuuritöyssyjä niiden Luneten sivujen käyttäjien tarpeet, joille ei ole omaa kieliversiota.

Tutkimuksen teoria nojasi markkinointiviestinnän, käyttäjäkokemuksen, käyttäjäkokemussuunnittelun ja käytettävyyden tutkimukseen. Lisäksi käsiteltiin lokalisaatiota ja transkreaatiota sekä Lähi-idän kulttuurinormeja ja erityisesti Islamin oppeja, jotka vaikuttavat olennaisesti Lähi-idän kulttuureihin.

Tutkimuksessa oli kaksi eri vaihetta, ja tutkimusmateriaali koostui Luneten global English -verkkosivuista ja tutkimuksen toisen vaiheen aikana tehdyistä haastatteluista. Ensimmäisessä vaiheessa kerättiin viikon ajan joulukuussa 2018 Luneten nettisivuilta kirjallista ja kuvallista materiaalia, joka voitaisiin kokea tabuksi tai kulttuurisesti loukkaavaksi Lähi-idässä.

Materiaali analysoitiin Lähi-idän kulttuurinormeja käsittelevän kirjallisuuden perusteella ja luokiteltiin intuitiivisesti seitsemään eri luokkaan, joista jokaisesta nostettiin esille yksi edustava esimerkki. Jokaisen esimerkin ympärille muodostettiin hypoteesi, yhteensä seitsemän, tutkimuksen seuraavaa vaihetta varten. Hypoteesit käsittelivät kuvia, joiden oletettiin loukkaavan Islamin naiskehon peittämistä koskevia normeja ja tatuointikieltoa sekä tekstiesiintymiä, joiden ajateltiin sisältävän länsimaisia arvoja ja käsitteitä, implisiittisiä ja eksplisiittisiä tabuja ja epäsoveliasta kielenkäyttöä.

Nämä hypoteesit testattiin tutkimuksen toisessa vaiheessa, jossa haastateltiin kolmea 35–44-vuotiasta naista Lähi-idästä. Naisista kaksi oli Iranista ja yksi Syyriasta. Naiset valikoituivat haastateltaviksi, sillä he edustavat Luneten kohderyhmää ja ovat kulttuuriensa kulttuurinormien ja sosiaalisen hyväksyttävyyden asiantuntijoita. Heille esitettiin avoin kysymys siitä, toimisiko Luneten sivuilta poimittu materiaali sellaisenaan heidän kulttuuriinsa viedyillä sivuilla.

Tutkielman seitsemästä hypoteesista vain yksi sai selkeää tukea haastatteluissa. Haastateltavien vastaukset erosivat toisistaan ja olivat osittain ristiriidassa kirjallisuudessa esitettyjen Lähi-idän kulttuurinormien kanssa. Tuloksista ei voi vetää aukottomia johtopäätöksiä, mutta on kuitenkin turvallista väittää, että Luneten global English -nettisivuilla on kulttuurisesti hankalia elementtejä. Kirjallisuudessa ja haastatteluissa nousi usein esiin neitsyyden tärkeys ennen avioliittoa, jolla on erittäin keskeinen asema Lähi-idän kulttuurinormistossa, mutta jota Luneten nettisivujen markkinointiviestintä ei huomioi. Global English -sivut eivät siis vielä kata kaikkien käyttäjiensä tarpeita aiheuttamatta kulttuurisia töyssyjä.

Avainsanat: markkinointiviestintä, sosiaalinen hyväksyttävyys, käyttäjäkokemus, käyttäjäkokemussuunnittelu, käytettävyys, lokalisaatio, transkreaatio

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ABSTRACT

This Master's Thesis focused on the marketing communications of the Finnish period cup manufacturer Lunette's global English website. The research question was whether Lunette's website's marketing communications content has textual or visual elements that could be considered as taboos in the Middle Eastern cultures and would thus hinder the social acceptability and the user experience (UX) of the Middle Eastern website. These elements would then require special attention in the user experience design (UXD) process of localising and transcreating the website in the Middle East so that it would be culturally acceptable. The second research question was whether the global English website suffices in covering all the needs of those users who do not have a designated language variant or are culture bumps inevitable.

The theory of this Thesis consisted of research in the fields of marketing communications, UX, UXD and usability. Localisation and transcreation were also important theoretical constructions, and the Middle Eastern cultural norms, heavily influenced by Islam, were theoretical focal points.

This Thesis had two different research phases, and the research material consisted of Lunette's global English website and the interviews conducted in the second part of the study. In the first phase that took place during a week in December 2018, textual and visual material that could be perceived as a taboo or culturally insensitive was collected from the Lunette website.

The material was analysed with the help of the literature examining Middle Eastern cultural norms and classified intuitively into seven categories. A typical example was chosen from each of the categories, and a hypothesis, altogether seven, was formed around each example for the next phase of the research. The hypotheses concentrated on images that were believed to violate Islamic norms of covering the female body and a ban on tattoos and text snippets that were assumed to include western values and concepts, implicit and explicit taboos and profane language.

The hypotheses' validity was tested in the second phase of the research, where three Middle Eastern women aged 35–44 were interviewed. Two of the women were from Iran, and one was from Syria. The women were chosen as interviewees since they represent Lunette's target group and are experts of their respective culture's cultural norms and social acceptability. The interviewees were asked an open-ended question on whether the material from the Lunette website would work if it were taken as such to the interviewees' cultures.

The interviewees clearly supported only one out of the seven hypotheses. The interviewees' answers conflicted with each other and partly with the literature about the Middle Eastern cultural norms. Thus, no indisputable conclusions can be made based on the results. However, it is safe to say that Lunette's global English website contains culturally insensitive elements. Virginity before marriage was a recurring theme in both the literature and interviews, and it is a central theme in the Middle Eastern cultural norms that Lunette's website's marketing communications seems to ignore. Hence, the global English website does not cover all its users' needs without culture bumps.

Keywords: marketing communications, social acceptability, user experience, user experience design, usability, localisation, transcreation

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1 Introduction

When you open your browser to visit a global company's website and click through its different country versions, you can often see great and small differences between them even if you do not always understand the language. Take, for example, the Swedish clothes giant H&M's online shop. The Chinese website's landing page advertises a countdown to the Chinese New Year, displays models with Asian features and a considerable amount of red, the colour of good fortune in the culture. The Irish site's landing page has a picture of a woman in a dotted dress with the text "Just Arrived: The Paris Effect", while the same picture on the English Kuwaiti site reads "New Arrivals of Head-To-Toe Houndstooth". Why is this?

When companies take their websites to other markets and cultures, the content is often translated into the local language, and the marketing communications content is transcreated or localised to follow the cultural traditions, customs and norms of the target market to increase sales. According to a study commissioned by the European Commission, 82% of consumers were less likely to buy products online from a website that was not in their native language (Graham, 2011, "Firms ignore the foreign language"). Conversely, 72.4% of consumers were more likely to buy a product from a website that had information in their native language, a study by Common Sense Advisory claims (Ibid.). There are several instances of brands translating their products for new markets and not being culturally sensitive enough, which led to failures in new markets. Consider, for example, how Coca-Cola had to rename Diet Coke as Coke Light since 'dieting' was not something Japanese women would admit to doing as they connected it with sickness or medicine (Cateora, Gilly & Graham, 2011, p. 366).

This study examined an imagined case of a user experience design (UXD) process of translating, transcreating and localising a Finnish menstrual cup manufacturer Lunette's website's (www.lunette.com) marketing communications to new markets in the Middle East to attain culturally sensitive or socially acceptable content that avoids taboos and supports the new website's usability and user experience (UX). In essence, this study was about the transferability of marketing messages and images across cultures and their effects on UX and usability. Tytti Suojanen, Kaisa Koskinen and Tiina Tuominen (2015, p. 22) assert that translation research could contribute fruitful perspectives for the field of cultural usability, as "culture penetrates usability in many respects: in definitions of usability, in the design of products and in methods that are used to evaluate usability in different contexts".

Within this study, I conducted a type of usability test. The question this study aimed to answer is whether Lunette's global English website's marketing communications has textual and visual elements that are taboos or culturally insensitive in the context of Middle Eastern markets, so that they would be perceived as socially unacceptable, hinder the website's UX and usability and should be given special attention in the UXD process of translating, transcreating and localising the content to the Middle East. The major languages of the Middle East, Arabic and Persian, and their characteristics, such as the different variants or dialects of Arabic, were not central to this study.

The inspiration for this study's topic sparked in late autumn 2017, when I met with some friends in Tampere, among them the American then-girlfriend of our mutual male friend. She was a teacher in Lebanon at the time and told us how discussing periods and period care products was very different from some more liberal countries, such as Finland. When she was advising young girls and women in her classes about periods, she was not allowed to introduce tampons unless she declared that they were only for married women. This rule was imposed on her by the officials of the Lebanese town she was teaching in, and the reason was the culture's fear that tampons or any other period hygiene products inserted inside the vagina would break the hymen. This is a common fear in the Middle East (Farah & El Samad, 2014, p. 360) where virginity is essential (Aboumehri & Sills, 2010, "The virginity industry"). Our friend's girlfriend could not have even imagined how the women would have reacted to a menstrual cup that we recommended her to try.

Lunette's main product is the menstrual cup, a bell-shaped period care product that is inserted inside the vagina and collects the flow. The reusable cup is emptied and washed 2–4 times a day, and it lasts in use for several years. The cups are manufactured in Finland using BPA free medical grade silicone. In addition to the menstrual cup, Lunette also markets cleansing products to accompany the cups and jewellery in the shape of a vulva, among other things.

This study's topic is important and relevant for several reasons. Finland is a small and quickly saturated market, so it is beneficial for Finnish companies such as Lunette to make their products available for the millions of consumers outside the country's borders. However, when Nordic companies introduce their products to new markets, it quickly becomes apparent that products that are self-evident in liberal cultures are not necessarily seen as unproblematic elsewhere. Furthermore, the values that the products carry within are not always values shared by the rest of the world. Values central to the interests of this study were those that Lunette advocates on their website: women's right to have hygienic period care products beneficial for their health, the right to decide about the products they use, the right to be safe during their period and to lead normal lives

even when on their period, not having to miss school or be ashamed of the fact they are menstruating.

Menstruation is still perceived as shameful and embarrassing, a taboo, in several cultures (Winkler & Roaf, 2015, "Bringing the dirty bloody linen out of the closet"). In Islamic cultures, the area of focus of this study, the Islamic laws restrict menstruating women from praying, fasting, having sex or touching the Quran unless it is a translation (Ahmed & Yesmin, 2008, p. 284). As the refugee crisis of 2015 brought and still brings an abundance of people from these cultures to Europe, these cultural issues and differences are more present and closer to us than ever. If the cultural differences are not understood and navigated with enough sensitivity, there can be cultural clashes, and the girls and women can be left without access to menstrual hygiene products.

In situations like these, the marketing communications, inseparable from the product it communicates about, must be rendered more appropriate to match the cultural values of the targeted consumers for them to accept the product. The product must be communicated to the consumers on their terms, in ways in which they understand what the product is about and can accept it and its use from the viewpoint of their culture and cultural norms. A website that does not consider the users' cultural backgrounds can endanger the UX and the usability of the website. If a person using the Lunette website is repulsed by references to topics that she or he considers taboos, then it is most likely the person will not continue using the website. This task of acknowledging cultural sensitivities and rendering a website's textual and visual content socially acceptable, leading to a usable website that caters to the user experience, is given to a translator or a team of translators who use the tools of translation, localisation and transcreation to reach their goal. Suojanen et al. (2015, pp. 22–23) profess that localisation is an excellent example of culture's presence when examining the usability of translations and that the localisation process is an area where the interface's usability factors and the elements of written and visual communication interact with each other. Ira Torresi (2010, p. 4) is convinced that transcreation, the process of readjusting or re-building an entire promotional text, is sometimes necessary for the text to be natural in the target language and culture and for it to maintain its function of persuasion.

As of January 2020, Lunette has 13 different language versions of its website: Finnish, Swedish, German, French, Portuguese, Russian, Thai, Chinese, and, interestingly, five variants of English. These are North American English, United Kingdom English, Australian English, New Zealand English and global English. I chose the global English website from the different English versions as the focus of this study since one of my aims was to examine whether a globalised version is

enough for all the audiences that the Lunette website's different language versions do not cover or will there inevitably be cultural nuances and sensitivities that hinder the UX and usability of the globalised website.

This thesis' research design consisted of multiple phases. First, I collected material from the Lunette global English website to compile a list of items both textual and visual that might be perceived as socially unacceptable and taboos if they were taken as such to the Middle Eastern target cultures, hindering the UX and usability of the Middle Eastern website. I chose the possibly culturally controversial instances based on literature discussing the cultural norms of the Middle East that are profoundly affected by the religion of Islam. I then analysed the material and its assumed controversial elements in textual and visual analysis, and the analysis' results formed the following hypotheses around the exhibits they discussed:

1. The first exhibit was an image that portrayed a young woman's upper body covered by a sports bra. Hypothesis 1. was that the image would contradict the Islamic norm of women having to cover their bodies.

2. The second exhibit was an image portraying a tattooed wrist and a hand facing the viewer while the index and middle finger formed a 'V' symbol. Hypothesis 2. was that as Islam does not allow tattoos and the V-sign possibly has a disputable meaning in different Middle Eastern countries and cultures, the image would be controversial.

3. The third exhibit was a text snippet that described values central to Lunette, such as individuality that excludes selfishness and equality. Hypothesis 3. was that the values listed would not exist in the Middle Eastern cultures in the same way they do in Western countries, or that the values would be perceived differently in the diverse cultures.

4. The fourth exhibit was a text snippet that described a clear, translucent menstrual cup. The expression entailed that the period cup would help its user keep her bed sheets clean. Hypothesis 4. was that this phrase is an implicit taboo reference to bloodied sheets that violate the Islamic cleanliness dogma.

5. The fifth exhibit was a text snippet that described spotting with the use of the word 'blood'. Hypothesis 5. was that this reference to blood constitutes a taboo violating the Islamic dogma of cleanliness.

6. The sixth exhibit was a text snippet that described Lunette cleansing wipes, mentioning that they could be used during road trips, in aeroplane bathrooms, festival porta-potties or office bathroom stalls. Hypothesis 6. was that some of these concepts would not similarly exist in Middle Eastern cultures as they do in Western cultures.

7. The seventh exhibit was a text snippet that advised the menstrual cup users on how to clean it and not to use scented crap. Hypothesis 7. was that the exhibit's cuss word would not be accepted in Middle Eastern cultures since Islam prohibits cussing.

I tested the above hypotheses in the next phase of the study, where I interviewed three female informants from the Middle East. The interviewees either validated or disproved the hypotheses by assessing whether the material presented to them would work in their culture if translated as such without any modifications. The interviewees' answers thus either refuted or supported the hypotheses in the second part of the analysis. I examined these results to evaluate whether the textual and visual marketing communications material from Lunette's global English website would be perceived socially unacceptable and taboos in the Middle Eastern cultures that would hinder the usability and the UX of the Middle Eastern website. The results would then have to be considered in the UXD process of translating, transcreating and localising the website so that its usability and UX could be adjusted.

We form the images and notions of other cultures in the framework of the culture of our origin (Frow, 1995, p. 3). Thus, it was beneficial for the validity of this study to interview females who are from the cultures or otherwise have connections to and know the cultures that the Lunette website would be translated, transcreated and localised into. The interviewees were able to share their expert understanding of what would and would not be socially acceptable in their respective cultures. The restraints a culture imposes on an individual were also some of the restrictions of this study. As I chose material from the Lunette website that is arguably socially unacceptable in the Middle Eastern cultures, I made these choices and assumptions from within the confinements that my own culture imposes on me. As stated above, I based my judgements on the social acceptability of Lunette's website's content on literature about the Middle Eastern cultural norms, but nonetheless, the effect of my culture must be considered.

Chapters 2 to 5 present the theoretical foundations of this study. Chapter 2 focuses on marketing communications, UX, UXD and usability that are all present in the Lunette website: marketing communications in the form of the website's content, UX as an over-arching theme that connects

marketing communications and usability to provide the user the best possible experience while UXD is the structure through which the UX and usability are achieved. Chapter 3 explores social acceptability, while chapter 4 discusses localisation, transcreation and translation, the tools used to transfer Lunette's website marketing communications content from one language and culture to another in a manner that preserves the content's social acceptability. These theoretical viewpoints are all relevant and present in the question this study aims to resolve.

Chapter 5 introduces the Middle Eastern cultural norms that follow by large from Islam and explores how these affect the translation, transcreation and localisation of the Lunette website. Chapter 6 examines the objectives and the data of this study and presents the methodology used in the textual and visual analysis and the interviews. Chapter 7 is the analysis section of this study with two phases: the focus will first be on the marketing communications material collected from the Lunette website and then on the interviews. The central results of the two-phase analysis will be presented, combined and discussed in chapter 8. Chapter 9 concludes the study.

2 Marketing Communications, UX, UXD and Usability

The following chapter's focus is on some of the central concepts for this study*: marketing communications, user experience* (later UX), *user experience design* (later UXD) and *usability*. Marketing communications is important when products are exported to new markets, as, depending on the product and its stage in the product lifecycle (Forrester, 1959, pp. 108–109), it must be introduced, explained and sold to the customers, and customers need to be motivated through marketing communications to use them (Egan, 2007, pp. 41–42). Marketing communications is a part of marketing in general (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Bergh, 2010, p. 2) and is defined by Egan (2007, p. 1) as "the means by which a supplier of goods, services, values and/or ideas represent themselves to their target audience with the goal of stimulating dialogue leading to a better commercial or other relationships".

Marketing and marketing communications are closely connected to UX and UXD, as this study concentrates on translating, transcreating and localising the marketing messages of a website that promotes a possible taboo product in the target market and culture. Thus, the UX and UXD of the website are present and central. *UX* at its broadest "encompasses all aspects of the end-user's interaction with the company, its services, and its products" (Norman & Nielsen, n. d., "The definition of user experience (UX)"), while *UXD* covers "the process of creating products that provide meaningful and relevant experiences to users" (Mifsud, 2011, "The difference (and relationship) between usability and user experience").

UX and UXD are naturally followed by usability, as usability is a sub-part of UX. An ISO standard (ISO 9241-11, 2018) defines usability as "the extent to which a product can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction, in a specified context of use". This study concentrates on how culture-specific elements can affect or even undermine the UX and usability of a website.

Chapter 2.1 delves into marketing communications, and its subchapters inspect marketing across cultures (2.1.1) and the role of images in marketing (2.1.2). These are followed by examinations of UX (2.2), UXD (2.3) and usability (2.4), usability's connection to UX (2.4.1) and cultural usability (2.4.2). Chapter 2.5 focuses on the connection between UX, UXD, usability and texts.

2.1 Marketing Communications

Classical marketing theories divide marketing into four different sections or tools that form the marketing mix, often referred to as the 4Ps: product, price, place and promotion (De Pelsmacker,

Geuens & Bergh, 2010, p. 2). The focus of this study is the promotion aspect or marketing communications. Few products will sell themselves: a chair is useful in itself, but why should consumers choose one with armrests over a chair that does not have them? Besides, why should they pay more for a particular chair over the competitor's offer, and buy it online instead of the local furniture store? Marketing communications ties all the arguments of product, price and place together in promotion.

Egan (2007, p. 2) states that marketing communications should remind, inform or motivate the target audience about the supplier's offer and serve as a means of differentiating it from others in the market. When the product, such as the menstrual cup, is new, and especially when it is connected to taboo topics in the market's culture, marketing communications should be harnessed into informing and motivating the consumers to use the product while alleviating their fear of taboos (more about taboos in chapter 3.2). Marketing messages have the potential to reassure the consumers that the encouraged way of using the product will not be condemned as taboo usage and possibly to break the link between the product and the taboo. Furthermore, in time, the company might even convince the consumers in the market to perceive the taboos as neutral topics without the stigma. Egan (2007, p. 107) seems to arrive at the same conclusion when he states that the means of marketing communications serve the underlying communications objectives of the company or brand.

Marieke de Mooij's (2005, p. 16), thoughts follow a similar path as she holds the view that marketing communications conveys the brand's values and offers the marketer a way to control the meanings people connect to a brand. This is essential when brands enter a new market with a product that might be linked to taboos, as the brands need to be the first to state what the product is and what values are connected to it to prevent undesired associations. Chris Fill (2011, p. 5) stresses the importance of grasping the needs, the environment and the information-processing style of the audience to create a message that resonates with them. In other words, when a company directs and formulates marketing messages about it or its offering to correspond with the receivers, the messages decrease the amount of negative associations in the consumers' minds and negative word-of-mouth (WOM). Furthermore, these appropriate marketing messages can proactively protect against negative associations and WOM and reciprocally increase the positive ones. To recap, marketing communications is vital for brands who enter a new market with a product that is connected to taboos. Brands can use the tool of promotion or marketing communications to diminish the prominence of taboos around their product.

2.1.1 Marketing Communications Across Cultures

De Mooij (2005, p. 5) notes advertising's close ties to culture: "Advertising is more than words; it is made of culture". Fill (2011, p. 7) advocates that when marketing communications' messages are engaging, they convey content that is meaningful for the participants, encouraging and provoking consumers to converse about the message. To arrive at this goal, marketers need to acknowledge that the same messages, their tone of voice, the way of addressing the receivers, and so forth, do not necessarily resonate with consumers in different cultures. Cultural differences that brands need to consider when introducing the product and ways of using it in the new market are significant in cases such as these. Following this line of thought, Hanna-Kaisa Desavelle (2009, p. 200) notes the importance of identifying the cultural meanings messages convey. In addition, Hilppa Sorjonen (2009, p. 112) reminds that products often have cultural associations tied to them: a neutral product in one culture might receive a taboo stigma in another. Consequently, a marketing message circulated in different cultures in the same form and with the same content might cause consumer reactions opposite to the intended ones. An example of this could be a brand that markets its menstrual cup product as safe to use for virgins, a marketing message that can be interpreted neutrally in multiple cultures. However, in cultures where virginity is a paramount value when it comes to women and premarital sex, the message might be considered as outright insulting, and prevent the product from being sold. The key is to thoroughly know the receivers of the message (Vuokko, 2002, pp. 13, 15).

De Mooij (2005, p. 144) argues that the set of values cultures hold central, their core values such as individualism or collectivism, also affect the purpose and role of marketing communications. In individualistic cultures, the stress is on persuasion (Ibid.). In collectivistic cultures building the relationship and trust between the seller and buyer is more important (Ibid.). As this study's focus is on the Middle East, it is interesting to note that Middle Eastern people are on the collectivist end of this scale because of the Islamic teachings and Arab traditions that prioritize loyalty to the group, respect toward family and humbleness when interacting with others (Ali, Taqi & Krishnan, 1997, p. 635). The marketing communications of brands entering the area should thus focus on convincing the consumers that they can trust the brand and their offering. When it comes to products such as the menstrual cup that can be connected to taboos, the consumers should be able to believe that the brand will inform them on how to use the product so that it does not result in taboo behaviour.

De Mooij (2005, p. 72) states that marketers need to classify cultures in order to have different marketing and strategies across cultures. She (Ibid., pp. 72–73) argues that models that rely on

separating various dimensions of a culture are the most effective in unearthing cultural differences and similarities concerning consumption-related values. The most useful, according to De Mooij (Ibid., pp. 59, 73), is Geert Hofstede's famous five dimensions of national culture that distinguishes cultures from each other according to five orientations. The five orientations are power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance and long-term orientation (Ibid., p. 60). However, Hofstede's model has been criticised for features of banal nationalism, for overstressing nations as the sole sources of culture—see chapter 2.4.2 for discussion on cultural usability and how subcultures shape individuals—and for overgeneralising the results of a study with only a few hundred survey participants to apply to a whole culture (Piller, 2011, p. 79–80). Here lies the danger that brands and companies see cultures as homogenous entities and formulate the marketing messages based on this while forgetting the different layers of culture. In this context, Jean-Claude Usunier and Julie Anne Lee (2013, p. 10) warn companies about perceiving nation-states and culture as equivalents. It might be, for example, that albeit pre-marital sex is seemingly considered a taboo in a particular culture as a whole, in different social classes, it is more accepted. This can also be seen as a possibility for marketers to formulate their messages so that it attracts different subcultures within a culture.

Usunier and Lee (2013, p. 10) further challenge Hofstede's ideas by stating the unclear relationship between nationality and culture. They (Ibid., pp. 10–12) highlight the role of communities and list 10 sources of culture next to nationality for an individual, such as language, family, sex and social class. Notably, the authors mention individuals in this context, as they are also the best sources of information on the customs and norms of their culture. Such is the case in this study, where individuals from the Middle East are interviewed for an insight on what type of marketing message content might represent a taboo in their respective cultures.

De Mooij (2005, p. 136) argues that when a marketer is formulating marketing messages, the marketer understands the receiver's culture and communication needs from their cultural framework. Frow (1995, p. 3) expresses this thought as well by writing that "there can be no simple contrast of 'their' cultural framework to 'ours', since the former is generated as a knowable object from within 'our' cultural framework". This affects the coding, the form and the content of the marketer's message (De Mooij, 2005, p. 136). Naturally, the receiver's culture affects the message's decoding process (Ibid.). The outcome is that brands not only need to deeply understand the culture they are introducing the product in but also need the help and in-depth knowledge of individuals from that culture to be able to properly formulate the marketing messages to carry their intended meaning and effect to the target audience.

2.1.2. Images in Marketing Communications

This study's data consists of both visual and textual elements, so this chapter focuses on the relationship between marketing communications and images. Mee-Eun Kang (1997, p. 980) states how visual images as nonverbal symbols require a special emphasis when studying advertising. Kang (1997, pp. 980–981) grounds his view on Bovee's and Arens' (1986, p. 47) findings on what people examining advertisements focus on: "most readers of advertisements (1) look at the illustration, (2) read the headline, and (3) read the body copy, in that order". Also, Kroeber-Riel (1990, cited in Appelbaum & Halliburton, 1993, p. 227) found that 98% of advertisements' content information is disregarded by consumers, stressing the importance of visuals.

Tying to the chapter above, the decoding of images used in marketing communications is affected by the consumers' culture since consumers process ads through learned cultural rules (Phillips, 1997, p. 78). Patricia Russo and Stephen Boor (1993, p. 344) state that "Images are the visual language of a culture. Like words, images don't always translate. What we recognize in our culture may have little or no meaning in another".

Consequently, marketers should beware of choosing visuals that convey unintended meanings (Bjerke & Polegato, 2006, pp. 865–866). Janet Borgerson and Jonathan Schroeder (2002, p. 570) suggest that visual representations in marketing communications can be regarded as socio-political artefacts that "create meaning within the circuit of culture that often extends beyond what may be intended by photographers, art directors, advertising agencies, and firms whose products are advertised". Interestingly, consumers are aware that advertisements promote a product and often perceive the advertisements' implicatures positively as a result (Phillips, 1997, p. 79). However, the consumers' reaction to the ad itself can still be adverse (Tanaka 1994, as cited in Phillips, 1997, p. 79).

2.2 UX

Content strategist and UX designer Kristina Bjoran (2017, "Marketing and user experience design") argues that marketers communicate to consumers the value of products that are designed for users with UX in mind so that "experience designers have someone to design for". Bjoran (Ibid.) continues by observing that marketing and UX are two sides of the same coin that must work together, especially as marketers have a great deal of information about the products' users and their needs. Nielsen's and Norman's (n.d., "The definition of user experience (UX)") definition of UX seems to agree with this as they state that for a superior user experience, a company's offerings

"must be a seamless merging of the services of multiple disciplines, including engineering, marketing, graphical and industrial design, and interface design".

An ISO standard (ISO 9241-210, 2010) definition of UX includes "all the users' emotions, beliefs, preferences, perceptions, physical and psychological responses, behaviours and accomplishments that occur before, during and after use". Aptly, Anshu Agarwal and Andrew Meyer (2009, p. 2920) draw data from different researches that consider the link of emotions to user acceptance and satisfaction, purchase intentions and see emotions as the "primary motivation for consumptive behaviour".

Diana DeMarco Brown (2013, p. 40) disagrees with Nielsen's and Norman's definition, or, more precisely, with its breadth as she narrows down the UX definition to consist of only the product and its use. Yet this thesis focuses on the part UX plays in the marketing of the product, regarding the matter from the experience marketing point of view. Jim Joseph (2010, p. 17) defines experience in this context as "the connection the brand makes with consumers". Consumers interact with brands in different touchpoints, through various channels. As this study focuses on one particular channel, a menstrual cup manufacturer's website and its content, the consumers visiting the website become its users. The experience they receive from using the website, interacting with the content of the website, can affect how the users perceive the brand and product. For example, if the website's visuals have images portraying topics or details considered as taboos in the website users' culture, the users are very likely to be averse to staying on the website or having positive connotations about the brand and its product.

2.3 UXD

UXD's holistic nature makes it difficult to define (Suojanen, Koskinen & Tuominen, 2015, p. 26). One reason for this is also that UX and UXD are relatively young fields that combine experts from other disciplines (Robinson, Lanius & Weber, 2017, p. 11). Don Norman (Clagnut, 2016, "Peter in Conversation with Don Norman") coined the term initially and states that after this it has "spread widely, so much so that it is starting to lose its meaning… user experience, human centered design, usability... They just sort of entered the vocabulary and no longer have any special meaning".

Cennydd Bowles and James Box (2010, "Going Undercover") also mention "usability" in their definition that describes UXD as a movement that "puts people first and creates products that are usable, useful, and enjoyable". It is interesting to see what players in the field of UX and UXD have to say. UserTesting (2019, "The definition of UX design") is a company that helps others tackle

their UX and UXD problems and admits in its blog that the term is missing a commonly accepted definition. Nonetheless, UserTesting (Ibid.) defines UXD as the process of designing digital or physical products that "are useful, easy to use, and delightful to interact with". UXD improves the quality of the experience of using a product and ensures the users receive value from the use (Ibid.).

UXD is crucial because this study is a type of user research. This study's methodology (see chapter 6) is based on interviewing the target group users of Lunette's website in a culture different from the company's original culture. The goal of the interviews is to see what elements in the website's content would hinder its use or be problematic when transferred as such from one culture to another. Bowles and Box (2010, "Exploring the Problem") argue that user research is not necessarily needed for UXD if people involved in the design process are a part of the target audience; otherwise it is of considerable significance in making decisions about products' design. Bowles and Box (Ibid.) differentiate market research and user research from each other, as market research focuses on opinions about, for example, brands, personal beliefs and marketing approaches. User research, on the other hand, delves into users' behaviour: "what drives people, how they do things, how and why they're likely to use your site" (Ibid.). Nevertheless, Bowles and Box (Ibid.) find that these two research approaches can support each other.

In the framework of this study, it is essential and useful to know the personal beliefs of the study's target group and whether they would use Lunette's website if it was taken to the Middle East. With this knowledge, the website's user designers can create and co-ordinate content that not only makes the site easy and pleasant to use but is also in accordance with the users' personal or cultural beliefs of, for example, the fact that virgins should not use intra-vaginal menstrual hygiene products. The definitions of UXD note the importance of culture. Aaron Marcus (2006, p. 17) asserts that the socio-cultural context is present in UXD, and Tanja Walsh, Piia Nurkka and Rod Walsh (2010, p. 2) add that understanding the impact of culture on UX is an essential part of studying and designing UX.

2.4 Usability

Usability pioneer Jakob Nielsen's (1993, p. 25) model of system acceptability (Figure 1.) shows that usability is just one dimension of the system acceptability. System acceptability measures "whether the system is good enough to satisfy all the needs and requirements of the users and other potential stakeholders" (Ibid., p. 24). System acceptability is divided into two branches, practical acceptability and social acceptability (see chapter 3). The practical acceptability of a system can be

evaluated with different features such as cost, reliability and usefulness. A useful system enables the user to achieve a specific goal. Usefulness is divided into utility and usability. Utility is the system's functionality, whether it is possible to do what is needed to, and usability is about how well that function can be used. Five different attributes define usability. A system that fulfils the usability requirements is:

1. easy to learn

2. efficient to use

3. easy to remember

4. few in errors

5. subjectively pleasing (Nielsen, 1993, p. 24–25).
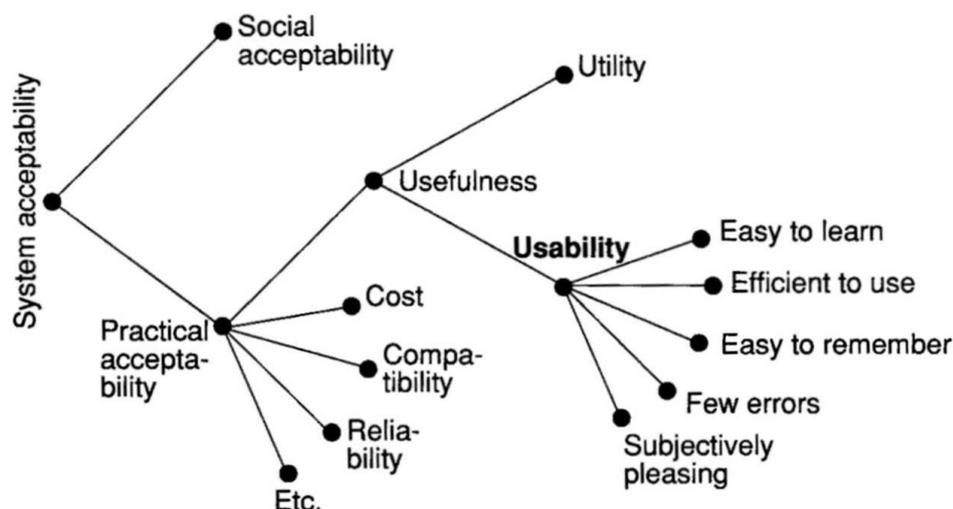
Figure 1. Jakob Nielsen's (1993, p. 25) model of system acceptability.

Tytti Suojanen, Kaisa Koskinen and Tiina Tuominen (2015, p. 13) describe usability as a characteristic of a text or a product that enables the user to achieve their goal of use quickly, without effort and to their satisfaction. Still, they (Ibid., p. 14) argue that usability "does not guarantee that every single user in the target group will be able to use it to their full satisfaction". This argument can be loosely linked to the cultural and personal interpretations people give to marketing messages; the people will see usability or at least parts of usability from their own cultural and personal framework. See chapter 2.3.3 for further discussion on cultural usability.

2.4.1 Usability and UX

The relationship of UX and usability is especially interesting in the context of this study since it focuses on a website promoting a product that can be seen as a taboo in some cultures and translating the website's marketing messages to another language and for another culture. The experience website users get from browsing and surfing on a particular website must naturally affect the usability of that website. If the experience is negative because, for example, the website's marketing messages about a product with a potential taboo status are not formulated with enough cultural sensitivity, can the website be usable at all?

The connection between UX and usability must be inspected to delve into the above question. The terms seem to come close to each other as researchers argue whether they fundamentally have the same meaning. However, an abundance of definitions places usability under UX. An ISO standard (ISO 9241-210, 2010) notes on the definition of UX that when usability is understood from the perspective of the users' personal goals, it "can include the kind of perceptual and emotional aspects typically associated with user experience. Usability criteria can be used to assess *aspects* of user experience" (italics added). Lorraine Chapman and Scott Plewes (2014, p. 13) state that product value and user experience are formed by emotional and utilitarian value. They (Ibid.) continue to list the building blocks of these two values, the three aspects of design: aesthetics, functionality and usability. The authors (Ibid.) employ the same terms for describing functionality and usability that Nielsen (1993, p. 24–25) uses for usefulness, utility and usability: functionality is the feature of a product that enables a user to accomplish a goal they value (similar to Nielsen's usefulness and utility) and usability "is the manner in which functionality is delivered and experienced by the user". Chapman and Plewes (2014, p. 13) categorise usability as a part of UX by claiming a great product "delivers a user experience that combines aesthetics, functionality and usability to meet both the user's emotional and utilitarian needs".

Building on the above definitions, the connection between UX and usability and the terms' co-dependence is, in fact, about the connection between emotions and utilitarianism. Mifsud (2011, "The difference (and relationship) between usability and user experience") is the founder of the Usability Geek blog and writes that in the context of websites, "the aim of *usability* is to make that web site easy to use whilst the aim of user experience is to make the user happy before, during and after using that web site". In other words, if people are not happy using a website because of marketing messages that promote possibly a taboo product without addressing the taboos, the usability is still be achievable through the ease of use. However, Nielsen (1993, p. 24–25) includes

satisfaction as one of the attributes for usability. "The system should be pleasant to use, so that users are subjectively satisfied when using it; they like it" (Ibid., p. 26). As in UX (2.2), Agarwal and Meyer (2009, p. 2928) identify the impact of emotional reactions on usability and argue that "emotions may not only be central to how a user judges the overall product experience, but may also affect how a user perceives its usability". They (Ibid.) go on to state that even two users are using the same product, the happy one may judge the product more usable than the unhappy user.

Whether UX that includes culturally insensitive messages undermines the usability of a website depends on how usability is perceived: is it just the ease of using a website or is it inseparable from the UX of a website or the enjoyment users get from using it. Can one exist without the other, is a website that offers a poor UX on content level still usable as a whole because of, for example, its easy navigation?

2.4.2 Cultural Usability

Cultural usability is an essential addition to the discussion above since it stresses the importance of cultural aspects in every part of the UX and usability process. Whether or not UX with culturally insensitive marketing messages threatens the whole usability of a website, cultural usability reminds that people focusing solely on creating usable websites, regardless of UX, need to consider cultural elements.

Cultural usability does not have an agreed definition, as it is used differently in diverse fields. Huatong Sun (2004, p. 24) observes two significant ways of defining the term: either it is the "study of cultural effects on product design" or a quest for a critical and sensitive design approach where technology practices are placed in cultural and social contexts (Tarkka & Tikka, 2001, as cited in Sun, 2004, p. 24). In their study of cultural usability testing, Thorkil Clemmensen and Shivam Goyal (2005, p. 1) note that considering cultural issues is central for the success or failure of a global product. Sun (2006, p. 459) mentions the importance of "culturally achieving product usability" in the context of user localisation (for localisation, see chapter 4.1).

Saila Ovaska, Anne Aula and Päivi Majaranta (2005, p. 4) state that usability is always dependent on the user and the context of use. The culture of the user shapes both. Suojanen et al. (2015, p. 14) refer to the same idea and highlight the environment of use and user characteristics. They (Ibid., p. 22) proceed to suggest that not only does the cultural background affect our perception on what is usable but also that there "may be contexts where participants have a different concept of usability, not only differing viewpoints as to what it entails". Olaf Frandsen-Thorlacius, Kasper Hornbæk,

Morten Hertzum and Torkil Clemmensen (2009, p. 1) found this by studying Danish and Chinese users. Assuming that usability is perceived to be the same interculturally is an example of making simplified, perhaps even stereotyped, generalisations of entire cultures (Suojanen et al. 2015, p. 20). However, different segments within cultures can differ widely. Suojanen et al. (2015, p. 20) note that cultures have subcultures within them that shape individuals. They (Ibid.) provide gender-based, regional and ethnic cultures as examples.

Aaron Marcus and Emilie W. Gould (2000, p. 5) provide examples on how usability and culture together affect a website's user interface and question how the sacred colours of red, blue, white and gold of particular western cultures would be understood in Buddhist cultures where the sacred colour is saffron yellow or in Islamic cultures where the sacred colour is green. Christina Valdés (2000, p. 272) elaborates this point by writing that the elements of advertising, such as colours and light intensity, are culture-specific since cultural conventions deem what interpretations are attached to them.

Nielsen (2000, pp. 237–238, 241–242, 245, 251) discusses international usability—that seems very similar to cultural usability—as such in only a few paragraphs and mentions culture in this context only once in his book *Designing web usability.* Though he (Ibid., p. 239) does mention differences in website interfaces between countries and notes examples of variations that would be due to cultural habits—what position the light switch is in when the lights are on—Nielsen does not still explicate that these originate from cultural differences. He (Ibid., p. 242) focuses mainly on the role of language and translation in international usability and seems to disregard the effect of culture: not only how culture affects usability itself but also how it affects the translation choices, or the register used when translating websites. Robert Johnson (1998, p. 11) argues that users should be included in the process more since they are the experts of their own culture—and experts of what is socially acceptable in their own culture. Thus, this study interviews the target group users of the Lunette website.

2.5 UX, UXD, Usability and Text

This study's data comprises images and text content from the Lunette website. In chapter 2.1.2, the focus was on the significance of images in marketing. The focus here is on the text's role in regard to a website's UX, UXD and usability since no matter how well the buttons on a website are placed or how aesthetic the user interface is, text that leads the website users astray or leaves them confused, or even repulsed, increases the chance of the users abandoning the website. Rick Sloboda

(2011, "Good web content examples") writes on the importance of text content for websites: "Web content can make or break a website – no matter how good the design is… the content needs to attract visitors, engage them, and ultimately entice them to take desired actions."

An empirical study about the criteria for award-winning websites supports this, as content predicted overall experience better than graphic design (Sinha, Hearst, Ivory & Draisin, 2001, p. 1). Content here is described as information that is engaging, relevant, concise and directed at its audience (Ibid., p. 3).

It is possible to argue that the quality of the text content on a website is essential for the UXD and usability, the latter described by Nielsen (1993, pp. 24–25) through, for example, the efficiency of use and subjective pleasantness. Suojanen et al. (2015, pp. 49–59) assess the textual elements of usability regarding attributes such as legibility and comprehensibility. Jacob Nielsen's and Don Norman's website Nielsen and Norman Group includes a few articles that are explicitly about the relationship between usability and texts. Page Laubheimer (2016, *International B2B Audiences"*) states in one that companies can increase the usability of their international B2B sites by indicating their presence in each region through adapting the website's content to local conventions. Adjusting the content to local conventions brings us to the cultural aspects of websites' text content. While discussing localising (for localisation, see chapter 4.1) content for users in different countries, Laubheimer (Ibid.) mentions cultural nuances that "impact user experience, often in subtle ways that are difficult to anticipate".

Interestingly, several studies that discuss the connection between website content and culture employ Geert Hofstede's earlier discussed cultural values (Usunier, Roulin & Ivens, 2009; Kim, Coyle & Gould, 2009). These studies highlight the significance of cultural factors on creating website content and, in turn, spark the argument that if culture is not considered in content creation, the content can affect the UXD and usability negatively.

3 Social Acceptability

Marketing, UX, UXD and usability are followed by *social acceptability*. Surprisingly, it is difficult to find a clear, precise definition for s*ocial acceptability*, as the term can refer to different things in diverse fields such as psychology, social sciences, management and mathematics. It could be that the term is so self-explanatory that it does not have an established meaning. In this study, I refer to the social acceptability of a product as to whether the users of a product and the society it is used in—even if all the members of the society do not use product—approve it and the way it is used, even if the product fulfils its original purpose of use.

Social acceptability is central to this study since when a website promoting a product that possibly violates cultural norms is taken into a new market, the social acceptability of the product and the manner it is communicated are of special importance. Birth control products are an excellent example that elaborates on the significance of a product's social acceptability. Some cultures and parts of the world, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, oppose their use due to, for example, misconceptions about the harmful effects birth control has on the womb (Superdrug Online Doctor, n. d., "Birth control around the world"). However, it can be questioned whether marketing communications could persuade—and educate—consumers in this area that the use of contraceptive products can be socially acceptable, at least in certain situations.

Chapter 3.1 examines the term in more detail, while chapter 3.2 sheds light social acceptability's connection to taboos.

3.1 Social Acceptability: An In-depth Definition

As discussed above, social acceptability as a term is employed in such multiple and various disciplines that it does not have one over-arching definition but is rather context-dependent. However, in a study on the social acceptability of marine protected areas, Aurélie Thomassin, Carole White, Selina Stead and Gilbert David (2010, p. 170) write on the holistic nature of the concept: "its structure depends on multiple opinions, each opinion through the multiple perceptions of each individual on the topic in question, influenced by personal interests and to varying degrees public opinion." Suojanen et al. (2015, p. 15) observe that social acceptability stems from communities, which could link to how Thomassin et al. (2010, p. 170) perceive the structure of social acceptability. However, Suojanen et al. (2015) provide no further explanation for this.

Thomassin et al. (2010, p. 170) further define social acceptability through the overall attitudes of a society that "enables its status to be evaluated without relation to the causes". They (Ibid.) go on to

say that social acceptability has a binary function, where individuals either accept or reject the social acceptability of, for example, the product or situation under assessment. This statement is debatable as social acceptability is dependent, among other things, on the context of use. An example of this is the use of firearms. Their original purpose is to hurt or exterminate their targets, and the products fulfil this purpose, yet the social acceptability of firearms is arguable. Some people accept the use of firearms by the police, in hunting, violent conflicts in different parts of the world—or do not actively voice their opinion against it—or in situations that demand self-defence. However, using a firearm in an everyday conflict with one's neighbour is condemned and penalised by the society.

In this study, the impact of social acceptability on the usability or utility of a website in a particular cultural context is of paramount interest. Suojanen et al. (2015, p. 16) approach the term from translation researcher Gideon Toury's concept of acceptability. They (Ibid.) outline Toury's acceptability by stating that it refers to "adherence to target culture norms" and observe that this is close to Nielsen's concept of acceptability. In his figure of system acceptability (see Figure 1.) Nielsen (1993, pp. 24–25) defines social acceptability from the framework and as a subpart of system acceptability. As an example, he (Ibid., p. 24) describes a system that is functional and scores highly on practical acceptability but is suspicious when it comes to social acceptability, as the system gathers highly personal information of its users, who might find this intimidating and unnerving. Suojanen et al. (2016, p. 15) summarise the impact cultural social acceptability has on a product by stating that "Even if a product is highly usable, it may lose its utility completely in a target culture if its use is not socially acceptable".

3.2 Taboos

Taboos are examples of concepts or customs that are socially unacceptable in a culture or society. The definition of *taboo* I will use in this study is by Encyclopaedia Britannica ("Taboo", n.d.) which describes taboo as "the prohibition of an action based on the belief that such behaviour is either too sacred and consecrated or too dangerous and accursed for ordinary individuals to undertake". Ouidade Sabri, Delphine Manceau and Bernard Pras (2010, p. 60) draw from several definitions of taboos and summarise that they have three aspects: "(1) prohibition, (2) sacredness and religion, even if mentioning rituals and moral/social prohibitions leaves open the possibility of profane taboos (also called magical taboos), and (3) impurity."

Keith Allan and Kate Burridge's (2006, p. 1) definition features the commonplace nature of taboos, describing them as a "proscription of behaviour that affects everyday life". They (Ibid.) see the emergence of taboos caused by human-coded constraints that guide us to avoid humiliation, discomfort and offence in social situations.

Taboos are essential for this study since the focus is on the Lunette website promoting a menstrual cup, a product that might be considered a taboo in the target market of the localised website, and whether the website has some elements that might be considered as mentions of taboo topics in the target market. Ouidade Sabri and Carl Obermiller (2012, p. 870) who research taboos in advertising see taboo as a behavioural or verbal act prohibited by the societal norms, something that cannot be publicly mentioned. Delphine Manceau and Elisabeth Tissier-Desbordes (2006, p. 14) contend that taboos in advertisements come in two forms: either the promoted product is a taboo, such as funeral services, or the advertisements apply a taboo theme in the promotion of a product, for example, explicit or deviant sexual acts in a perfume advertisement. Sabri and Obermiller (2012, p. 869) suggest that advertisers rely on the strategy of using taboos because of their shock value and ability to steal the consumers' attention. It is thus intriguing that Sabri and Obermiller (Ibid., p. 872) found in their study that this strategy is risky, as the use of strong taboo themes in advertisements correlates negatively to the consumers' attitudes and their purchase intentions towards the advertised brand. Sabri and Obermiller (2012, p. 872) summarise how "the violation of taboos in ads triggers social normative pressure that reduces intention to purchase the product".

This study's focus is on female consumers in the target market, so the findings of Manceau and Tissier-Desbordes (2006, p. 28) that women view the overall use of taboos in advertising more negatively than men is notable. Furthermore, they (Ibid. p. 21) hypothesise that women are more opposed than men to sex and nudity–especially female nudity–in advertising. However, taboos in advertising are more acceptable if they align with what the brand is promoting, for example, nudity is more tolerable in a lingerie advertisement than in an advertisement for food products (Ibid., p. 29).

Gretchen Larsen and Maurice Patterson (2018, p. 1063) suggest that marketing campaigns that involve taboos either challenge them—sometimes successfully—or avoid the taboo, possibly even strengthening it. One taboo that is significant to this study at hand and that is reinforced by marketing and advertising is menstruation (Johnston-Robledo & Chrisler, 2013, p. 11). The absorption power of sanitary products is often demonstrated with pouring blue instead of reddish liquid on them (Winkler & Roaf, 2015, p. 6). Winkler and Roaf (Ibid., p. 6) argue that the use of

blue instead of a red liquid aims to conceal that the products are designed to absorb menstrual blood, regarded as impure or unhygienic in a multitude of cultures. Johnston-Robledo and Chrisler (2013, p. 11) claim that this marketing practice emphasises the secrecy and embarrassment of menstruation and increases the need to feel clean and fresh.

Mustapha Taibi and Mohamed El-Madkouri Maataoui (2016, p. 72) discuss the relative nature of taboos. They (Ibid., pp. 72–73) assert that different cultural groups can have varying perceptions on what is considered a taboo, and although several cultures would share a taboo, the intensity and the offensiveness of a taboo can vary from one culture to another. Sabri, Manceau and Pras (2010, p. 62) summarise this by declaring that "Taboos are cultural productions that are embedded socially and historically".

An illustrating example of avoiding taboos in marketing campaigns directed at certain cultures, aptly in the context of the Middle East, comes from Unilever. Vijay Mahajan (2012, p. 70) describes how the consumer goods giant advertised their dandruff shampoo Clear with the world-famous footballer Cristiano Ronaldo. Interestingly, Unilever airbrushed Ronaldo's diamond earring away in advertisements in Jordan and Syria, as the company was afraid it might offend some of the people in the area. In Lebanon, they kept the earring in the advertisements (Ibid.).

4 Localisation and Transcreation

When a website is taken into a new market that demands a certain level of cultural sensitivity and avoidance of taboos from the website's marketing communications, *localisation* and *transcreation* are the tools to achieve this goal and social acceptability. The Localization Industry Standards Association or LISA (Fry & Lommel, 2003, p. 13) that has since ceased operating defined *localisation* as "the process of modifying products or services to account for differences in distinct markets". The term is arguably very close to *transcreation*, a term that Daniel Pedersen (2014, p. 57) defines in regard to marketing and advertising as an "adaptation of advertising material for different markets".

Chapter 4.1 investigates the definition and the nature of localisation further, also discussing it in relation to translation. Chapter 4.2 explores localisation's and translation's relationship to transcreation, while chapter 4.3 examines what these concepts signify for taking marketing texts from one culture and language to another.

4.1 Localisation

Ursula Wrobel (2002, p. 26) argues that marketing products that have a connection to taboo topics on a website are a balancing act between globalisation with aims for economies for scale and localisation aiming at context-sensitive communication. She (Ibid.) strongly believes that "economies of scale cannot be realised without efficient communication - that is true even more so for "taboo" product marketing via Web sites".

The definition for localisation by LISA (Fry & Lommel, 2003, p. 13) lists three categories that localisation needs to address: linguistic issues, content and cultural issues and technical issues. Linguistic issues seem to refer to translating, but LISA's definition also considers other language issues and functions, such as programming applications' interfaces and search engine optimisation, next to the text that needs to be taken from one language to another. Regarding cultural issues, LISA's (Ibid.) definition mentions product localisation. An example of this would be changing the steering wheel to the right side when taking US manufactured cars to the UK. If the focus is on intangible products, one famous example is Bob the Builder, who, when localised to Japan, had to be drawn a new little finger to replace the one he lost in his handicraft activities (Bob the Builder", 2000). In Japan, a missing little finger is the sign of the Japanese mafia Yakuza (Ibid.). The last category, technical issues, seems to differentiate localisation from translation (Fry & Lommel, 2003, p. 13). It involves, for example, changing the code of software products if the target language

uses completely different alphabets, such as Chinese that requires twice the disk space compared to English (Ibid.).

Russo and Boor (1993, p. 344) discuss designing interfaces for international users and highlight the cultural understanding of the person responsible for localisation by reminding of the difference between what is comprehensible and what is acceptable to a culture: "Because social norms vary greatly between cultures, what is acceptable in one culture can be objectionable in another." This statement echoes the concepts of social acceptability (chapter 3.1) and taboos (chapter 3.2) discussed above. They (Ibid., p. 343) give a list of cross-cultural elements that need to be considered during internationalisation and localisation processes if the product is to succeed in international markets:

1. Text

2. Number, Date and Time Formats

3. Images

4. Symbols

5. Colours

6. Flow

7. Functionality.

In this study, the focus is on the list's items 1. Text and 3. Images. Russo and Boor (1993, p. 343) mention that text and format are usually the elements considered in localisation projects, while the other items on the list are often disregarded. Following from this, they (Ibid., p. 344) discuss in greater detail the generally overlooked elements, such as images, and note the importance of designers' awareness of cultural differences that enables the recognition of culturally specific images. Russo and Boor (1993, pp. 344–345) remind that particular caution is demanded when "designing images that contain religious symbols (e.g., crosses and stars), the human body, women and hand gestures", and that designers should avoid or eliminate images whose elements can be perceived as controversial. To aid this process, the authors (Ibid., pp. 346) recommend development teams to work together with the target culture's natives.

Bruno Herrmann (2018, p. 26) deliberates on localisation and argues that translation is only the first milestone in engaging with international audiences. He (Ibid.) then stresses the importance of delight that the audiences need to experience. Fascinatingly, this is reminiscent of the different UX and UXD (see chapters 2.2 and 2.3) definitions that emphasise the emotions of the users. Herrmann (Ibid.) also borrows terms from the marketing field as he advises formulating localised content based on content reach, resonance with the audience and their reactions. Furthermore, he (Ibid.) continues to discuss the importance of the localised content to seem natural and intuitive in the audience receiving it. These attributes could easily be linked to usability (2.4), social acceptability (3), and even avoiding taboos (3.2). Herrmann (Ibid.) summarises the effectiveness of localisation as a "multifaceted adaptation of content based on linguistic, cultural, and functional effectiveness".

When examining the relationship between localisation and translation, Reinhard Schäler (2010, p. 210) mentions how localisation is explained as something more than translation to laypersons. The explanation's vagueness is reminiscent of the definitions for transcreation (see chapter 4.2 below). Schäler (Ibid., p. 209) defines localisation as the "linguistic and cultural adaptation of digital content to the requirements and the locale of the foreign market". However, as he (Ibid., p. 210) tries to differentiate translation and localisation from each other, Schäler notes the obscurity of the separating factor and admits the difficulty in distinguishing the difference. The notable differences to translation in Schäler's (Ibid.) definition of localisation are the technical aspect, such as scripts, and the engineering and testing phase, where the localised product is re-assembled and tested or quality assured.

4.2 Transcreation

Localisation is one of the tools of context-sensitive communication—or social acceptability and avoidance of taboos—of a website's marketing messages when it comes to promoting possibly taboo-connected products. Localisation must also be discussed next to another tool, transcreation, since the world of advertising and marketing often use the term. However, transcreation is much contested, as researchers in the field are unsure whether transcreation is a new buzzword to describe something that already exists or if it introduces new issues to the industry. Many definitions employ the same argument that is used to separate translation and localisation, that transcreation is essentially translation but also something extra.

The term transcreation is somewhat new in the field of translation, although Pedersen (2017, p. 45) dates the introduction of the concept already to 1964 by the scholar and translator Purushottam Lal.

Sissel Marie Rike (2013, p. 73) links transcreation to creativity that makes the end product a transcreation instead of a translation. Torresi (2010, p. 23) also asserts that creativity is what translators of promotional material are required to have when they have to re-build or transcreate a text in the process.

Re-building a text in the transcreation process is another recurring theme that researchers use to separate it from translation. Torresi (2010, p. 4) recognises translation as the transfer of mainly written concepts between languages and separates it from localisation, the adjustment of a promotional text so that it suits the target culture and retains its persuasive function. Torresi (Ibid.) continues that the localisation process might demand transcreation, "re-building the entire promotional text so that it sounds and reads both natural and creative in the target language and culture".

The demands of sounding and reading natural and creative in the target language and culture are reminiscent of formulating varying marketing messages for different markets in order to consider cultural differences while still evoking the same reaction in the consumers (see chapter 2.1.1). Pedersen (2014, p. 59) seems to echo this connection as he analyses definitions of transcreation by different service providers and concludes that transcreation is a creative adaptation that in the best case preserves the brand voice and aims at "reaching the same impact when speaking to a new target audience".

Consequently, the descriptions of transcreation raise the argument of translation definitions that identify the same characteristics as the transcreation definitions above. Eugene Nida's (1964) *dynamic equivalence* is a perfect example of this. Nida (1964, p. 166) defines dynamic equivalence as "the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message". He (Ibid.) further elaborates on the word *natural* in this context as a translation that conforms to the target language and culture as a whole. It also conforms to the context of the message transferred from one language to another and fits the target language audience (Ibid.). Conformance to the target language and culture seems similar to respecting cultural nuances. Conformance to the message and target language audience seem to suggest the message has the same impact with the target audience, which might demand adaptation, and conformance to the context of the message could include preserving the brand voice.

4.3 Translating and Localising Marketing Communications Texts

The above chapters discuss the tools for taking a text from one language and culture to another to evoke a similar reaction in readers worldwide. These tools and the goal are crucial in the context of translating and localising marketing communications on a website that promotes a culturally controversial product. Marketing has become more focused on maximising the benefits for the customer and tailoring products and product messages for this end (Day & Moorman, 2010, pp. 5, 15). Translating and localising marketing messages to suit the various markets is a natural continuum to this.

Valdés (2013, p. 303) lists four main functions that a translated advertisement has:

1. communicate an obvious intention, which is to publicize, to make something public, to promote and to sell

2. transmit the values of the product or brand

3. reflect and export the values of a culture, which is directly or indirectly associated with the product or service

4. and provide information about the price, the potential uses of the product, the benefits for the consumer, etc.

These functions seem much identical to an advertisement in the source language and culture and thus resemble international marketing's goal of a message to elicit a similar response in consumers in different cultures (see chapter 2.1.2 for marketing across cultures). Valdés (2000, p. 273) identifies both text and non-verbal elements, such as images and sounds, as components that might need a transformation from one language and culture to another.

George Ho (2004, p. 222) enters translation into the value chain of commodity production and circulation, as translations make the marketing of products in different languages and cultures possible, generating more economic value. Ho (Ibid., p. 223) further notes that translations are voluntary but also observes their centrality for globalisation. He (Ibid., p. 224) stresses the importance of quality translations that are a part of the success of the marketing campaign and whose goal is to "maximize the -- material/economic value of the source message for the target addressee". Furthermore, Ho (Ibid., p. 225) sees that the appeal of a commodity is dependent on the translator inserting their distinct cultural knowledge to a translation and thus making it appealing in

the eyes of the target audience (see 2.4.2 for cultural usability). Linking to this, Suojanen et al. (2015, p. 25) observe that clashes of cultural differences or cultural bumps (see taboos in chapter 3.2) in translations are usability problems (for usability, see chapter 2.4).

Basil Hatim and Ian Mason (1990, p. 236) describe the role of a translator aptly as "mediator of cultures". Translators apply their cultural knowledge through the target audience's language (Ho, 2004, p. 225). In this context, language refers not only to the actual words in the target language but also to expressing ideas and thoughts in a manner familiar to the target language audience (Ibid.). Vuokko (2002, pp. 14–15) adds that the language should reflect the framework of the target audience: messages should conform to the target culture's values and laws and include product characteristics that are important in the specific culture. According to Vuokko (Ibid.), this should be executed in a manner that genuinely speaks to the audience and stops them to think. Ho (2004, p. 227) summarises this as "appropriate culture-based marketing strategies". The strategies include knowledge of consumer psychology and the target culture's audience's behaviour (Ibid.). Valdés (2013, p. 304) notes how translators are required to have social and cultural expertise since cultures impose legal, ethical and social restrictions on translation decisions. Valdés (Ibid.) gives sexual remarks as an example of cultural elements that might be banned in the target market, writing that "Sometimes the choice of a word or an idea is entirely subjected to the effect it creates". Similar notions were already examined in chapter 3.2 discussing taboos, though Valdés' idea is also relevant to marketing across cultures (2.1.1) and cultural usability (2.4.2).

Valdés (2000, p. 272) emphasizes the receiver's role when translating advertisements. Translation decisions depend on how well the translator acknowledges the receivers' expectations toward the text type and the knowledge they possess about the product and the brand and how the translator presumes the receivers interpret the message and construct its meaning from their cultural viewpoint (Ibid., pp. 272–273). Thus, it is vital for the translator to know their target audience, as is the case when formulating marketing messages. The challenge is that the receivers can all have different interpretations of the same message as they view the text through the lenses of personal history and values (Ibid.). This thought can be linked to Suojanen et al.'s (2015, p. 20) idea of subcultures within greater cultures that explain the varying understandings of usability (see cultural usability in chapter 2.4.2).

5 Middle Eastern Cultures and Case Lunette

This chapter and its different sections examine what characteristics of the Middle Eastern cultures may affect the social acceptability of the marketing communications of Lunette's website and, consequently, the social acceptability of the menstrual cup. The focus is on a significant force in the area, Islam, that is discussed in chapter 5.1. Although Islam is not the only power that shapes the cultural conventions of the Middle East, it is still a critical one. Islam's different teachings and values will be considered in regard to Lunette and the website's localisation in the following chapter 5.2 and its subchapters. The other significant religion of the Middle East, Judaism, and minor religions like different sects of Christianity are naturally important factors in the area as well, not least because of Jerusalem, but will not be discussed in this thesis because of space restrictions.

5.1 Islam's Footing in the Middle East

According to a report by the Pew Research Centre (2011, p. 92), 90.5% of the population in the Middle East were Muslim in 2010. It needs to be noted, though, that the Pew Research Centre's (Ibid., p. 91) list of the Middle Eastern countries comprises only 13 countries and territories: Bahrain, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Palestinian territories, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. The report (Ibid., p. 39) excludes a major Muslim country Iran from the list and includes it in the Asia-Pacific region, even though more than 99% of Iran's population follow Islam. In this research, Iran is counted as a Middle Eastern country, as, for example, Encyclopaedia Britannica and an abundance of other authorities list it as such.

According to Mahajan (2012, p. 52), the diversity of religions is one of the powers shaping the national identity in the Middle Eastern countries. Although countries such as Israel and its Judaism challenge the comprehensive nature of Islam in the area, Islam's effect on the traditions, customs and culture is nonetheless immense. Not all cultural conventions follow from the religion, and some Middle Eastern countries are more relaxed about the religion's teachings (Tahir Maigari, 2016, p. 91). However, Quran and *Hadith*, the word of the prophet Muhammad, are central in instructing not only the life of religion but also other aspects of being such as health and hygiene (Ibid.). Different sects within Islam do not always agree on which hadiths are valid, but they all follow the Quran (Fernea & Fernea, 1994, p. 66). Thus, the holy book and the word of the prophet are significant for many of the practices in the Middle East.

5.2 Islam's Teaching and the Menstrual Cup

Islam has an abundance of doctrines that affect the use and perceptions of the menstrual cup product. As can be expected, these beliefs and teachings affect the marketing of the product. Some of the most essential doctrines concerning Lunette, the menstrual cup and menstruation will be discussed below.

5.2.1 Cleanliness

Cleanliness is a key term in Islam, symbolling purity and goodness, and both the Quran and the Hadith have several references to these themes (Fernea & Fernea, 1994, p. 66). Recognised Islamic scholar Yusuf al-Qaradawi (1999, p. 12) even describes *halal* or lawful things as "good and pure" and *haram* or prohibited as "impure and harmful". When it comes to cleanliness and menstruation, Aru Bhartiya (2013, p. 523) argues that the holy texts of all religions except for Sikhism define menstruating women as "ritually unclean". Furthermore, Suha Al-Oballi Kridli (2002, p. 179) states how in Islam, a menstruating woman is not *tahra*, clean in Arabic. According to George Braswell (as cited in Kridli, 2002, p. 179), menstruating women cannot partake in religious acts such as prayer, fasting or pilgrimage or touch the Quran. What is more, the holy book advises men not to have intercourse or touch menstruating women until their period is over, and they are clean again (Fernea & Fernea, 1994, 66). Kridli (2002, p. 179) discusses some of the practices and beliefs that Arab American women have brought with them to their new cultural surroundings. Among them is the belief that a woman should not shower during her menstruation but only after it, either because it is thought to relieve menstrual pain or is associated with the cleanliness demands (Ibid.).

As this is the case, direct and explicitly worded references to menstruation and especially menstrual blood on the Lunette website might be considered a taboo with the Middle Eastern receivers. Interestingly, Bhartiya (2013, p. 526) notes how menstrual blood is somewhat a taboo in the Western world as well, especially when inspecting advertisements for female hygiene and menstruation products (see also 4.3 Taboos). They rarely if ever show actual menstrual blood or anything that would even indicate it as, for example, the absorption power of pads is proven by pouring blue liquid on them (Ibid.).

5.2.2 The Dress Code and Beauty Enhancements of Women

According to Islam, women's bodies should be concealed, and both revealing clothing and tight-fitting clothing that expose the outlines of female body parts, especially sexual organs, are considered *haram* (al-Qaradawi, 1999, p. 48). These hidden body parts are not to be looked at or

touched with any body part of others outside marriage or medical situations, and gazing at the opposite sex with desire is forbidden (Ibid., pp. 80–82). Scholars have differing opinions about the Quran's wording that commands women not to show their adornment and whether this means that women should cover their faces and hands altogether (Ibid., p. 83). Al-Qaradawi (Ibid., pp. 82–83) advises women to cover their faces whenever possible, especially if they are attractive, and deems the excessive use of make-up other than Kohl.

Quran also prohibits the extreme altering of physical features (Ibid., p. 50). This includes shaping eyebrows, tattoos and plastic surgery, though plastic surgeries are acceptable if an individual has a physical deformation that causes physical and psychological pain (Ibid.). However, it is fascinating to note that Dubai is dubbed the "world's plastic surgery hub" (Carrington, 2014) and Iran the "nose job capital of the world" (Ammar, 2014, Iran). Hair dyeing is allowed, but the only dyes acceptable seem to be black, henna or *katm*, a plant from Yemen that dyes the hair black with a red tinge (al-Qaradawi, 1999, p. 52).

5.3.3 Sexuality

One of the most central cultural values of Islam that concerns Lunette is virginity. Islam holds women's maidenhood before marriage in such high regard that Islamic women do not use tampons in fear of breaking their hymen (Kridli, 2002, p. 179). As I described earlier, my friend's girlfriend who gave physical education during her post in Lebanon recalled that the officials consented to this only if she told her young female pupils that tampons were solely for married women who have already lost their virginity. The brides still need to prove their virginal status on their wedding night, which has led some sexually active unmarried women to undergo a surgery of reconnecting the hymen before the wedding (Aboumehri & Sills, 2010, "The virginity industry"). The operations are also performed in fear of honour killings that can follow from the loss of virginity (Ibid.). Because of these reasons, Lunette's Middle Eastern website's marketing communications that refers to virginity or virgin individuals using the menstrual cup might be extremely culturally insensitive.

A common misconception about the Middle East and the convictions on discussing sex is that they would follow from constraints and rules set by the religion (Taibi & El-Madkouri Maataoui, 2016, p. 73). Taibi and El-Madkouri Maataoui (Ibid.) observe that even though discourse about sex and sexuality are highly restricted in Arab cultures, the topics receive the taboo stigma by society and culture. However, what is seen as a taboo in the Middle Eastern societies can be argued to be significantly affected by the culture's religion. Nonetheless, Taibi's and El-Madkouri Maataoui's

(Ibid.) statement corresponds with the earlier definitions of taboo (see chapter 4.3) which contends that taboos are relative to cultural groups.

Especially the context in which sexuality is discussed makes it a taboo in the Arab world (Ibid.). Bringing up the topic and different subfields related to it is acceptable in peer groups of the same age and gender, but conversations about sex between different sexes are prohibited (Ibid.). This fact seems to correspond with Islam's norms on dress code that state that gazing at the opposite sex with desire is forbidden (chapter 5.2.2). Euphemisms are commonly used tactics both in general discussions and in more institutional situations, for example, in doctor-patient encounters (Taibi & El-Madkouri Maataoui, 2016, p. 73). According to Taibi & El-Madkouri Maataoui (Ibid.), terms describing genitalia, such as 'penis' or 'vagina', however neutral they might be in Western cultures, are considered very offensive in the Arab world. Their use is acceptable only "among equals in intimate or ingroup circles" (Ibid.).

6 Objectives, Methodology and Data of the Present Study

The following chapters present the objectives and data collection methods of this study. This study's approach is empirical and qualitative. The question that this study aims to answer is whether Lunette's global English website's marketing communications has textual and visual elements that are taboos or culturally insensitive in the context of Middle Eastern markets so that they would hinder the website's UX, usability and social acceptability and should be given special attention in the UXD process of translating, transcreating and localising the content to the Middle East.

Data for the analysis was collected in two separate steps to unearth an answer to the question above. First, the textual and visual elements that form Lunette's global English website's marketing communications were examined to discover material that could be culturally insensitive or a taboo in the context of Middle Eastern markets and should thus be given special attention when translating, trancreating and localising the website's content to the Middle East. The findings of this analysis were then the foundation for the next phase of the analysis, a usability test of sorts. Jeffrey Rubin and Dana Chisnell (2008, p. 21) define usability test as a process that "employs people as testing participants who are representative of the target audience to evaluate the degree to which a product meets specific usability criteria". In the test, three women from the Middle East were interviewed to either validate or disprove the taboo status of the material discussed. Women from the Middle East were chosen as interviewees because they are both the consumers targeted and experts of their own culture, as argued by Johnson (1998, p. 11), and experts in what marketing messages would be considered inappropriate or a taboo in their respective cultures.

Chapter 6.1 gives information on the Lunette company and their current marketing communications efforts in the Middle East. Chapter 6.2 shortly describes the two-level analysis of the Lunette website. Chapter 6.2 is followed by subchapters that further detail the textual or verbal analysis (6.2.1) and the image or visual analysis (6.2.2). The last chapter 6.3 and its subchapters report the interview part of the analysis: recruiting interviewees (6.3.1), the interviewees' demographics (6.3.2), conducting the interviews (6.3.3), interview material (6.3.4). Chapter 6.4 discusses the possible biases of this study.

6.1 Lunette Company

Lunette is a menstrual cup designer and manufacturer from the small city of Juupajoki in Western Finland. In addition to menstrual cups, Lunette also sells menstrual cup cleaning products and appropriately themed accessories, such as jewellery in the shape of a vulva. The explicitly stated

company values are leadership, inclusivity, sustainability, optimism, accessibility and education. Furthermore, the Lunette brand seems to want to position itself as the liberal, vocal and straightforward advocate for positive and relaxed attitudes towards the natural phenomenon of menstruation. Lunette's COO Sonja Karjalainen (personal communication, January 7, 2020) confirms that the brand's tone of voice avoids the use of euphemisms and is located on a scale between unapologetic and bold. Lunette also actively lobbies for human rights and against the tampon tax, among other things (Ibid.). Lunette's approach seems to be very topical. One example that strengthens the topical nature of menstruation positivity is Plan International UK's recent announcement that a period emoji has been added to Unicode in the fight against period shame (Ho, 2019, "Bloody brilliant").

There is a slight conflict between the brand image and brand values of Lunette and taking the product to Middle Eastern markets. This is because the values of Lunette, such as education and liberation of female bodies and menstruation, are not actualised in the Middle East, at least not to the same extent as in Lunette's country of origin, Finland. On the contrary, the Middle Eastern countries are criticised for the repression of female rights (Amnesty International, 2018, p. 55). However, one of the company's values is accessibility, and Lunette states that their goal is "to be a part of this positive change by making sure that everyone EVERYWHERE have a healthy, sustainable and affordable option for period products" (Lunette Global English, n.d.). This is a good motivator for bringing the Lunette cup to Middle Eastern consumers.

Lunette has retailers in Turkey, Israel and Gulf Countries, who are responsible for introducing the product to the new markets and translating the marketing material into the local languages. Lunette's Turkish retailer also imports menstrual cups to other countries in the region, such as Iran (S. Karjalainen, personal communication, January 7, 2020). Karjalainen (Ibid.) mentions how Lunette does not want to change their brand's tone of voice depending on the country, but that Lunette is aware of the virginity discourse and has noted this, for example, when partaking in development co-operation projects in developing countries. As a result of the virginity discourse, some of Lunette's retailers in the Middle East might recommend that the menstrual cup product only be used by married women (Ibid.).

Karjalainen (Ibid.) sees that all the current Lunette marketing material suits the Middle East but notes the importance of highlighting different aspects in varying markets: in some countries, the savings that menstrual cups bring is the key, in others it could be environmental matters. In the Middle Eastern countries, retailers might not mention that the menstrual cup can be used by virgins

as well, or they might stress that it is suitable for married women or women who have given birth. (Ibid.) Karjalainen (Ibid.) acknowledges that in countries that do not have a history of tampon use, the inter-vaginal product might be difficult to comprehend.

6.2 Collection of Data: Two-Step Analysis of the Lunette Website

The Lunette website analysis was conducted with a focus on the site's textual and visual material. The objective was to discover elements both textual and visual that could be deemed inappropriate or linked to taboos in Middle Eastern cultures, and that would demand careful attention when translating and localising the website to the target countries. The textual and visual elements that could receive a status of inappropriateness or a taboo were chosen based on the findings in chapter 5. Chapter 5 discusses Islam's teaching and how they might affect the use and perception of the menstrual cup, thus textual elements and images that could violate these teachings were collected. As discussed in chapter 5.2 and its subchapters, the Islamic doctrines that guided the material collection from the Lunette website were:

1. the cleanliness dogma that teaches that menstruation and menstruating women are impure

2. the dogmas on dressing and beauty that teach that women's bodies should not be exposed publicly and that excessive use of makeup and extreme altering of physical features are not approved

3. the dogmas on sexuality that teach that virginity is central for women, forbidding pre-marital sex, and that all matters of sex can only be discussed in peer groups.

The collection of material from the Lunette website started on December 7th, 2018 and concluded on December 14th, 2018. The Lunette websites were updated, and their contents were changed after this study was conducted. The collection of the material concentrated on the following sections of the website and their subsections:

1. Shop

2. About

3. How to

4. Company

5. Contact

The sections of the website that were excluded in the material collection were:

1. The Lunette blog, as it is dense with controversial content.

2. Shipping & Return and Privacy Policy, as they contain technical and legal information that is not relevant to this study.

3. Learn section, as it is dense with controversial content.

The Lunette blog was excluded from the material collection because of the controversial content both textual and visual it contains that would need to be wholly re-created or transcreated (see chapter 4.2) to follow the cultural norms of the Middle East. Examples of the controversial content are explicit references to female genitalia, menstrual blood and sexuality. Some of the blog posts, such as *10 Reasons Why You Should Switch To Lunette Cup* or *How To Clean Your Lunette Cup* could be translated into Middle Eastern versions with some changes to enable conformity to cultural norms. Examples of these could be the omission of explicit references to genitalia or sex. However, there are more extreme blog posts and their accompanying images that would most likely have to be excluded entirely and possibly replaced with freshly created content suitable for the target cultures. Blog posts that would need such a process are, for example, *Messy, Delectable and Queer* (see Image 1.) that discusses sex during menstruation and *Interview with Queen C*nt – Sacred or Profane?* that interviews two British performance art activists about their comedy sketch show Queen C*nt – Sacred or Profane. Both blog posts are built on topics that are highly sensitive taboos in the Arab world. The former is about sex during a time in woman's cycle that is considered unclean in Islam (see chapter 5.2.1), the latter already has an explicit reference to female genitalia in the title and discusses controversial topics such as pornography and sex (see chapter 5.2.3).

Image 1. Lunette website, Blog section, blog posts.

The Learn section of the Lunette website would also need to be subjected to the same treatment of re-creation as described above to comply with the Middle Eastern cultural norms. The section educates its readers in an explicit manner both textually and visually (see images 2. and 3.) on issues such as female anatomy, virginity and the breaking of the hymen. As already discussed in chapter 5.3.3, such topics are taboos according to the doctrines of Islam. For this reason, it might be safer for Lunette not to mention these topics in such an explicit manner, if at all.

FEEL FREE TO GRAB A MIRROR AS YOU READ THIS

Checking out your vulva while you learn about all of its different parts can help you become more familiar with your anatomy—and there's a lot to learn.

EXTERNAL ANATOMY

clitoral hood
glans clitoris
the urethral opening
the labia majora
the labia minora
vaginal opening
perineum

As the term implies, the external female anatomy includes the genitals that are outside the body. Collectively, this region is called the vulva. The vulva includes the outer and inner lips of the labia (labia majora and labia minora), clitoris, and the openings to the urethra and vagina *~the whole enchilada~*. This entire area is often mistakenly referred to as the vagina — what you can see externally is simply the vaginal opening. You'll learn more about the vagina later in the internal anatomy section.

lunette

Image 2. Lunette website, Learn section, Anatomy 101.

CERVIX

Do you know what a cervix looks like? If you haven't already google imaged it (which we highly recommend you do), we're here to break it down for ya. During menstruation, the cervix plays a key role in this process.

Knowing where your period comes from not only helps you understand your body more, but it empowers you!
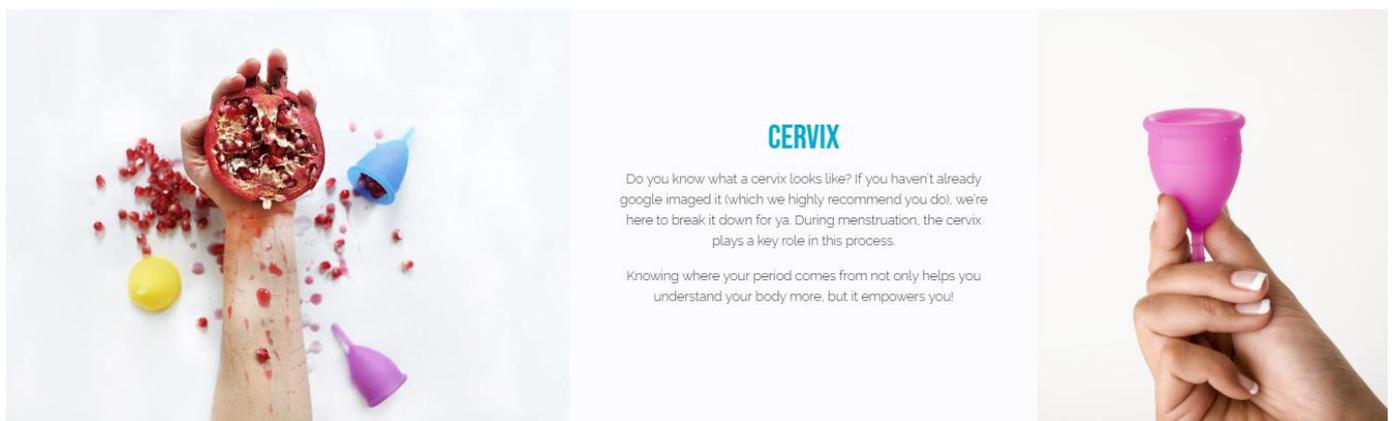
Image 3. Lunette website, Learn section, Cervix.

6.2.1 Textual Analysis of the Lunette Website

Text content is a natural and significant part of any website, as discussed in chapter 2.5. Thus, the textual content of the Lunette website was central in the data gathering. The aim of the textual analysis was to find text content that might be deemed as inappropriate or seen to represent a taboo in the Middle Eastern culture. Although singular words such as 'vagina' or 'liberation' were examined in this context, the collection of data focused on long text elements, for example, sentences and whole paragraphs, so that individual words would not be removed from their context.

Textual elements that could receive a status of being inappropriate or a taboo in the Middle Eastern cultures were collected. The decisions on what to include were based on chapter 5 and its subchapters that investigate Islamic dogmas on themes such as cleanliness and virginity that might affect how the menstrual cup is used and perceived. Following from this, textual elements that could violate these doctrines were collected.

The chosen textual elements could include either implicit, explicit or both types of references that violated the Islamic dogmas. Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson (1986, p. 182) mention *explicatures* and *implicatures* as aspects of verbal communication. They (Sperber & Wilson, 1986, p. 182) define explicature as explicitly communicated information and implicature as implicitly communicated information. Sperber and Wilson (1986, p. 199) differentiate between strong and weak implicatures, the definition of the two summarized by Barbara Phillips (1997, p. 78) where the strong is the "obvious interpretation, the thing that comes first to mind, weak requires more mental work and further inference." Based on their insights, the receivers of an implicature message will try to interpret it from the context, and by choosing from all the possible premises and conclusions they can arrive at (Sperber & Wilson, 1986, pp. 194, 199). The weaker the implicature, the more possibilities of choice.

The findings of the textual analysis were classified into six different categories. There are seven categories altogether, but the first one was reserved for images:

1. Controversial portrayal of the female body in images

2. Controversial concepts and images

3. Western cultural values

4. Implicit reference to taboo topics

5. Explicit reference to taboo topics

6. Concepts non-existent in the Middle Eastern cultures

7. Profane language

While I was analysing the Lunette website, the above categories felt an intuitive way to arrange the collected material. No other method was used to devise the categories, except the so-called 'gut feeling'. The findings of the textual analysis are presented in an Excel table (Appendix 1.), and they

formed the basis for the interview material (chapter 6.3.4) as well as the images from the image analysis (below).

6.2.2 Image Analysis of the Lunette Website

The theory section stressed on several occasions the importance of images in marketing (2.1.2) and their role in localisation. Thus, the images were a central part of the Lunette website analysis. The objective of this visual analysis was to find images that might be deemed inappropriate or seen to represent a taboo in the Middle Eastern culture. The focus was solely on images and pictures, not on the website's other possible visual representations, such as small clickable icons.

Images from the Lunette website that could be labelled as inappropriate or seen to refer to a taboo in the Middle East were included in the analysis. The decisions of what to include in this category were based on the findings in chapter 5 and its subchapters that list different Islamic doctrines that could affect the use and perception of the menstrual cup. I collected images that could violate these teachings. The chosen images could include either direct, indirect or both types of references that violated the Islamic dogmas. The same division by Sperber and Wilson (1968, p.182) to explicit and implicit expressions, explicature and implicature, that was used in the textual analysis (6.1.2) was employed in the visual analysis as well. This was done even though Sperber's and Wilson's (1968) concepts were developed for verbal communication.

The visual analysis did not concentrate on analysing the colours used in the images, although they have been researched widely in the field of advertising (Sehera, Arshada, Ellahib & Shahidc, 2012; Moore, Stammerjohan & Coulter, 2005; Lichtlé 2007), UX and UXD (Abegaz, Dillon & Gilbert, 2015; Cyr, Head & Ivanov, 2006; Guo, 2016). The findings of the image analysis were sorted into the first two categories out of the seven listed earlier, controversial portrayal of the female body in images and controversial concepts and images.

All the findings of the image analysis of the Lunette website can be found in an Excel table (Appendix 1.) alongside the findings of the textual analysis. The image material formed the basis for the interview material (see chapter 6.3.4).

6.3 Collection of Data: Interviews

The textual and visual analysis of the Lunette website was followed by interviews of three women from the Middle East. Consequently, the interview questions and material presented in the interviews were selected from amongst the findings of the two-level analysis. The pieces of text and

images discussed in the textual and visual analysis also functioned as hypotheses that the interviewees either validated or disproved. The hypotheses are presented in chapter 6.3.4. The sub-chapters below outline the process of recruiting interviewees (6.3.1), present the interviewees (6.3.2) and explain how the interviews were conducted (6.3.3).

6.3.1 Recruiting Interviewees

The interviewees were recruited from among Middle Eastern women as they represent both the target group of Lunette's marketing activities and experts in the knowledge of what would be deemed inappropriate or taboo content in their respective cultures. Women from the age group of 18–55 were the desired interviewees because most women have their menopause and the end of their period by the age of 55 (Stöppler, n.d., "Menopause"). Interviewees that are still on their period have a better grasp of what it is like to deal with menstruation in the Middle East and of the appropriate ways of referring to menstruation-related topics.

This study used the snowball or chain sampling method since the study's research topic is sensitive by nature. Additionally, the interviewees were challenging to reach as they had to be women from the Middle East, and I do not have any direct contact with the desired target audience. Patrick Biernacki and Dan Waldorf (1981, p. 141) describe the snowball method as yielding "a study sample through referrals made among people who share or know of others who possess some characteristics that are of research interest." Potential interviewees were contacted indirectly through friends, acquaintances, companies and organisations that might be connected to the target group or work with them.

The sensitive nature of the topic hindered acquiring interviewees. Many potential interviewees declined to participate in the research since they felt uneasy about discussing issues such as menstruation. The fact that so many women declined could indicate that the women in this study's population were more liberal compared to the general population. Some other reasons for declining were that interviewees felt uncomfortable being audio recorded, and many of the contacted women in the target group were simply not aware of what a menstrual cup is. Though, it must be noted that not knowing the product would not have been a problem per se as the focus of this research is on the marketing communications on the website, not, for example, on the product itself. Moreover, I discovered later that some of the potential interviewees who declined had thought that they would be interviewed about their use of period products. This might follow from language barriers, and because the potential interviewees were contacted through other people, the message might have been altered in the process.

6.3.2 Interviewees

The interviewees were three 35–44-year-old women, two from Iran and one from Syria. The interviewees were given pseudonyms to hide their identities and will be referred to as Anahita, Badia and Chalipa. All names are according to the culture and the Middle Eastern country of their origin. The interviewees are presented below in the same order they were interviewed. Details of their age and the time they have been residing in each country are given in a range format to protect their identities.

1. Anahita is a 35–44-year-old woman from Iran. She has been living outside Iran for more than 10 and less than 15 years and is currently residing in Finland.

2. Badia is a 35–44-year-old woman from Syria. She has been living outside Syria for more than 5 and less than 10 years, 3 of those years in Lebanon, so she is familiar with that culture as well. She is currently residing in Germany for less than 5 years.

3. Chalipa is a 35–44-year-old woman from Iran, but she was born in a refugee camp in Iraq where she lived for more than 15 and less than 20 years. She is thus familiar with the Iranian culture only through her family and relatives. She is currently residing in Finland for more than 20 and less than 25 years.

6.3.3 Conducting the Interviews

I conducted the interviews in February 2019, two in the Tampere area face to face and one via a Skype connection. A few hours before the Skype interview, I sent the interviewee an email with the interview material, thus she had more time to acquaint herself with it than the two other interviewees. I audio recorded two out of the three interviews since one interviewee declined to be audio recorded. The duration of the interviews varied from approximately 10 minutes to approximately 25 minutes.

I first explained the interviewees what the research was about and where the material for the interviews was collected from. I then presented the interviewees with seven different exhibits that I chose from the results of the Lunette website analysis (see Appendix 1.). Every single item represented a different category that I classified the results in based on the readings about the Middle Eastern cultural norms and Islamic dogmas (see chapter 5.2). I asked the interviewees an open-ended question on whether they thought the material presented would work as such if it were taken to their respective country and translated into their respective language. The interviews could have yielded more extensive results with further questions.

I conducted two out of the three interviews in Finnish because the interviewees were either more advanced in the language than in English or preferred to have the interview in Finnish. For the Finnish interviews, I translated the textual exhibits from Lunette's global English website into Finnish. I presented the interviewees with both the original English and the translated Finnish text exhibits. The exhibits for these interviews were not collected straight from the Finnish site as the two sites are not interchangeable content-wise and the global English site is the focus of the research. Later, for analysing the interviews' results, I also translated the citations from the Finnish interviews into English. The interviewees' answers were transliterated and included in the analysis with minimum to mid-range precision (Koskinen, Alasuutari & Peltonen, 2005, pp. 319–320). The minimum precision included forming a general idea of what the interviewees' answers entailed and the mid-range precision included some citations in addition to the general idea (Ibid.). The maximum range precision, where the interviews are transliterated word by word (Ibid.) was not used in this study.

6.3.4 Interview Material and Hypotheses

Chapter 6.2 and its subchapters demonstrated how data was collected from the Lunette website, and this chapter shortly lists the material that was derived from that analysis and used in the interviews. Also listed below are the hypotheses founded on the material collected from the Lunette website. The validity of the hypotheses was later tested in the interviews. The interviewees were presented with two different images and five text snippets from the Lunette website.

Image 4., exhibit 1., from the Lunette landing page (see below) is a picture of a young teenaged woman dressed in a sports bra. Hypothesis 1. is that the picture violates the norms of Islam that dictate that women should cover their bodies.
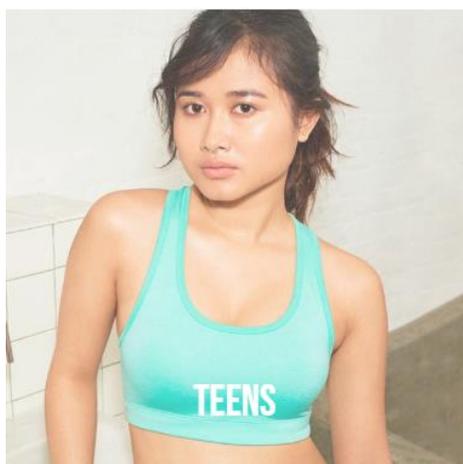
Image 4. Lunette website, landing page.

Image 5., exhibit 2., from the Lunette landing page (see below) depicts a tattooed wrist and a hand, the fingers making a V-sign with a pink menstrual cup between the index and the middle finger. Hypothesis 2. is that the image is controversial since Islam does not allow tattoos and the V-sign can have a disputable meaning in different Middle Eastern countries and cultures.

Image 5. Lunette website, landing page.

Exhibit 3. is a text snippet from the Lunette landing page that lists the company's central values:

> (1.) Lunette is all about liberation. We're advocates of individuality without selfishness, community without conformity and of course equality for all. You don't need anyone to "empower" you, because you already have the power within to liberate yourself from external expectations, limitations and period care products that are bad for your body and the environment.

Hypothesis 3. that these are values that do not exist in the Middle Eastern cultures in the same way they do in Western countries, or that the values bear a different meaning.

Exhibit 4. is a text snippet from the Lunette website's shop section. It describes a translucent menstrual cup:

> (2.) Keep a clear head (and clean sheets) so you can focus on the important distractions in life.

Hypothesis 4. that the exhibit is an implicit reference to the cleanliness taboo since the mention of 'clean sheets' invites the reader to picture the opposite.

Exhibit 5. is a text snippet from the FAQ section of the Lunette website. It describes spotting:

> (3.) Spotting: A drop or two of blood, not even requiring a sanitary pad though you may prefer to use one.

Hypothesis 5. is that the exhibit's direct reference to blood is an explicit taboo that violates Islam's cleanliness dogma.

Exhibit 6. is a text snippet from the shop section of the Lunette website. It describes Lunette cleaning wipes.

> (4.) Lunette Wipes are your cleanser on the go when water is not an option. Road trips, Airplane bathrooms, festival porta-potties or just your office bathroom stall- you're totally covered.

Hypothesis 6. is that some of the concepts listed in the exhibit do not exist in Middle Eastern cultures, at least not to the same extent as in Western cultures. The concepts investigated are road trips, aeroplane bathrooms, festival porta-potties and office bathroom stalls.

Exhibit 7. is a text snippet from the *How to* section of the Lunette website. It instructs the menstrual cup users on how to clean the product.

> (5.) Wash your hands and clean your cup with water and mild soap (seriously, none of that scented crap!).

Hypothesis 7. is that the cuss word the exhibit includes is not acceptable in Middle Eastern cultures as Islam prohibits cussing.

6.4 Possible Biases

Because the population of the research is somewhat small and because two out of three women are from the same country, no all-encompassing conclusions can be made based on the interviews. Jeffrey and Chisnell (2008, p. 72) recommend that usability tests have a minimum of four to five participants from one audience cell since according to research, this number will reveal 80 per cent of a product's usability problems for that audience. Furthermore, that 80 per cent will include most of the significant usability issues (Ibid.). Thus, the size of this study's population is not ideal for revealing the lion's share of the usability deficiencies of the Lunette website's content.

The fact that so many women declined to be interviewed because of the sensitive nature of this topic could indicate that the women interviewed were more liberal than the majority that declined. This can affect the results. The fact that all the interviewees are from the same age group and that none of the interviewees live in the culture of their origin can also distort this study's results. The interviewees living outside their native countries are somewhat distanced from their culture of origin, especially those who have been away for a more extended period and might be affected by the "new" culture and its cultural norms.

Furthermore, one of the women was Iranian by ethnicity but was born and raised in a refugee camp in Iraq. According to her own words, this meant that she was not so familiar with Iranian culture

and cultural norms as opposed to someone having been both born and raised in Iran. The differing educational backgrounds of the interviewees can be another distorting factor. Two of three interviewees were from a higher education background and might thus view the topic with a more liberal attitude.

The interview material from the global English website that contained text was translated into Finnish for two out of the three interviews. Something could have been lost in the translation process, though I am a translation major and the interviewees were presented with both the original English text and the translated Finnish text. It must also be noted that as two out of the three interviews were conducted in Finnish, the citations from these interviews were translated into English. This again poses the threat that the translation process altered the meaning of the interviewees' answers.

Two out of the three women were interviewed face to face, one through a Skype connection. The different methods can also affect the results of this study. Here it must be noted that some hours before the Skype interview was conducted, I sent the interviewee the interview material by email. Thus, the Skype interviewee had more time to accustom herself with the material than the women who interviewed face to face, which could have affected the Skype interviewee's answers.

Earlier, the somewhat constraints a culture imposes on an individual's ability to fully understand other cultures were discussed. This thought was expressed by Frow (1995, p. 3), among others. This idea is another possible bias that might have affected, for example, what material I chose to include in the analysis from the Lunette website and how I categorised that material.

7 The Lunette Website and the Interviews

The analysis of this research is divided into two steps, as discussed earlier. The textual and visual analysis of the Lunette website is first discussed on a general level (7.1) before a more in-depth, detailed plunge into a few prominent examples from the results (7.1.1–7.1.7). These results and the examples examined are the material that was used in the interviews. Chapter 7.2 and its subchapters present the analysis of the interviews. The interviews are thus a continuum to the first part of the analysis as they either validate or disprove the hypotheses derived from the textual and visual analysis' results.

7.1 Lunette Website

The objective of the Lunette website analysis was to find both textual and visual material that could be seen as culturally insensitive and a taboo in the Middle Eastern cultural context, and that could hinder the UX and usability of the website in the Middle East. These culturally insensitive, taboo elements would then demand particular attention in the UXD process of translating, transcreating and localising the content in the Middle East.

The material that was chosen from the Lunette website to be scrutinised somehow violated the Islamic dogmas presented in chapter 5.2 and its subchapters. The collection of the material took place during one week in December 2018. All the sections of the Lunette website were included in the analysis except for the Lunette blog and learn section because of the density of controversial content. The shipping & return and privacy policy sections were also excluded, as they contained technical and legal information that is not relevant to this study.

I divided the results of the Lunette website analysis intuitively into 7 different categories, based on the so-called 'gut feeling'. The images occupied the first one and shared the second one with textual content. Categories 3–7 were solely dedicated to textual content:

1. Controversial portrayal of the female body in images, 4 cases

2. Controversial concepts and images, 10 cases

3. Western cultural values, 2 cases

4. Implicit reference to taboo topics, 4 cases

5. Explicit reference to taboo topics, 30 cases

6. Concepts non-existent in the Middle Eastern cultures, 3 cases

7. Profane language, 2 cases

As some of the categories have a large number of cases, the following chapters will discuss only some of the most prominent cases. It is worth noting that if the instances included in one category contained several issues that fell under other categories as well, they were still kept in the category that seemed most fitting to avoid duplicate references.

7.1.1. Controversial Portrayal of the Female Body in Images

As discussed in chapter 5.3.3, Islam instructs that the female body must be covered. What is more, Islam does not approve of extreme altering of physical features, such as eyebrow shaping and hair dyeing other than with black dyes, henna or *katm*. The marketing communications of Lunette's global English website's portrayal of the female body and female aesthetics seems to contradict these dogmas, and the four cases from the Lunette website fall into the category under discussion because they contradict these convictions. In two out of the four images, the female model's nipples are visible through her top (see Image 6. below and Image 7. in Appendix 2.).
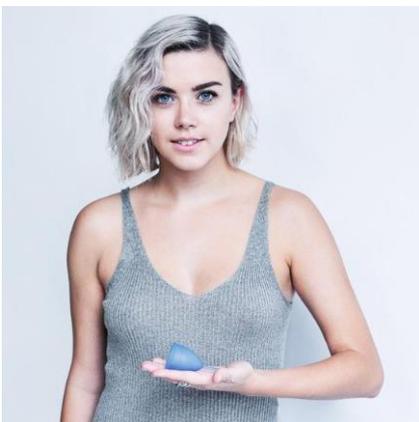
Image 6. Lunette website, landing page.

The third image shows a young girl dressed in a sports bra (see Image 4. below), and the fourth portrays a female model visibly not wearing a bra under her top (see Image 8. in Appendix 2.).

Image 4. Lunette website, landing page.

7.1.2 Controversial Concepts and Images

The instances in this category are controversial for varying reasons. Several of them include a picture of a hand forming the V-gesture and holding a menstrual cup (see Image 5. below).

Image 5. Lunette website, landing page.

The reference here seems to be to a vagina with a menstrual cup inside it—although this might depend on the person interpreting the image. Furthermore, the V-gesture the image includes can have other meanings depending on the culture interpreting it and what way the palm is facing ("Bush's V-Sign", 1992; "V-sign", 2003). In several countries in the Middle East, the V for victory symbol appears to stand for "peace" (Zelinsky, 2011, "The peace sign in the Middle East"). However, this might not apply to all the Middle Eastern countries and cultures. Nonetheless, the image is likely to be controversial since it depicts a tattooed wrist. Islam forbids tattoos (see chapter 5.2.2).

It can be questioned whether all the images portraying the left hand of a woman without a wedding ring on it are too strong a signal that unmarried women are using this product. Breaking the hymen with a tampon is a fear among Middle Eastern women—and men—so inserting a menstrual cup inside the body would be a cause for the same fear. However, not all cultures wear the wedding ring on the left hand, and so this observation was not taken into account in the analysis or later in the interviews.

Contraception is another controversial issue that the FAQ section of the Lunette website mentions. Quran's teachings and the general convictions on family planning and birth control in the Middle East are contradictory (Kridli, 2002, p. 181). In general, large families are valued, and especially sons are considered important, which can hinder family planning and lead to women having several children if they have not conceived a son yet (Kridli, 2002, p. 181). Furthermore, some Muslims see Prophet Mohammed's call to marry and multiply as an encouragement against contraception (El-Islam, Malasi & Abu-Dagga, 1988, p. 942). On the other hand, the Prophet also instructed that the quality of human life should not be sacrificed for quantity (Kridli, 2002, p. 181). Al-Qaradawi (1999, pp. 103–104) states four valid reasons for the use of contraception: the pregnancy or delivery might harm the mother or the baby; more children might worsen the family's quality of life; the upbringing of the children might suffer as the new baby demands so much time and attention; the pregnancy might harm a suckling infant. In the website translated, transcreated and localised in the Middle East, the mention of contraception could be controversial.

7.1.3 Western Cultural Values

The cases in this category emphasise cultural values of Western societies that might be considered non-existent, controversial or at least significantly different in a Middle Eastern cultural setting. These cases are somewhat more abstract than those in other categories, and as there is no directly usable comparative material to support them, they are more open for debate.

The most prominent examples are from the Lunette landing page:

> (1.) Lunette is all about *liberation*. We're advocates of *individuality* without selfishness, community without *conformity* and of course *equality* for all. You don't need anyone to "*empower*" you, because you already have the power within to *liberate* yourself from external expectations, *limitations* and period care products that are bad for your body and the environment.

The italics were added to highlight the problematic concepts that might be considered Western and not transferrable as such to Middle Eastern cultures. Liberation, equality and limitations might be controversial in countries that are critiqued for gender inequality and the lack of human rights.

Liberation might also entail different tones for the Middle Eastern audiences as many countries in the area have suffered or are still suffering from conflicts that are the consequence of different liberation acts such as the Arab spring. Individuality and not always conforming to the community's rules are widely known as prominent features of Western societies and would not probably sit well in the Middle Eastern societies where the community, especially families, and abiding by them are of paramount importance (Ali, Taqi & Krishnan, 1997, p. 635). 'Empowerment' might be a difficult subject since the Middle Eastern countries are accused of violations of human and women's rights (Amnesty International, 2018, p. 55).

7.1.4 Implicit Reference to Taboo Topics

The cases in this category are debatable as well since their implicit nature renders their points of reference somewhat ambiguous. The most prominent example is from the website's shop section, the description of the translucent menstrual cup:

> (2.) Keep a clear head (and clean sheets) so you can focus on the important distractions in life.

The reference to keeping the sheets clean might in the context of the menstrual cup provoke the opposite image of clean sheets in the minds of some readers, one of the sheets covered in blood. This is perhaps not desirable in the Middle Eastern cultures where cleanliness is a prime value and periods are considered unclean (see chapter 5.2.1).

7.1.5 Explicit Reference to Taboo Topics

This category is the most populated. A majority of the cases in the category include explicit reference to genitalia, a taboo in the Middle Eastern countries (see chapter 5.2.3), Though, these references are quite expected with the product in question. One instance from the violet menstrual cup description has a reference to being sexy, another taboo topic, especially outside marriage (see chapter 5.2.2):

> (6.) Chic and classy, this cup is for all of you out there who know that strong and mighty can also be elegant and foxy.

The category also includes many cases that discuss menstrual blood, such as this example from the FAQ section:

> (3.) Spotting: A drop or two of blood, not even requiring a sanitary pad though you may prefer to use one.

These might contradict the cleanliness paradigm of Islam (see chapter 5.2.1).

7.1.6 Concepts Non-Existent in the Middle Eastern Cultures

The cases in this category include concepts that are mundane in the Western world but do not necessarily exist in the Middle Eastern cultures, at least not to the same extent. The website's shop section describes Lunette cup wipes as follows (italics added):

> (4.) Lunette Wipes are your cleanser on the go when water is not an option. *Road trips, Airplane bathrooms, festival porta-potties* or just your *office bathroom stall-* you're totally covered.

All these italicised examples can be argued to exist in the Middle East, yet they are questionable. The Middle Eastern people, of course, move around by cars but it is debatable whether road trips in the sense of travelling great distances and making the trip itself an experience exist in these cultures. Furthermore, aeroplanes in the Middle East have toilets just as everywhere else, but arguably a majority of the Middle Eastern women never get to experience them. Travel by plane is reserved only to the higher social classes, and, at least in Saudi Arabia, only to women whose male guardian permits them to travel (Hubbard, 2019, "American woman, divorced from Saudi husband").

The Middle Eastern countries do have music festivals. However, most of them appear to be arranged for tourists in tourist destinations such as Dubai (Scenenoise Team, 2018, "10 first-rate Middle Eastern music festivals"). Music festivals with local acts seem to be arranged as well but in perhaps more liberal Middle Eastern countries like Lebanon (Ibid.). Singing is permitted in Islam if the topic of the song follows Islamic teachings, the music is not exciting, and the manner of delivery does not violate Islamic morals by, for example, being sexual (Al-Qaradawi, 1999, pp.151–152). The mention of offices could be questionable as many women in the Middle East are not allowed to work, as their place is at home (Kanso, 2018, "'Men don't want women to work'").

7.1.7 Profane Language

Cussing and swearing are seen as evil and considered as sins in Islam (Bint Shameem, n. d.). Thus, the following manner in which Lunette instructs the menstrual cup users to wash the product might be perceived as controversial (italics added):

> (5.) Wash your hands and clean your cup with water and mild soap (seriously, none of that scented *crap*!).

Though, it must be noted that 'crap' here is a slang way of replacing words such as 'junk' or 'goods' that is a feature of English and would probably not work in Arabic or Persian in any case.

7.2 Interviews

The question this study aims to answer is whether Lunette's global English website's marketing communications has textual and visual elements that are taboos or culturally insensitive in the context of Middle Eastern markets, so that they would be perceived as socially unacceptable, hinder the website's UX and usability and should be given special attention in the UXD process of translating, transcreating and localising the content to the Middle East. The textual and visual analysis produced material from the Lunette website that could be deemed culturally insensitive or taboos. The textual and visual analysis were followed by the second step of the analysis, the interviews, in which three women from the Middle East either validated or disproved the taboo status of the most prominent findings from the Lunette website.

The analysis of the interviews is divided into seven different sub-chapters (7.2.1–7.2.7). The interviewees were asked for their opinion on seven distinct examples from the Lunette website, each one representing one of the seven categories discussed in the textual analysis. Before the analysis, the interviewees and their general attitudes toward the interview material are introduced.

Anahita, a 35–44-year-old woman from Iran, was interviewed first. She has been living outside Iran for more than 10 and less than 15 years and is currently residing in Finland. Anahita had a very laissez-faire attitude toward the material presented to her during the interview. It appeared that in her opinion, all of the material could be transferred to the Iranian website and translated into Persian without much localisation or transcreation measures. Interestingly, this is not in agreement with how many possible interviewees declined to be interviewed about the topic because of its sensitive nature. Anahita did mention that according to her, these topics were a taboo 20–30 years ago.

Badia, a 35–44-year-old woman from Syria, was interviewed second. She has been living outside Syria for more than 5 and less than 10 years, 3 of those years in Lebanon, so she is familiar with that culture as well. She is currently residing in Germany for less than 5 years. Badia's perception of the interview materials' social acceptability was different from Anahita's. She did not see any problems with the majority of exhibits presented and repeatedly mentioned how other menstrual hygiene companies often employ a similar way of communicating about their products in advertising in Syria. Nevertheless, Badia found a few examples somewhat controversial, but not on a highly significant level. Badia was not that familiar with the menstrual cup, so she was exceedingly curious about the product and its use, asking several questions on how the product worked.

Chalipa, a 35–44-year-old woman from Iran, was interviewed last. Chalipa was born in a refugee camp in Iraq where she lived for more than 15 and less than 20 years. Chalipa doubted whether she could give an accurate answer to the questions presented because of her refugee-camp background and not having been born and raised in Iran. She is familiar with Iranian culture only through her family and relatives. She is currently residing in Finland for more than 20 and less than 25 years.

Interestingly, though being born and raised outside Iran, Chalipa was strictest in her opinions about the material's social acceptability and taboo status. She perceived most of the exhibits as not suited for an Iranian cultural setting or found them at least controversial.

7.2.1 Controversial Portrayal of the Female Body in Images

The first exhibit (Image 4.) depicts a young woman, allegedly a teenager, in a sports bra. Hypothesis 1. is that the image would break the Islamic norm that the female body should be covered.

Anahita stated that the image would be acceptable or non-acceptable depending on the place of publication. It would be suitable online where anyone can, for example, Google it. In public places, such as in a school or a university, the image would not do. Anahita claims this is because the young woman portrayed in the image wears a piece of clothing that is like a bikini top. Anahita's statement agrees with the hypothesis presented earlier that the female body should be covered, yet it contradicts the assumption that this would bear significance in the translation, transcreation and localisation process of the Lunette website. Anahita did mention that some websites in Iran have been blocked, such as sites containing pornographic material and Facebook. However, Anahita considered the image in question mild enough so that the translated, transcreated and localised Lunette site would not be blocked. It is interesting to ponder whether the Iranian authorities would agree with this.

Badia concurred with Anahita in that the image displayed would not cause issues on the Lunette website in Syria. Furthermore, she did not see any problems with an image such as this presented even on television or social media in Syria*:*

> (7.) No problem now. I think, because, so many, there are so many international companies. Sport companies or clothes companies, or… So many pictures like this in the television or in Facebook or Instagram, I mean no problem. (Anahita)

Chalipa's opinion was opposite to those of Anahita and Badia. She regarded the image non-acceptable on a website in Iran. To explain her view, Chalipa simply stated: (8.) *Not enough clothes on.* (Chalipa)

Hypothesis 1. that states the image (Image 4.) violates Islamic norms that dictate that women should cover their bodies is neither supported nor refuted by the interviewees. The interviewees' answers are not in unison, and so a general conclusion cannot be formed. Anahita and Badia disprove the hypothesis as they see Exhibit 1. would be acceptable on a website in the Middle East, but Chalipa's answer disagrees with this and supports the hypothesis.

7.2.2 Controversial Concepts and Images

The second exhibit (Image 5.) depicts a tattooed wrist and hand in a V-gesture with a menstrual cup. Hypothesis 2. is that the tattoo would be controversial since Islam prohibits tattoos and that the V-gesture could possibly have an offensive or otherwise controversial meaning in the interviewees' cultures.

Anahita noted that not that many people in Iran know what the menstrual cup is. When asked about it, Anahita confirmed that the product should be presented to Iranians differently than in the image discussed. However, she did not go into further detail or explain whether, for example, the V-sign would be acceptable.

The image seemed to puzzle Badia. She was so focused on trying to understand what the image depicted and expressed that it kept stealing her attention away from the actual acceptability of the image. Badia felt that with the tattoo, the image would not be as acceptable as possible but would still not cause any more substantial issues.

> (9.) I think it won't be so beloved, you know. I don't think it will something that they like it. But it's not a big problem. -- It's not something very positive, to be accepted, because of the, like you said, the tattoo, or little bit the dark nails, and these rings around. (Badia)

The painted nails and the rings were not details that were considered in the first part of the analysis. However, painting nails with such a distinguishable and bold colour is possibly against the Islamic norms of beauty enhancements (see chapter 5.2.2).

Chalipa was strict in declaring that the tattoo in the image would be an issue: (10.) *No, no tattoos in Islam.* (Chalipa). However, she clearly stated that the V-sign would be acceptable. She did not report any other controversial or unacceptable details concerning the image.

Hypothesis 2. that the image (image 5.) is controversial since Islam does not allow tattoos and the V-sign can have a disputable meaning in different Middle Eastern countries and cultures is partly supported by the interviewees' answers. Anahita observed that the image would not be socially acceptable as such but did not make it clear what part of the exhibit would not be suitable. Badia found the tattoo in the exhibit controversial but not strictly so. Badia also acknowledged that the painted nails and rings in the image would not necessarily be suitable but did not comment on the image's V-sign specifically, nor did she mention that it would be somehow offensive. Chalipa stated that the tattoo would not be socially acceptable but that the V-sign would cause no issues. Hypothesis 2. is only partly supported and would demand more research, not least because the interviewees reacted to details that were not considered in the Lunette website analysis.

7.2.3 Western Cultural Values

After discussing the images, the interviewees were presented with the first text snippet from the Lunette website, Exhibit 3. This piece of text is from the Lunette landing page, listing the company's central values. Hypothesis 3. is that these values do not exist in the cultures of the Middle Eastern countries similar to how they exist in Western countries, or that they would be understood differently.

> (1.) Lunette is all about liberation. We're advocates of individuality without selfishness, community without conformity and of course equality for all. You don't need anyone to "empower" you, because you already have the power within to liberate yourself from external expectations, limitations and period care products that are bad for your body and the environment.

Anahita stated first that the exhibit would work as such in a Persian translation, transcreation and localisation. When she was asked further about the values the piece of text presented, such as freedom and equality, Anahita argued that this was again dependent on the context of the discussion. On the Lunette website and in the context of periods this would be passable, however not in some other contexts.

> (11.) Firstly, you should see what the topic under discussion is. If it is, like, human rights, there [Iran] really is no equality there. (Anahita)

Badia did not conceive the exhibit problematic and described that in Syria, the type of dialogue in the exhibit was already in use in the context of period care products.

> (12.) When you speak also in the advertising about Always, you know Always, they speak about also like liberation and freedom, you know? They use the same words, to be free, the same thing. I mean, not exactly the same thing but in the same meaning. (Anahita)

Chalipas's perceptions about the exhibit contrasted those of Anahita and Badia. Chalipa found the whole text in the exhibit controversial:

> (13.) Problematic in Iran, because of the religion of Islam. Women cannot do anything freely. (Chalipa)

The hypothesis 3. that the values in the exhibit (Exhibit 3.) do not exist in the Middle Eastern cultures in the same way they do in Western countries, or that the values bear a different meaning, was in general neither supported nor refuted by the interviewees' answers. The interviewees' answers are not in unison, and so a general conclusion cannot be formed. Anahita and Badia found the exhibit socially acceptable, but Chalipa perceived the whole piece of text as being problematic.

7.2.4 Implicit Reference to Taboo Topics

Exhibit 4. is a piece of text from the Lunette website's shop section and describes a translucent menstrual cup. Hypothesis 4. is that the exhibit's mention of clean sheets invites the reader to imagine the opposite, and so the expression is an implicit reference to the taboo of uncleanliness.

> (2.) Keep a clear head (and clean sheets) so you can focus on the important distractions in life.

Anahita did not see any problems or any sort of reference to taboo topics in Exhibit 4. Badia first compared this again to Always advertising, where women are shown to be able to, for example, concentrate better on work and move freely because of the unnoticeable period care products they are using.

However, when Badia's attention was drawn to the expression about clean sheets and whether this would raise images of the opposite, bloodied sheets, in the reader's mind, she read the piece of text again and slightly changed her opinion about it. Badia felt that the sentence or what it conveyed would not be offensive as such but that it would perhaps be better without the mention of clean sheets.

> (14.) I think it's enough to say if you keep a clear head. Maybe they do not get… Yeah… It will give the idea of what you want to say. (Badia)

Chalipa did not recognise any controversy with Exhibit 4. She did mention that cleanliness is of great importance in Islam. However, Chalipa did not notice that the exhibit would have implicitly referred to unclean sheets.

Hypothesis 4. that the exhibit is an implicit reference to the uncleanliness taboo since the mention of clean sheets invites the reader to picture the opposite was refuted by all of the interviewees.

Nevertheless, when prompted, Badia did feel that the piece of text would be enough without the mention of clean sheets.

7.2.5 Explicit Reference to Taboo Topics

Exhibit 5. is from the FAQ of the Lunette website and describes spotting. Hypothesis 5. is that as the exhibit includes a direct reference to blood, it might be considered a taboo and a violation of Islam's teachings on cleanliness, a central value in the religion.

> (3.) Spotting: A drop or two of blood, not even requiring a sanitary pad though you may prefer to use one.

Anahita recognised that the topics the text snippet discussed were a taboo perhaps decades ago, but not today.

> (15.) You know what, back in the day, could be that 30 years ago, 25, 20 years ago, these things have been a bit of a taboo. But today they are not. Nowadays, maybe even on TV, they talk about this topic. It has been studied that it is the most natural thing that can happen to women. (Anahita)

Badia felt somewhat similar to Anahita's opinion. Badia did not see mentioning blood as a taboo in this context.

> (16.) It's normal to make it clear, I mean, they need to understand… Because we are talking about a specific thing and we need to make sure everybody understands exactly what we are talking about. So, I mean, it's normal. (Badia)

Chalipa's answer was different from those of Anahita and Badia. Chalipa did not find the exhibit's reference to blood as socially unacceptable, but she considered the mention of it somewhat strange.

> (17.) We say 'period', we do not talk about blood. It simply just is so when you are accustomed to not needing to use that word. (Chalipa)

Hypothesis 5. that states that the exhibit's direct reference to blood is an explicit taboo that violates Islam's cleanliness norm was refuted by the interviewees. The interviewees did not perceive the exhibit as socially unacceptable, but in Badia's opinion, the use of the word 'blood' was strange.

7.2.6 Concepts Non-Existent in the Middle Eastern Cultures

Exhibit 6. is another one from the shop section of the Lunette website, a description of Lunette cleansing wipes to accompany the menstrual cup. Hypothesis 6. that some of the concepts the text snippet listed, such as festival porta-potties, do not exist in the Middle Eastern cultures, at least not to the same extent as in Western countries.

> (4.) Lunette Wipes are your cleanser on the go when water is not an option. Road trips, Airplane bathrooms, festival porta-potties or just your office bathroom stall- you're totally covered.

When discussing the exhibit, Anahita emphasised the importance of explaining to people in the country what Lunette is. However, she did not answer the question of whether concepts such as festivals exist in the Middle East in a similar manner they do in Western countries. Some further questioning might have yielded an answer to the points of interest.

Badia specified that festivals are not frequent in the Arabic countries and that they should maybe be replaced with something else in the exhibit:

> (18.) You can mention everything but yeah, festivals we don't have a lot but we can go at a party at night where there's no water in public toilets. -- So, it doesn't have to be festivals, actually we don't have festivals, but other things, yes. Like road trips, airplanes, public bathrooms. -- If you want it specifically for the Arabic planned, they don't have festivals. Or you can say… It can have something like public thing but it's [festivals] not really a thing here like in Europe. (Badia)

When Badia was further asked about the reference to office bathrooms, whether this would reach the right target audience and whether there are a lot of women in Syria working in office surroundings, she brought the discussion back to the topic of virginity.

> (19.) I think it's yeah, it's fine, but it won't work so good. Because of the teens or the girls who are not married are not going to use it. And women, yeah, it depends also on the… People who are little bit open-minded, they can use it. But there is a lot of women who work, but they are so traditional women they do not use it at all, I don't think they will use it, even if they are women and mothers and there is no problem in the… I mean, they are already married. The new generation, yes, but the number is not so big. (Badia)

Badia continued to discuss virginity, a theme that was already mentioned as a paramount value of Islam in chapter 5.3.3 that introduced Islam's dogmas on sexuality.

> (20.) It's something in the tradition and actually very important. You cannot easily change it. You don't expect that to be soon. Could be used, like I said, for a married woman or, and even not all of them, you know. Because for some of them it's not convenient. (Badia)

Badia's above statement is significant for Lunette as the marketed product is inserted inside the vagina, and the fear of breaking the hymen with hygiene products used inside the female genitalia is a present one.

Chalipa felt she was unable to answer questions about Exhibit 6. because of her background of being born and growing up in a refugee camp in Iraq. Chalipa had already expressed before that as she was familiar with the Iranian culture only through relatives and family and had not lived in the country, she might not be able to give accurate answers to the questions presented to her.

The hypothesis 6. that states some of the concepts listed in the exhibit do not exist in the Middle Eastern cultures, at least not to the same extent as in Western cultures, was partly supported by the

interviewees' answers. Badia mentioned festivals and porta-potties as concepts that do not exist in the Middle East, or at least Syria, in the same form as in Europe. Apart from this, the hypothesis was refuted. The fact that Chalipa felt she could not contribute to the discussion about this particular exhibit must be noted.

7.2.7 Profane Language

The last exhibit (Exhibit 7.) is a piece of text from the How to section of the Lunette website. The exhibit instructs the menstrual cup users on how to clean their product. Hypothesis 7. is that as the exhibit includes a cuss word prohibited in Islam, the exhibit would not be acceptable in the Middle Eastern cultures.

> (5.) Wash your hands and clean your cup with water and mild soap (seriously, none of that scented crap!).

Anahita found the expression acceptable, while Badia, on the contrary, did not see the use of cuss words as acceptable:

> (21.) Actually, we don't use… It won't work so good in Arabic. (Badia)

Chalipa's answer followed that of Badia's, although Chalipa was perhaps more determined in stating that in the Middle East, the use of cuss words is not allowed.

Hypothesis 7. that states that the cuss word the exhibit includes is not acceptable in the Middle Eastern cultures as cussing is prohibited in Islam received more support than disproval. However, as the interviewees' answers are not in unison, a general conclusion cannot be formed. Anahita did not support the hypothesis, Badia and Chalipa did.

8 Central Results and Discussion

This chapter focuses on the results of the two-phase analysis and on drawing ideas and possible conclusions from the results. The hypotheses and whether they were supported or not by the interviewee's answers are listed in chapter 8.1. These results are then discussed and linked back to the overall analysis. General conclusions and interpretations are built on the results in chapter 8.2.

8.1 Results of the Two-Step Analysis

The results of the textual and visual analysis were divided into seven different categories. Seven hypotheses were formed based on the most prominent exhibits from the textual and visual analysis' categories. The three interviewees' answers clearly refuted only two of the hypotheses (hypothesis 4. and hypothesis 5.) and gave partial support to two hypotheses (hypothesis 2. and hypothesis 6.).

However, Chalipa did not contribute to hypothesis 6. that Anahita and Badia supported. This was because of Chalipa's background of being born and growing up in a refugee camp in Iraq and her feeling that she could not always prove accurate answers as she knew the Iranian culture only through relatives and friends. The interviewees' answers did not form a consensus on the rest of the hypotheses. As a result, the interviewees' answers validated only one of the hypotheses and even that partly.

Hypothesis 1. was neither supported nor refuted. Anahita felt that Exhibit 1. (Image 4.), would have been acceptable on a website but not in advertisements in public places. Badia perceived the image to be adequate for advertising on different channels such as the Internet and television. The answers of Anahita and Badia suggest a clear and fascinating difference between the Middle Eastern countries and what sort of imagery is acceptable in each marketing channel. However, Chalipa's answers disrupted this as they were in stark contrast with those of Anahita and Badia. Chalipa considered the image to be unacceptable on a website.

Hypothesis 2. proved to be partly valid. All the interviewees appeared to view Exhibit 2.'s V-sign acceptable, although Anahita did not specifically comment on it. Badia and Chalipa clearly stated that the V-sign was acceptable and that the tattoo was not. Anahita did not comment on the tattoo either; however, she mentioned that the image was not functional as such. What is especially interesting about Exhibit 2. is Badia's comment about the darkly painted nails and the rings in the image. In the textual analysis, the rings and the nails were not something that caught my attention. This could be an example of a cultural difference in how people from various cultures are cued to see and react to distinct visual stimuli differently. However, this could also be simply a sign of individual preference as none of the other interviewees mentioned these details.

Hypothesis 3. proved to be partly supported. Anahita and Badia perceived Exhibit 3. and the values it included to be socially acceptable, albeit Anahita saw this as context-dependent, and even Badia mentioned the context of period hygiene product advertising. Chalipa found the exhibit problematic. It is fascinating that Anahita and Badia determined that the exhibit was acceptable in its context since the exhibit's text mentions "equality for all" and "liberation from external expectations". However, women are not equal to men in the Middle East, and the external expectations dictate even what type of period hygiene products the women can use. As Chalipa stated, (13.) *Women cannot do anything freely.* (Chalipa)

Hypothesis 4. proved to be false. All the interviewees agreed that Exhibit 4.'s mention of clean sheets was not an implicit reference to unclean sheets. Thus, it was not a taboo because of the violation of Islam's central cleanliness teachings. Nonetheless, after some reflection, Badia felt that the exhibit could suffice without the mention of clean sheets.

Hypothesis 5. proved to be false. None of the interviewees judged Exhibit 5. to be unacceptable, albeit Chalipa found the mention of blood strange and stated that she—and perhaps her circle of Iranian and possibly Middle Eastern persons—was not accustomed to using the word. Interestingly, the other two interviewees did not report a similar detail, even though Anahita and Badia are both ethnically Iranian. Could this be an example of a subculture within a culture (Suojanen et al., 2015, p. 20) that has different ways of referring to a phenomenon shared with the upper-level culture or the whole world?

Hypothesis 6. was partially refuted. However, interviews about Exhibit 6. did not produce clear answers with the interviewees. Anahita did not answer whether she thought the concepts Exhibit 6. included exist in a similar manner in the Middle East, and Chalipa did not feel able to provide a statement because of her refugee camp background. Badia mentioned that only one of the concepts listed in the exhibit does not exist in a similar manner in Syria.

Hypothesis 7. received support from two of the interviewees. Both Badia and Chalipa found the cuss word in the exhibit unacceptable, although Chalipa was perhaps stricter in her statement that the use of cuss words is not allowed in the Middle East. Anahita's answer was not in accordance with the other two, as she did not find any problems with the expression.

8.2 Discussion

The question this study set out to answer was whether Lunette's global English website's marketing communications had textual and visual elements that are taboos or culturally insensitive in the context of Middle Eastern markets, so that they would be perceived as socially unacceptable, hinder the website's UX and usability and should be given special attention in the UXD process of translating, transcreating and localising the content to the Middle East.

Out of the seven hypotheses that were based on the textual and visual analysis of the Lunette website material, only one was partially validated, and the interviewees gave the rest less support. The interviewees' answers disagreed both with each other and with the hypotheses. Iranian Anahita was the most liberal one out of the interviewees, whereas Iranian Chalipa was quite the opposite

with her conservative views. Syrian Badia's opinions were somewhere in between the polarising opinions.

The discrepancy between the interviewees' answers was surprising, since based on the literature on the cultural and religious norms in the Middle East (chapter 5.2), categorising the material collected from the Lunette website was a straightforward process. Although the social acceptability of some of the examples was debatable, the literature supported categorising most of the exhibits as evidently socially unacceptable in the Middle Eastern cultures. This could partly be a case of my cultural restrictions—as discussed by Frow (1995, p. 3)—and even falling into the trap of stereotypes. On the other hand, I might have been oversensitive with the material, believing that the exhibits I chose must be taboos and unacceptable since the Middle Eastern cultural norms imposed on women seem restrictive in my Western mind. On the other hand, the literature I used could contain stereotypes, and as some of the literature was published closer to 10 or over 10 years ago, the cultural realities printed in these sources might not match those that the interviewed women experience and engage in today.

Could the interviewees' varying socio-cultural backgrounds also explain the differences in their replies, as Anahita and Chalipa are both ethnically Iranian, yet had such firmly opposing views most of the time? Since Badia originates from Syria, it was impossible to determine whether the differences in Anahita's and Chalipa's answers reflected the various social groups or social classes of Iran. However, it must be noted that Chalipa was born and grew up in a refugee camp in Iraq. Hence, she is familiar with the Iranian culture only through family and friends and was insecure whether she could give accurate answers. The level of education of the women was not compared but could have yielded stimulating results. Nevertheless, here the problem would have been that the women acquired their education in different countries with different education systems.

It is difficult to draw any detailed conclusions from the analysis for the method had several restrictions. In the first part of the analysis, I could have overlooked some details in the content of the Lunette website that would have gained different reactions from the interviewees in the second part of the analysis. Also, the results of the interviews could have been different if all the material gathered during the textual and visual analysis were discussed instead of singular cases. Naturally, my inexperience in conducting interviews of this type could have affected the results. One way this could have been avoided, and that would have offered a very interesting method, would have been if the interviews were held at the same time in the form of focus group discussion so that the women would have had the opportunity to discuss their differing opinions.

The small size of the research population also set its restrictions, and finding interviewees was extremely difficult. As a result, the women who agreed to be interviewed could represent a more liberal section of the population in whole. Additionally, all the women in the population happen to be from the same age group, which can distort the results. It could have been more fruitful to interview Middle Eastern teenagers and young adults to see how they feel about the norms and constraints set by their culture when it comes to menstrual hygiene and how it relates to advertising these products. These age groups are perhaps more open to new period care products and might have a more contemporary understanding of how these topics are discussed in their cultures. Also, the younger generations are possibly more accustomed to encountering advertising through, for example, social media and the Internet. However, the girls and women in this age group could be more insecure and susceptible to cultural norms that disapprove of new period products as opposed to older, westernised women who possibly have more determined opinions and are confident in their values.

Interviewing women from the same country could have also been interesting, as such a study could have revealed possible differences between the subcultures and cultural groups within a culture. Now it is debatable whether the discrepancies in the interviewees' answers and stances reflect the difference between the countries of the Middle East or some other differences. My theory is that one significant explaining factor is the level of education since the interviewees with a higher level of education seemed to have a more liberal attitude toward menstruation and the exhibits from the Lunette website. Nonetheless, other elements could unravel the reason behind the diversity of the interviewees' answers: the length of absence from the original culture, living in multiple countries and cultures, travelling and seeing other cultures and their ways, among others.

This brings us back to Usunier's and Lee's (2013, pp. 10–12) statement about the unclear relationship between nationality and culture, and the other elements that build a person's culture: language, family and sex, among others. In other words, there is a danger of this study overgeneralising and simplifying the cultures of the Middle East. It is perhaps inevitable within the confinements of space and time allotted for a work of this size. However, this study does highlight the importance for brands to remember that nations and cultures are not interchangeable when products are introduced to new markets through the translation, transcreation and localisation of marketing messages.

One of the biggest questions this study leaves unanswered or maybe reveals is how to determine where the line between cultural restrictions, norms, taboos and personal preference goes. Do the

interviewees' contrasting answers simply reflect personal views on menstruation, how should they be discussed, and what is the appropriate way to address this topic in marketing messages? Moreover, how can all the myriad factors behind the personal preferences and opinions be considered? These questions are beyond the scope of this study, even perhaps the scope of what can be studied.

Some of the cultural nuances discussed in this study make having one "globalised" website to cater for all the audiences outside the different language versions somewhat impossible, at least in the context of the menstrual cup. The question that then follows is if a company potentially has a global consumer base, should the company then localise its website into every single language and culture of the world? Where can the line be drawn? If the resources companies have available for such localisation projects are considered, would one global version for Europe in the lingua franca English suffice, since the European cultures are arguably closer to each other than, for example, Finnish and Chinese cultures. However, 60 % of Spaniards cannot read, speak or write in English (Montero, 2017), although they represent 9 % of the population of the European Union (Marcu, 2018, p. 1). How should and could companies take into account multicultural nations, such as India, that have numerous subcultures with varying languages, dialects, religions, customs and norms?

The goal of this study was to answer the following question that was already presented in the beginning of this chapter: Does Lunette's global English website's marketing communications have textual and visual elements that are taboos or culturally insensitive in the context of Middle Eastern markets, so that they would be perceived as socially unacceptable, hinder the website's UX and usability and should be given special attention in the UXD process of translating, transcreating and localising the content to the Middle East?

It is safe to state that this study does reveal certain elements and cultural nuances in the global English website's marketing communications that should be considered if the UXD process of translation, transcreation and localisation of the Lunette website to the Middle East were to be successful so that the UX and usability would not be hindered. One of the most central cultural nuances is the importance of virginity in the Middle Eastern cultures that was emphasised in the literature about the Middle Eastern cultural and religious norms (chapter 5.3.3) and acknowledged several times by Badia. The virginity norm causes limitations on the marketing of the menstrual cup in the area, especially on how the product should be presented to different segments in the market, such as unmarried and married women, and how they should be motivated to use it. Thus, it would be extremely intriguing, fruitful, and of great importance to do more research on the topic.

9 Conclusion

The social acceptability of a website's marketing communications content, be it text or images, has the power to affect the usability and the UX of the website. If a website in one language and designed for a particular culture, is taken to another culture, the UXD process partly consisting of translation, localisation and transcreation should regard with especial care the content deemed socially unacceptable and culturally insensitive or taboos in the new culture.

This study's aim was to examine whether Lunette's global English website's marketing communications has textual and visual elements that are taboos or culturally insensitive in the context of Middle Eastern markets so that they would be perceived as socially unacceptable, hinder the website's UX and usability and should be given special attention in the UXD process of translating, transcreating and localising the content to the Middle East. The study relied on the theoretical framework and explored the concepts of marketing communications, UX and UXD, usability, social acceptability, localisation and transcreation. Text and images were relevant to these themes as this study discussed the importance of images in marketing, and UX, UXD and usability were considered from the point of view of the social acceptability of a website's content. The concept of culture was central throughout the study as its effect was present with all of the themes discussed, albeit it was more pronounced with some subject matters, for example, in the discussion of marketing across cultures, cultural usability and taboos. The discussion of taboos in the context of menstruation, usability and social acceptability emphasised the role of cultures, the importance of fathoming cultural differences and remembering cultural restrictions imposed on perceiving other cultures.

A whole section was dedicated to literature about the cultural norms of the Middle Eastern countries, mostly the ones that are influenced by Islam as it penetrates the area's cultures, conventions and customs so thoroughly. After the objectives, methodology and data of the study were presented, the cultural readings were reflected in the first part of the analysis, the gathering of controversial material, both textual and visual from the Lunette website. The material was divided into seven categories, and prominent examples from each category were formulated into seven hypotheses. These were then filtered through the sieve of three Middle Eastern women who were interviewed in the second stage of the analysis. The goal was that the women, experts in their culture's norms, would either validate or disprove the hypotheses.

Some of the material from the Lunette website that was identified as potentially culturally controversial was debatable. Many of the examples were supported by literature and other sources,

but it must be noted that my cultural background and possible subconscious prejudices could have affected the Lunette website analysis. Nonetheless, it is surprising that the interviewees' answers disagreed with the hypotheses and often with each other. Only one of the hypotheses was validated partially by the interviewees, and the rest did not receive strong support. Anahita seemed to represent the most liberal views, Chalipa was the most conservative one, and Badia occupied the middle ground. A more evident overall pattern of how the interviewees' answers contradicted each other could not be observed.

Since the interviewees' answers were not unanimous, the study did not yield unambiguous results. It is safe to say that the study did reveal some cultural nuances that could affect the social acceptability of Lunette's website's marketing communications content and thus hinder the UX and usability of the website taken to the Middle East, unless these elements were given enough attention in the UXD process of translation, transcreation and localisation. However, it is difficult to determine in a detailed manner what those factors threatening the UX and usability would be as a consequence of the discrepancies between the literature about the Middle Eastern cultural norms, the textual and visual analysis of the Lunette global English website and the interviewees' answers. It is also challenging to see how these factors could be generalised as the interviewees' answers could reflect, for example, the different subcultures within a culture.

However, one theme that seems to be highly controversial is the virginal state of Middle Eastern girls and women before marriage, as this was clearly stated in the literature examining the Middle Eastern cultural norms and often mentioned by Badia. The paramount importance of virginity is connected to the fear that inserting any other type of period hygiene products inside the female body would break the hymen. It can be assumed that this would deem building a global version of the Lunette website, capable of catering to the needs of all the possible readers of the world and respecting their cultures, impossible. The girls and women in liberal countries could be left feeling perplexed if there was no mention of the menstrual cup product's suitability for virgins, and the women in countries less liberal to pre-marital sex could be offended by this mention.

Reasons for why some of the interviewees' answers contradicted each other are mere assumptions. It was somewhat challenging to decipher the interviews' results and compare them to the textual and visual analysis since the study had shortcomings that hindered reaching clear results. The population of the study was small, and all the interviewees were from the same age group, although they still belonged to the target group of Lunette menstrual cup users. The size of the population was affected by the difficulty to recruit interviewees, and several potential interviewees declined to

participate because of the sensitive nature of the topic. It can thus be inferred that the women in this study's population were more liberal compared to the general population, and this could have been visible in their answers, although Chalipa seemed very conservative in hers.

The difficulties in recruiting interviewees signal that the topics of menstruation and menstruation hygiene still hold a taboo status among many Middle Eastern women. Some potential interviewees also declined to be recorded for various reasons, and finally, one interview had to be conducted without recording it. The taboo nature of the study's topic suggests that the translation, transcreation and localisation of the Lunette website would demand a delicate understanding of the cultural differences, and this task would suit translators working as cultural mediators.

The shortcomings of this study also emphasise the opportunities for how future studies could build on this base and improve it. A larger population with varying combinations of interviewees would possibly yield more fruitful answers. If all the interviewees were from the same country, this could reveal the different societal layers, cultures within cultures, and their stance on period hygiene products and how they should be discussed. However, a population with several women from different Middle Eastern countries could show a pattern of differences between countries.

Furthermore, the focus of future studies could also be changed. The interviewees' overall attitudes could be examined first so that they would be placed on a scale from liberal to conservative. It would be then interesting to see how these women perceive the social acceptability of the material from the Lunette website. Another intriguing study path would be to see how the attitudes of male heads of the family would shape the marketing communications of the Lunette website. It can often be the case that when women's menstrual hygiene products are purchased, the person behind the purchase is the male of the family who possibly oversees the finances and the spending.

Finally, if Lunette ever actually takes its website to the Middle East, the whole UXD process of translation, transcreation and localisation of the marketing communications with a dedication to socially acceptable content that avoids taboos and supports the UX and usability would provide fascinating material for research. Also, it would be exciting to see how consumers in the area would receive such a website. The possibilities for future studies within this framework are endless.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. Excel spreadsheet of the possibly controversial content from the Lunette Global English website

Category:	**Controversial Portrayal of the Female Body in Images**		
	Where	Example	Issue
	Landing page slide show	See Image 7.	Female body nipples visible, extreme altering of appearance (eyebrows, hair dye)
	Landing page	See Image 6.	Female body nipples visible, extreme altering of appearance (eyebrows, hair dye)
	Landing page	See Image 4.	Teen girl body unclad
	About --> What is a menstrual cup	See Image 8.	Female body very visible, no bra, extreme altering of appearance (eyebrows, hair dye)
Category:	Controversial Concepts and Images		
	Where	Example	Issue
	Landing page slide show	See Image 9.	V hand gesture.
	Landing page	See Image 5.	V hand gesture + "Tattoeed" wrist --> tattoos prohibited in the Sharia law but varying interpretations of Islam in different Middle Eastern countries
	Shop --> Products --> Menstrual Cup:	See Image 11.	Cursing and V hand gesture

	Monki x Lunette x The Cup		
	How to --> FAQ:	Can I use the Lunette menstrual cup with an IUD?	Contraception in the Middle East?
	How to --> FAQ:	Can I use Lunette with a Contraceptive Ring?	Contraception in the Middle East?
	Company --> Giving back	Can you imagine being discriminated against, even experiencing violence, simply because you're on your period? Sadly, this is still happening in many different parts of the world: menstruators are faced with adversity related to their menstrual hygiene.	This *is* the situation in the Middle East, so I wouldn't go highlighting it. The people probably don't have to imagine it as they are going through it.
	Company --> Giving back	See Image 10.	Children holding menstrual cups, is this too straightforward a reference to the virginity issue?
	How to --> FAQ: I've never used a cup before. Is it hard?	Wash your hands and use your fingers and a little mirror to learn what's your body like.	Is this too controversial to tell a Middle-Eastern woman?
	Shop --> Products --> Accessories: Lunette tote bag	Image 13.	Genitalia a taboo.

	Shop --> Products --> Accessories: Diamond vulva necklace	See image 12. Six (6) in total.	Implicit reference to genitalia that is a taboo.
Category:	Western Cultural Values		
	Where	Example	Issue
	Landing page	Lunette is all about liberation. We're advocates of individuality without selfishness, community without conformity and of course equality for all. You don't need anyone to "empower" you, because you already have the power within to liberate yourself from external expectations, limitations and period care products that are bad for your body and the environment.	Do the concepts of liberation, equality and empowerment exist the same way in Middle Eastern cultures. Would liberation be a problematic term after the events of Arab spring? Individuality very much a concept emphasized in Western cultures compared to Arab cultures where families are of paramount importance. In the bigger picture, would this be too much of a war cry in cultures where women's rights are different than compared to those in Western world? Would different authorities accept this? Do women in Arab countries feel they need to be "liberated" or is this a concept that is imposed on them from the Western viewpoint?
	Shop --> Products --> Menstrual Cup: Blue	Beat the period blues with this cool, calming companion. For those	Is this again a Western concept of finding inner peace in the middle of a hectic life? Women

		who enjoy harmonious, tranquil, blue-sky days and want more inner serenity (even if the rest of your life is anything but quiet).	are often housewives in Middle-Eastern countries and their lives follows the religious rhythm. Does religion already offer this serenity?
Category:	Implicit Reference to Taboo Topics		
	Where	Example	Issue
	Shop --> Products --> Menstrual Cup: Clear	For the trendy minimalist or those who agree periods should be straightforward and fuss-free. Keep a clear head (and clean sheets) so you can focus on the important distractions in life.	Is this a bit too straightforward as there are such strict taboos connected to menstruation and cleanliness?
	About --> What is a menstrual cup	More control: Unlike tampons, you never "run out" of Lunette. Like an invisible sidekick it runs around with you either in a handy, cute pouch or sitting comfortably inside you.	Is this controversial as in some Middle Eastern cultures even tampons are feared to take away the users' virginity?
	How to --> Size guide	Age For teens and young users, the smaller model 1 makes for easier ins and outs.	Does this imply virginity?

	How to --> FAQ: My Lunette menstrual cup has been inside me for ten hours, is that okay?	My Lunette menstrual cup has been inside me for ten hours, is that okay?	Referring to the taboo of something being actually inside your vagina and breaking your hymen if you are a virgin?
Category:	Explicit Reference to Taboo Topics		
	Where	Example	Issue
	Shop --> Products --> Accessories: Diamond vulva earrings and necklaces	Tasteful, elegant but with a statement-making edge. Wear this gorgeous piece of vulva jewelry with pride and confidence! ALSO see Image 8.	Words referring to genitalia a taboo, images as well.
	Shop --> Products --> Accessories: Lunette tote bag	The best tote bag ever! This roomy bag has a watercolor print of uterus or a golden print of diamond vulva.	Words referring to genitalia a taboo, images as well.
	Shop --> Products --> Menstrual Cup: Violet	Darling, you look fabulous. Chic and classy, this cup is for all of you out there who know that strong and mighty can also be elegant and foxy.	Referring to female sexuality and being sexy.

	How to --> How to use: Insert	Keep it rolled up and guide it rim first into the vagina. To check that the cup has fully opened, slide a clean finger up to the cup bottom and feel it - it should be round.	Female genitalia a taboo. Also sliding a finger inside the vagina? Though here it is expressed in quite a politically correct way.
	How to --> How to use: How does it work?	The Lunette menstrual cup fits nice and snug, held in position by the seal formed by the walls of the vagina and the vaginal muscles. Your interior is superior and does all the work — you'll barely feel a thing! The cup is placed entirely inside the lower part of the vagina, just behind the pubic bone below the cervix. Vaginas are tilted backwards, so guiding the cup towards the small of your back, moving it up and down will help you find the correct and comfortable position.	Female genitalia a taboo.

		Rotate the cup to check that it has fully opened and doesn't leak. Your cervix may move during menstruation, so inserting the cup requires practice and knowledge of your own anatomy.	
	How to --> How to use: Tips for first time menstrual cup insertion	Relax and take your time: Choose alone time when you can focus without distractions or interruptions. Perhaps after a warm bath when you are relaxed. If you are too nervous, the vaginal muscles will tighten, making it uncomfortable, if not impossible, for successful insertion. Get Acquainted with yourself: It is always a good idea to know your own body. Take some time to locate the vaginal opening and even insert a finger to locate your cervix. It feels exactly	Female genitalia a taboo.

		like the tip of your nose. Knowing where your cervix is will help you to position the cup properly and not insert it too high. Practice during your period: The vagina is more flexible and the blood works as a lubricant. OR . . . Take a "dry run" before your period: You might be more comfortable practicing before your period if you feel squeamish about touching blood. In this case, use water as a lubricant.	
	How to --> How to use: Tips for first time menstrual cup removal	Squeeze bottom to release suction: This is the key - the bottom of the cup has ridges for gripping. Grip the bottom and tweek the cup to the side. The idea is to pull an edge away from the vaginal wall to release suction.	Female genitalia a taboo.

	How to --> Size Guide --> Size guide for the Lunette Menstrual cup	As if knowing your bra size wasn't enough, now you have to know your vagina size? That's why we offer two sizes (because not all vaginas are the same).	Female genitalia a taboo.
	How to --> Size Guide	Pregnancy For our Mums out there, you can use both sizes. Pregnancy changes a few things down there, so firstly take into account your new cervix position (if it's low use a model 1), and secondly your new flow volume post-birth.	Female genitalia (all genitalia!) a taboo.
	How to --> Size Guide	Cervix If you have a low-sitting cervix, try the shorter model 1 for a better fit.	Female genitalia (all genitalia!) a taboo.
	How to --> Size Guide	Lifestyle If you're a fitness goddess with strong vaginal muscles, consider using Model 1.	Female genitalia (all genitalia!) a taboo.
	How to --> Size Guide	Bladder Sensitive bladder? The softer model 1 might be	Refence to genital area and bodily functions

		a match made in heaven for you.	
	How to --> Cleaning: FAQ	Perfumed soaps with unknown pH values might coat the cup with a layer of irritants that could damage the precious mucous membrane of the vagina.	Female genitalia (all genitalia!) a taboo.
	How to --> Folding Methods: How to fold your menstrual cup	There are different ways you can get your folding groove on but all result in getting your cup snug and secure in the lower vaginal area and beyond the public bone (the sweet spot) where it can do its thing without you feeling it at all.	Female genitalia (all genitalia!) a taboo. Notice the spelling mistake.
	How to --> FAQ: How does a menstrual cup differ from a tampon?	Both are internal menstrual protection. A menstrual cup collects the blood and the tampon absorbs it. One ml of menstrual blood is comparable with a gramme, so the capacity of tampons and menstrual cups are comparable	Refence to genital area and bodily functions. Should the mention of Lunette being "internal" be avoided? Blood a cleanliness taboo?

	How to --> FAQ: How do I know if my flow is heavy or light?	Spotting: A drop or two of blood, not even requiring a sanitary pad though you may prefer to use one.	Cleanliness taboo?
	How to --> FAQ: So does my blood just sit in there?	So does my blood just sit in there? Your blood might overflow and only then would leakage be a problem.	Cleanliness taboo?
	How to --> FAQ: Sometimes I have leakage when I use it. Can this be related to my cervix?	Sometimes I have leakage when I use it. Can this be related to my cervix? The cervix is the entrance of the uterus through which menstrual blood flows through a pin-sized hole into the vaginal canal. The cervix usually sits high in the vagina keeping it above the menstrual cup, which is placed lower. If you're a menstruating human whose cervix moves to a lower position during menstruation or if the	Female genitalia a taboo.

		cup is inserted too high, then the two can touch and cause leaks or discomfort. TOP TIPS: You can locate your cervix in the upper part of your vagina and it will feel like the tip of a nose. If you can't locate it, then it means yours is deep enough and won't affect using the cup in any way. If you've given birth, exercise the pelvic diaphragm muscles by doing kegels (the added bonus it can also help with incontinence and improving sex!)	
	How to --> FAQ: I can't get my menstrual cup out. Should I be worried?	Push the cup down with your pelvic muscles (as if you were pooping) until you can get a firm grip from the bottom. You can also try this trick: slide your finger amongst the side of the cup (your finger between the cup and vaginal wall)	Feces mentioned, is this a taboo? + Genitalia defo a taboo

		and bend your finger when you reach the rim.	
	How to --> FAQ: My Lunette menstrual cup has started to become discolored over time. Is this normal?	Yes, it's normal because blood is quite strong, but with good cleaning you can minimize the discoloring.	Cleanliness taboo?
	How to --> FAQ: Will using a menstrual cup protect me from having TSS?	It is an extremely rare, potentially fatal disease occurring in those with or without a uterus, and children.	Genitalia a taboo
	How to --> FAQ: Are colored cups safe?	We don't use really bright colors or glitter in our products- we choose our colors very carefully so they are truly safe to use inside the vagina.	Genitalia a taboo
	How to --> FAQ: What about leakage? My cervix is tilted and shortly after placement I experienced	My cervix is tilted and shortly after placement I experienced small bit of leakage. Then it doesn't face your cervix properly and lets	Genitalia a taboo

	small bit of leakage.	some of the leak pass the cup.	
	How to --> FAQ: Is it dangerous that the cup reaches to my cervix?	Is it dangerous that the cup reaches to my cervix?	Genitalia a taboo
	Company --> About us: So, how did Lunette start?	Tired of bleeding into tampons and pads, she decided to buy a menstrual cup online, only to find that these things also didn't work for her.	Cleanliness taboo?
	Company --> About us: So, how did Lunette start?	With laser vision and improved design rooted in safety, ease, and comfort (and compatible for women of every age, shape, size and childbearing stage), Heli led the charge to create the world's top menstrual cup – Lunette	The taboo of virgins using period cup?
	Company --> About us: Leadership	We lead by example, practicing period positivity and shame-free bleeding.	Cleanliness taboo?

	Company --> About us: Accessibility	Everyone with a uterus deserves easy access to period care products.	Female genitalia taboo
	Company --> About us	Jenny Alhonen Bloody creative	Cleanliness taboo?
	Company --> About us	Jussi Haavisto The bloody man	Cleanliness taboo?
Category:	Concepts Non-Existent in the Middle Eastern Cultures		
	Where	Example	Issue
	Shop --> Products --> Cup cleaners: Lunette cupwipes	Lunette Wipes are your cleanser on the go when water is not an option. Road trips, Airplane bathrooms, festival porta-potties or just your office bathroom stall- you're totally covered. Our cup wipes eliminate nearly all germs, and enable you to use your cup safely.	Are road trips a thing in Arab countries? Do Arab woen travel a lot by flying? Definitely no festivals in Arab countries. Women do not probaby work often in offices. Some of these Western values, this example mixes both.
	Shop --> Products --> Cup cleaners:	This liquid cleanser is the perfect match for your silicone	Veganism is not really recognised in Arab countries. Saudi-Arabia is in parts an exception to the rule, but veganism is not a massive thing even there:

	Lunette Feelbetter Cup Cleanser	menstrual cup. Totally organic, vegan, and sulfite and paraben-free, with only ingredients that you can recognize.	http://www.arabnews.com/node/1264871/saudi-arabia
	Shop --> Products --> Accessories: Cotton pouch	Your favorite statement-making accessories & beauty products deserve a bag to match.	Statement-making a Western concept?
Category:	Profane language		
	Where	Example	Issue
	How to --> Cleaning: First time users:	Check that the air holes around the top are fully open. Wash your hands and clean your cup with water and mild soap (seriously, none of that scented crap!)	Cursing
	Shop --> Products --> Accessories: Cotton pouch	Keep everything organised, safe & fresh AF in these gorgeous handmade, 100% cotton pouches.	Cursing

93

**Appendix 2. Controversial images from the Lunette website**
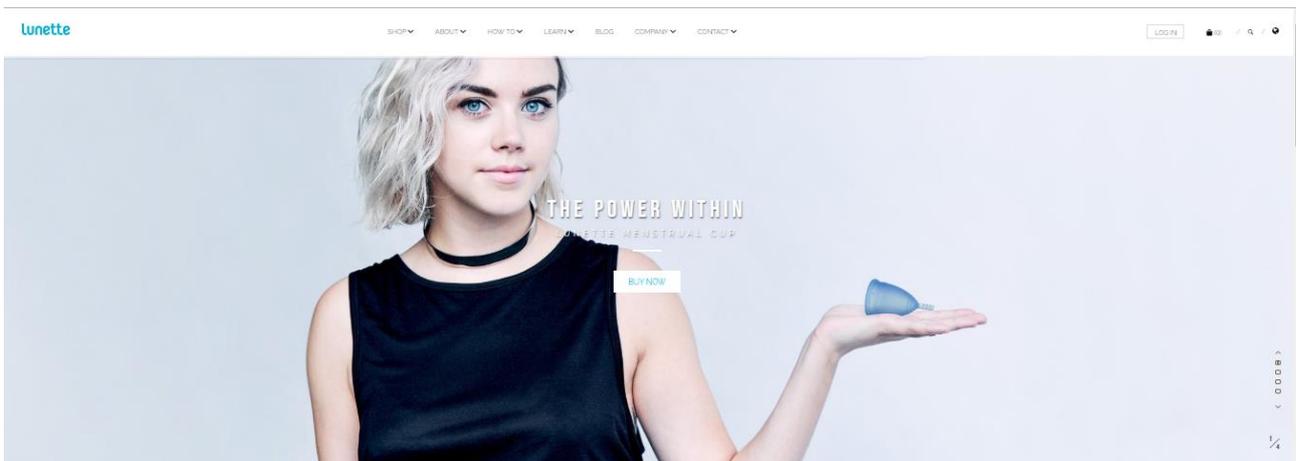


Image 7. Lunette website, landing page slideshow.

Image 8. Lunette website, landing page.
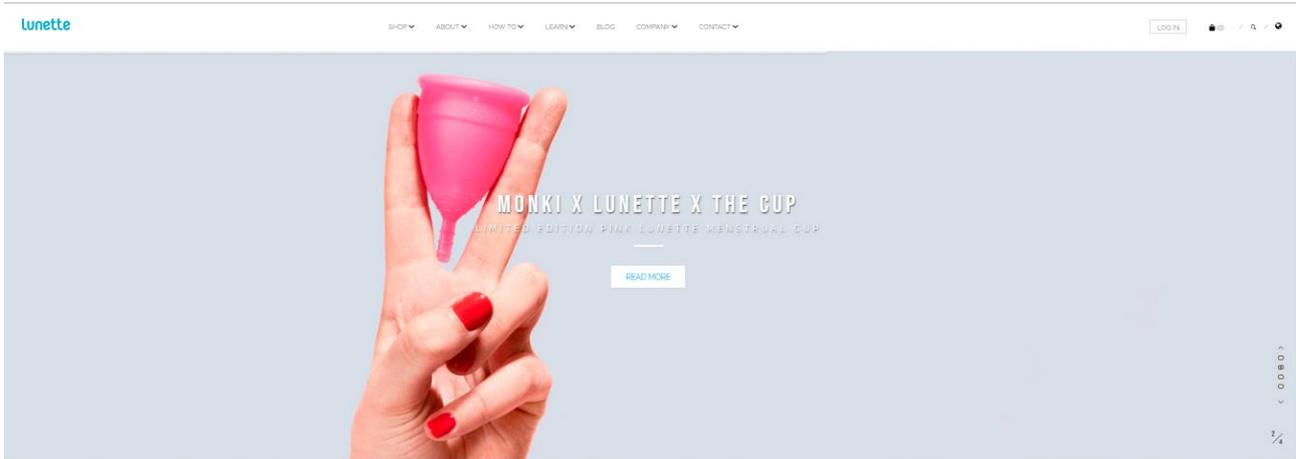
Image 9. Lunette website, landing page slide show.

Image 10. Lunette website, company section, giving back.

MONKI X LUNETTE X THE CUP

★★★★★ 6 Reviews

34.89 €

SIZE ⓘ

[MODEL 1] [MODEL 2]

[1 ⇅] [🔒 ADD TO CART]

The Lunette period-power team have joined forces with trend-setting fashion gurus at Monki to bring you an exclusive (and fabulously cool) set of products and accessories that will boost your rockstar swag, especially when you have your period.

When you order this limited edition super cute pink Lunette cup you'll get **two free pins**, as well as an exclusive **"periods are cool" pouch** ('cus we all know they are).

Plus, we will donate one cup to a girl in need for every cup sold. Read more from thecup.org

This is a limited edition so be fast and get yours now!

Read more about the campaign: monki.lunette.com

Image 11. Lunette website, shop section, products, menstrual cup: Monki x Lunette x The Cup.

Turquoise Diamond vulva - wooden necklace

31.89 €
☆☆☆☆☆ No reviews

Turquoise Diamond vulva - wooden earrings

31.89 €
☆☆☆☆☆ No reviews

Image 12. Lunette website, shop section, products, accessories: Diamond vulva necklace.

LUNETTE TOTE BAG

☆☆☆☆☆ Write a review

14.90 €

PRINT

[VULVA] [UTERUS] [DIAMOND VULVA]

[1 ⌄] 🔒 ADD TO CART

The best tote bag ever! This roomy bag has a watercolor print of uterus or a golden print of diamond vulva. Black. 100% cotton. Limited edition.

f 🐦 ⓟ G+

Image 13. Lunette website, shop section, products, accessories: Lunette tote bag.

Suomenkielinen lyhennelmä

Verisistä kupeista ja sinisestä nesteestä: Luneten nettisivumarkkinoinnin sosiaalinen hyväksyttävyys Lähi-idässä

1 Johdanto

Kansainvälisten yritysten eri kieliset nettisivut eivät ole yksi yhteen, sillä sivujen tekstin kääntämisen lisäksi niiden markkinointiviestintäsisältö, tekstit ja kuvat, käyvät läpi lokalisaatio- tai transkreaatioprosessin. Tuloksena on nettisivut, jotka noudattavat markkina-alueen kulttuurisia normeja, perinteitä ja tapoja ja näin ollen parantavat parhaimmillaan yrityksen myyntiä. Euroopan komission teettämän tutkimuksen mukaan 82 % kuluttajista ei osta tuotteita yhtä todennäköisesti sivuilta, jotka eivät ole heidän äidinkielellään (Graham 2011, Firms ignore the foreign language). Pelkkä tekstin kääntäminen ja kuvien siirtäminen sellaisenaan ei kuitenkaan riitä, ja useat yritykset ovat kääntäneet tuotteitaan uusille markkinoille epäonnistuneesti tarvittavan kulttuurisen ymmärryksen puutteessa.

Tämän tutkielma tarkasteli kuvitteellista käyttäjäkokemussuunnitteluprosessia (UXD), jossa suomalaisen kuukuppivalmistaja Luneten nettisivujen markkinointiviestintäsisältö käännetään, lokalisoidaan ja viedään transkreaation keinoin Lähi-idän kulttuureihin. Tavoitteena on sosiaalisesti hyväksyttävä, tabuja välttelevä markkinointiviestinnällinen sisältö, joka tukee nettisivujen käytettävyyttä ja käyttäjäkokemusta (UX). Tytti Suojasen, Kaisa Koskisen ja Tiina Tuomisen (2015, 22) mukaan käännöstieteellä on paljon annettavaa kulttuuriselle käytettävyydelle, sillä kulttuuri sitoutuu käytettävyyteen niin käsitteen määrittelyn, tuotesuunnittelun kuin käytettävyyden arvioinnin tasolla.

Tämän tutkielman päämääränä oli selvittää, onko Luneten global English -nettisivuilla joko kirjallista tai visuaalista markkinointiviestintäsisältöä, joka koetaan tabuksi tai muuten kulttuurisesti loukkaavaksi ja näin ollen sosiaalisesti ei-hyväksyttäväksi Lähi-idän kulttuureissa. Tällainen materiaali haittaisi Lähi-itään vietyjen nettisivujen käyttäjäkokemusta ja käytettävyyttä, joten se vaatisi erityistä huomiota käännös-, transkreaatio- ja lokalisaatioprosessissa. Koska tutkielman painopiste oli sisällön sosiaalisessa hyväksyttävyydessä ja käytettävyydessä, tutkielma ei käsitellyt Lähi-idän pääkieliä arabiaa ja persiaa tai niiden erityispiirteitä. Global English valikoitui Luneten sivujen 13 kielivariantista tutkimuksen kohteeksi, sillä tavoitteena oli tarkastella, pystyykö kyseinen kielivariantti ylittämään kulttuuriset nyanssit ja kattamaan niiden kuluttajien tarpeet, jotka eivät ymmärrä 12 muuta kieliversiota.

Tutkimusmenetelmä koostui useasta vaiheesta. Käsittelin kirjallisessa ja visuaalisessa analyysissa Luneten nettisivuilta kokoamaani kulttuurisesti kiistanalaista sisältöä. Perustin materiaalivalintani teoriakirjallisuuteen, jossa käsiteltiin erityisesti Islamin oppeja noudattavia Lähi-idän kulttuurinormeja. Analyysin tulokset asettuivat seitsemään kategoriaan, joista jokaisesta poimin yhden esimerkin tarkemman tarkastelun kohteeksi. Esimerkit muodostivat seitsemän hypoteesia, joiden paikkaansa pitävyyttä testasin tutkielman haastatteluvaiheessa, eräänlaisessa käytettävyystestissä. Haastattelin kolmea naista Lähi-idästä, sillä he ovat omien kulttuuriensa kulttuurinormien ja sosiaalisen hyväksyttävyyden asiantuntijoita. Haastatteluissa käsitellyt hypoteesit ja esimerkit olivat:

1. Kuva vyötäröstä ylöspäin kuvatusta nuoresta naisesta urheilurintaliivit päällä. Hypoteesi 1. oli, että kuva olisi ristiriidassa Islamin normin kanssa, joka määrää naisia peittämään kehonsa.

2. Kuva tatuoidusta ranteesta sekä kädestä kämmenpuoli katsojaan päin, käden etu- ja keskisormi muodostavat V-symbolin. Hypoteesi 2. oli, että kuva olisi kulttuurisesti ristiriitainen Islamissa kielletyn tatuoinnin ja mahdollisesti eri tulkintoja herättävän V-symbolin takia.

3. Tekstiote, joka kuvaa Lunetelle keskeisiä arvoja, kuten yksilöllisyyttä ilman itsekkyyttä sekä tasa-arvoa. Hypoteesi 3. oli, että luetellut arvot eivät ole olemassa tai ettei niitä ymmärretä Lähi-idän kulttuureissa samalla tavalla kuin länsimaisissa kulttuureissa.

4. Tekstiote, joka kuvailee läpinäkyvää kuukuppia kertomalla, että kuppi auttaa käyttäjäänsä pitämään lakanat puhtaina. Hypoteesi 4. oli, että tämä ilmaus on epäsuora tabuviittaus likaisiin lakanoihin, mikä loukkaa Islamin siisteysoppeja.

5. Tekstiote, joka kuvailee tiputtelua mainitsemalla ilmauksessa sanan *veri*. Hypoteesi 5. oli, että viittaus vereen on Islamin siisteysoppeja loukkaava tabu.

6. Tekstiote, joka kuvailee Luneten kuppipyyhkeitä mainiten, että niitä voi käyttää pidemmillä automatkoilla, lentokoneiden vessoissa, festivaalien siirrettävissä kuivakäymälöissä tai toimistojen vessakopeissa. Hypoteesi 6. oli, että nämä käsitteet eivät ole olemassa Lähi-idän kulttuureissa samalla tavalla kuin länsimaisissa kulttuureissa.

7. Tekstiote, joka neuvoo kuukupin putsaamisessa ja kehottaa välttämään hajustettua *paskaa*. Hypoteesi 7. oli, että tekstin kirosana ei olisi hyväksyttävä Lähi-idässä, sillä Islam kieltää kiroilun.

Tutkielman teoreettinen tausta keskittyi Lähi-idän kulttuurinormien lisäksi markkinointiviestinnän, käyttäjäkokemuksen, käyttäjäkokemussuunnittelun, käytettävyyden ja sosiaalisen hyväksyttävyyden tarkasteluun.

2 Markkinointiviestintä, käyttäjäkokemus, käyttäjäkokemussuunnittelu ja käytettävyys

Markkinointiviestintä on keskeisessä asemassa, kun tuote viedään uusille markkinoille. Tuotteen elinkaarivaiheesta riippuen (Forrester 1959, 108–109) se täytyy esitellä kuluttajilla, ja kuluttajia tulee motivoida tuotteen käyttöön markkinointiviestinnän keinoin (Egan 2007, 41–42). Markkinointiviestintä on yritysten työkalu, jolla he viestivät itsestään ja tarjoomastaan kohdeyleisölle ja erottautuvat kilpailijoista (Egan 2007, 1–2). Markkinointiviestintä tulee tarvittaessa valjastaa uusilla markkina-alueilla lievittämään kuluttajien pelkoja tabuihin yhdistettävästä tuotteesta, kuten kuukupista. Yritykset voivat markkinointiviestinnän avulla hallita mielleyhtymiä, joita kuluttajat kytkevät brändiin (de Mooij 2005, 16).

Markkinointiviestinnän tulee huomioida kulttuurin vaikutus uusien markkina-alueiden valloituksessa. Markkinointiviestintä on parhaimmillaan merkityksellistä kuluttajille (Fill 2011, 7), mutta muuttumattomat viestit ja niissä käytetyt viestinnän keinot, kuten äänensävy ja lukijan puhuttelu, eivät välttämättä saa samanlaista vastakaikua eri kulttuureissa. Viesteihin ja itse tuotteisiin liitetään erilaisia kulttuurisia merkityksiä ja assosiaatioita (Desavelle 2009, 200; Sorjonen 2009, 112), joten samanlaisena pysyvät tuotteet ja viestit voivat aiheuttaa yllättäviä, aiotun vastaisia reaktioita eri kulttuureissa. Viestejä ei tule ymmärtää pelkästään kirjallisina, sillä kuvat ovat todella tärkeitä viestin välittäjiä. Mainosten katselijoiden mielenkiinto keskittyy ensimmäisenä kuviin (Bovee & Arens 1986, 47). Edellisten kohtien valossa viestin välittäjän on hyvä tuntea vastaanottajat (Vuokko 2002, 13, 15) ja heidän kulttuurinsa läpikotaisin.

Markkinoinviestintä kytkeytyy vahvasti *käyttäjäkokemukseen* ja *käyttäjäkokemussuunnitteluun,* sillä tämän tutkielman yhtenä painopisteenä oli nettisivujen markkinointiviestinnällisen sisällön luoma käyttäjäkokemus ja käyttäjäkokemussuunnittelun vaikutus nettisivujen käännös-, transkreaatio- ja lokalisaatioprosessiin. Käyttäjäkokemus kattaa laajimmassa merkityksessään kaiken käyttäjien ja yrityksen, yrityksen palveluiden ja tuotteiden välisen kanssakäymisen (Norman

& Nielsen, s. d., The definition of user experience (UX)). Käyttäjien kokemus esimerkiksi nettisivuvierailusta vaikuttaa heidän mielikuvaansa nettisivut omistavasta brändistä ja sen tuotteista.

Käyttäjäkokemussuunnitteluprosessin päämääränä on luoda tuotteita, jotka antavat käyttäjilleen merkityksellisiä kokemuksia (Mifsud 2011, The difference (and relationship) between usability and user experience). Koska tämän tutkielman metodina on eräänlainen käytettävyystesti, sitoutuu se vahvasti käyttäjäkokemussuunnitteluun: kohderyhmän arvot ja kulttuurinormit tuntiessaan käytettävyyssuunnittelijat pystyvät luomaan kohderyhmän tapoihin mukautuvat, käytettävät nettisivut, joiden käyttö on paitsi helppoa myös miellyttävää. *Käytettävyys* on osa käyttäjäkokemusta ja määrittää, kuinka tehokkaasti ja vaivattomasti tuotteen käyttäjät pääsevät haluamaansa päämäärään tietyssä käyttökontekstissa (ISO 9241-11 2018). Käytettävyys onkin aina riippuvainen käyttäjästä ja kontekstista (Ovaska, Aula & Majaranta 2005, 4), ja kulttuuri muokkaa niin käyttäjää kuin käyttöä. Kulttuuriset elementit vaikuttavat siis kokonaisvaltaisesti nettisivujen käytettävyyteen, käyttäjäkokemukseen ja käyttäjäkokemussuunnitteluun.

3 Sosiaalinen hyväksyttävyys

Sosiaaliselle hyväksyttävyydelle on vaikea löytää yhtä määritelmää, sillä termi tarkoittaa eri asioita eri aloilla. Tässä tutkielmassa sosiaalinen hyväksyttävyys käsitteli tuotteita ja viittasi siihen, hyväksyvätkö käyttäjät ja yhteiskunta tuotteen ja sen käytön, vaikka kaikki yhteiskunnan jäsenet eivät käyttäisi tuotetta ja vaikka se täyttäisi alkuperäisen tarkoituksensa. Esimerkiksi aseet ovat alkuperäisen tarkoituksensa täyttäviä tuotteita, eli niillä voidaan vahingoittaa tai surmata ihmisiä ja eläimiä. Aseiden sosiaalinen hyväksyttävyys riippuu kuitenkin käyttötilanteesta, yhteiskunnasta ja potentiaalisesta käyttäjästä. Kulttuuri nousee jälleen merkittäväksi tekijäksi sosiaalisessa hyväksyttävyydessä, sillä täysin käyttökelpoinen tuote voi menettää käytettävyytensä kohdekulttuurissa, joka ei koe tuotteen käyttöä sosiaalisesti hyväksyttäväksi (Suojanen ym. 2016, 15). Markkinointiviestintä voi muuttaa käyttäjien ja yhteiskunnan mielikuvaa tuotteen, kuten kuukupin, sosiaalisesta hyväksyttävyydestä uudella markkina-alueella.

Tabut ovat esimerkkejä asioista tai tavoista, jotka eivät ole sosiaalisesti hyväksyttäviä tietyssä kulttuurissa tai yhteiskunnassa. Encyclopaedia Britannican (s.d., Taboo) mukaan tabu on kiellettyä toimintaa tai käytöstä, joka on liian pyhää tai vaarallista tavan yksilöille. Tabuihin liittyy myös käsitys epäpuhtaudesta (Sabri, Manceau & Pras 2010, 60). Mainonnassa tabut kytkeytyvät joko itse tuotteeseen tai sen mainostukseen (Manceau & Tissier-Desbordes 2006, 14), ja markkinointikampanjat voivat haastaa tabuja tai vältellä ja jopa vahvistaa niitä (Larsen & Patterson

2018, 1063). Markkinointi vahvistaa erityisesti kuukautisiin liittyviä tabuja (Johnston-Robledo & Chrisler 2013, 11), sillä kuukautistuotteiden imukyky osoitetaan usein sinisellä nesteellä (Winkler & Roaf 2015, 6). Tämä vie kuluttajien tuotteen huomion pois kuukautisverestä, jota pidetään useissa kulttuureissa likaisena ja epähygieenisenä (Winkler & Roaf 2015, 6).

4 Lokalisaatio, transkreaatio, kääntäminen ja markkinointitekstit

Lokalisaatio ja *transkreaatio* ovat työkaluja, joilla yritykset muotoilevat verkkosivujensa markkinointisisällön sosiaalisesti hyväksyttäväksi uudella markkina-alueella. Lokalisaatiossa tuotteita ja palveluita muokataan, jotta ne vastaisivat eri markkinoiden eroavaisuuksiin (Fry & Lommel 2003, 13) ja täyttäisivät kuluttajien vaihtelevat tarpeet. Transkreaatio on erityisesti markkinoinnissa ja mainonnassa käytetty termi ja prosessi, jossa mainosmateriaali muokataan eri markkinoille sopivaksi (Pedersen 2014, 57). Lokalisaatio ja transkreaatio ovat käsitteinä lähellä toisiaan, ja eroavaisuudet tulevat esille kenties siinä, että lokalisaatiota voidaan käyttää muidenkin kuin tekstien, esimerkiksi pelien yhteydessä. Transkreaatio on tuttu erityisesti markkinoinnin alalla. Toisaalta transkreaatio, tai tekstien uudelleen kokoaminen, voidaan nähdä lokalisaation alaprosessina (Torresi 2010, 4). Kulttuurin merkitys on läsnä kummassakin, sillä sekä lokalisaation että transkreaation päämääränä ovat kontekstiinsa sopivat viestit, jotka kuulostavat luonnollisilta kohdekulttuurissa ja vaikuttavat kohdeyleisöön samalla tavalla kuin lähdekieliset viestit (Wrobel 2002, 26; Torresi 2010, 4; Pedersen 2014, 59).

Lokalisaatio- tai transkreaatioprosessista vastaava kääntäjä voidaan ajatella kulttuuriseksi välittäjäksi (Hatim & Mason 1990, 236), joka varmistaa kulttuurintuntemuksellaan, että kohdekielen viestit noudattavat vastaanottajien kulttuurisia tottumuksia ja kohdekulttuurin lakeja sekä korostavat kohdekulttuurille olennaisia tuotetietoja (Vuokko 2002, 14–15). Kääntäjän on todella tärkeää tuntea käännettävän viestin kohdeyleisö, sen odotukset tekstityyppiä kohtaan, tiedot tuotteesta ja brändistä ja kuinka kohdeyleisö ymmärtää ja tulkitsee käännetyn viestin kulttuurinsa näkökulmasta (Valdés 2000, 272).

5 Lähi-idän kulttuurit, Islamin opit ja Lunette

Islam on yksi Lähi-idän kulttuuriin ja normeihin merkittävimmin vaikuttava tekijä. Pew Research Centre -tutkimuskeskuksen raportin (2011, 92) mukaan 90,5 % Lähi-idän väestöstä on muslimeja. Vaikka kaikki Lähi-idän kulttuuriset tavat eivät ole seurausta uskonnosta ja oppeihin suhtaudutaan eriasteisella vakavuudella eri maissa (Tahir Maigari 2016, 91), Koraani ja profeetta Muhammedin

elämää kuvaavat hadithit ohjeistavat uskonnollisia käytäntöjä sekä muita elämän osa-alueita, kuten suhtautumista terveyteen ja hygieniaan (Tahir Maigari 2016, 91).

Puhtaus on Islamin tärkeimpiä arvoja, joka liitetään hyvyyteen (Fernea & Fernea 1994, 66) ja laillisuuteen (al-Qaradawi 1999, 12). Menstruoivat naiset eivät ole Islamin oppien mukaan puhtaita (Kridli 2002, 179), ja naiset eivät saa kuukautistensa aikana koskea Koraaniin tai ottaa osaa uskonnollisiin rituaaleihin, kuten rukoukseen, paastoamiseen ja pyhiinvaellukseen (Baswell 1996, Kridlin mukaan 2002, 179).

Islam vaikuttaa myös naisten pukeutumiseen ja kaunistautumiseen. Naisten tulisi kätkeä kehonsa erityisesti lisääntymiselimet peittävillä, löysillä vaatteilla (al-Qaradawi 1999, 48). Yletön meikkaaminen on tuomittavaa fyysisten piirteiden äärimmäisen muokkaamisen lisäksi (al-Qaradawi 1999, 50, 82–83). Näihin lukeutuvat kulmakarvojen muotoilu, tatuoinnit ja kauneuskirurgia, ellei kirurgia korjaa psyykkistä ja fyysistä kipua aiheuttavia epämuodostumia (al-Qaradawi 1999, 50). Hiustenvärjäys on sallittua ainoastaan, jos käytetään mustaa väriä, hennaa tai jemeniläistä katm-kasvia (al-Qaradawi 1999, 52).

Puhtauden lisäksi yksi Islamin keskeisimpiä Lunetteen vaikuttavia arvoja on neitsyys. Seksuaalista koskemattomuutta pidetään niin suuressa arvossa, että musliminaiset eivät uskalla käyttää tamponeja tai muita emättimen sisäisiä kuukautistuotteita pelätessään niiden rikkovan immenkalvon (Kridli 2002, 179). Seksuaalisuus on tabu Lähi-idässä, mutta aiheesta on mahdollista keskustella vapaammin vertaisryhmissä eli samaa sukupuolta ja ikäluokkaa edustavien läheisten kanssa (Taibi & El-Madkouri Maataoui 2016, 73). Muuten sukupuolielimiin viittaavat sanat koetaan todella loukkaaviksi, vaikka termit olisivat neutraaleja tai kliinisiä länsimaiden mittapuulla (Taibi & El-Madkouri Maataoui 2016, 73).

6 Tutkielman tavoitteet, tutkimusaineisto ja metodi

Tämä tutkielma oli empiirinen ja kvalitatiivinen. Tutkielman tutkimuskysymys oli: onko Luneten global English -nettisivujen markkinointiviestinnässä kirjallisia ja visuaalisia elementtejä, jotka ovat tabuja Lähi-idän markkina-alueella ja hidastaisivat näin ollen Lähi-itään vietyjen nettisivujen käyttäjäkokemusta, käytettävyyttä ja sosiaalista hyväksyttävyyttä. Nämä elementit vaatisivat erityistä huomiota Lähi-itään rakennettavien nettisivujen käyttäjäkokemussuunnitteluprosessissa, jonka osa-alueita ovat kääntäminen, transkreaatio ja lokalisaatio.

Keräsin ja analysoin materiaalia kahdessa eri vaiheessa: ensimmäisessä poimin Luneten nettisivuilta eksplisiittisiä ja implisiittisiä kirjallisia ja visuaalisia aineksia, jotka voitaisiin kokea tabuina Lähi-idässä. Perustin valintani aiemmin käsittelemääni Lähi-idän ja pääosin Islamin kulttuurinormeja tarkastelevaan kirjallisuuteen. En analysoinut Luneten blogia tai Learn-osiota, sillä ne olivat täynnä kulttuurisesti kiistanalaista sisältöä. Jätin myös toimitus-, palautus- ja yksityisyyskäytäntöjä käsittelevät sivut pois analyysistä, sillä niiden sisältö ei ollut olennaista tutkimukselle. Kokosin kirjallisen ja visuaalisen analyysin tulokset Excel-taulukkoon, ja ne asettuivat intuitiivisesti seitsemään eri kategoriaan:

1. Kiistanalainen naiskehon kuvaus

2. Kiistanalaiset käsitteet ja kuvat

3. Länsimaiset kulttuuriarvot

4. Implisiittiset tabuviittaukset

5. Eksplisiittiset tabuviittaukset

6. Käsitteet, jotka eivät ole olemassa Lähi-idän kulttuureissa

7. Epäsovelias kielenkäyttö.

Valitsin jokaisesta kategoriasta yhden edustavan esimerkin, jonka ympärille muodostin hypoteesin. Nämä olivat:

1. Kuva vyötäröstä ylöspäin kuvatusta nuoresta naisesta urheilurintaliivit päällä. Hypoteesi 1. oli, että kuva olisi ristiriidassa Islamin normin kanssa, jonka mukaan naisten tulee peittää kehonsa.

2. Kuva tatuoidusta ranteesta sekä kädestä kämmenpuoli katsojaan päin, käden etu- ja keskisormi muodostavat V-symbolin. Hypoteesi 2. oli, että kuva olisi kulttuurisesti ristiriitainen Islamissa kielletyn tatuoinnin ja mahdollisesti eri tulkintoja synnyttävän symbolin takia.

3. Tekstiote, joka kuvaa Lunetelle keskeisiä arvoja, kuten yksilöllisyyttä ilman itsekkyyttä sekä tasa-arvoa. Hypoteesi 3. oli, että luetellut arvot eivät ole olemassa tai ettei niitä ymmärretä Lähi-idän kulttuureissa samalla tavalla kuin länsimaisissa kulttuureissa.

4. Tekstiote, joka kuvailee läpinäkyvää kuukuppia kertomalla, että kuppi auttaa käyttäjäänsä pitämään lakanat puhtaina. Hypoteesi 4. oli, että tämä ilmaus on epäsuora tabuviittaus likaisiin lakanoihin, mikä loukkaa Islamin siisteysoppeja.

5. Tekstiote, jonka tiputtelua kuvaavassa ilmauksessa mainitaan sana *veri*. Hypoteesi 5. oli, että viittaus vereen on Islamin siisteysoppeja loukkaava tabu.

6. Tekstiote, joka kuvailee Luneten kuppipyyhkeitä mainiten, että niitä voi käyttää pidemmillä automatkoilla, lentokoneiden vessoissa, festivaalien siirrettävissä kuivakäymälöissä tai toimistojen vessakopeissa. Hypoteesi 6. oli, että nämä käsitteet eivät ole olemassa Lähi-idän kulttuureissa samalla tavalla kuin länsimaisissa kulttuureissa.

7. Tekstiote, joka neuvoo kuukupin putsaamisessa ja kehottaa välttämään hajustettua *paskaa*. Hypoteesi 7. oli, että tekstin kirosana ei olisi hyväksyttävä Lähi-idässä, sillä Islam kieltää kiroilun.

Varmistin hypoteesien paikkaansa pitävyyden analyysin seuraavassa vaiheessa, eräänlaisessa käytettävyystutkimuksessa. Käytettävyystutkimuksessa tuotteen kohderyhmään kuuluvat koehenkilöt arvioivat, täyttääkö tuote sille asetetut käytettävyyskriteerit (Rubin & Chisnell 2008, 21). Tutkielmassa haastattelin kolmea 35–44-vuotiasta naista Lähi-idästä, yhtä Syyriasta ja kahta Iranista. Naisista kaksi oli asunut jo useamman vuoden ajan Suomessa, kolmas nainen Saksassa. Naiset edustavat tuotteen kohderyhmää ja ovat omien kulttuurinormiensa ja kulttuuriensa sosiaalisen hyväksyttävyyden asiantuntijoita. Haasteltavien määrä olisi voinut olla isompi, sillä Jeffrey ja Chisnell (2008, 72) suosittelevat, että käytettävyystestissä olisi 4–5 osallistujaa yhdestä kohderyhmästä. Tällä osallistujamäärällä saadaan paljastettua 80 % tuotteen käytettävyysongelmista yhtä käyttäjäryhmää kohtaan, ja tämä prosenttimäärää kattaa suurimman osa merkittävistä käytettävyysongelmista (Jeffrey & Chisnell 2008, 72). Aiheen arkaluonteisuus kuitenkin haittasi merkittävästi haastateltavien värväämistä.

Tein kaksi haastattelua kasvokkain Tampereella ja yhden Skypen välityksellä. Nauhoitin kaksi haastattelua, sillä yksi haastateltavista kieltäytyi nauhoituksesta. Haastatteluiden kesto vaihteli 10 ja 25 minuutin välillä. Vaikka haastatteluissa käytetty materiaali oli englanninkielistä, kaksi haastattelua käytiin suomeksi haastateltavien kielitaidon takia. Käänsin näitä haastatteluita varten materiaalin suomeksi, ja esitin sen englanninkielisen rinnalla. Selitin ensin haastateltaville, mistä haastattelussa oli kyse ja mistä haastatteluissa käyttämäni materiaali oli peräisin. Seuraavaksi esitin

jokaisen materiaaliesimerkin kohdalla avoimen kysymyksen siitä, toimisiko kyseinen esimerkki sellaisenaan Lähi-itään viedyillä, haastateltavien äidinkielelle käännetyillä Luneten nettisivuilla.

7 Luneten nettisivut ja haastattelut

Luneten nettisivuilta löytyi yhteensä 55 esiintymää, jotka voitaisiin kokea tabuiksi Lähi-idässä tai jotka olisivat kulttuurisesti ristiriitaisia:

1. Kiistanalainen naiskehon kuvaus, 4 esiintymää

2. Kiistanalaiset käsitteet ja kuvat, 10 esiintymää

3. Länsimaiset kulttuuriarvot, 2 esiintymää

4. Implisiittiset tabuviittaukset, 4 esiintymää

5. Eksplisiittiset tabuviittaukset, 30 esiintymää

6. Käsitteet, jotka eivät ole olemassa Lähi-idän kulttuureissa, 3 esiintymää

7. Epäsovelias kielenkäyttö, 2 esiintymää.

Hypoteesi 1.:n mukaan ensimmäisen kategorian kuvat loukkasivat Islamin oppeja naiskehon peittämisestä. Lisäksi kuvat loukkasivat Islamin kieltoa fyysisten piirteiden äärimmäisestä muokkaamisesta. Haastatteluissa keskusteltiin kuvasta, jossa nuorella naismallilla on päällään vain urheilurintaliivit. Kaksi haastateltavista kumosi hypoteesin ja yksi tuki hypoteesia.

Toisen kategorian kirjalliset ja visuaaliset esiintymät sisälsivät useita Islamin oppien kanssa ristiriidassa olevia elementtejä, kuten mainitnan ehkäisystä. Hypoteesi 2.:n mukaan toisen kategorian kuva tatuoidusta ranteesta loukkasi Islamin tatuointikieltoa, ja kuvan V-symboli voitiin kokea kiistanalaiseksi eri Lähi-idän kulttuureissa. Haastateltavien vastaukset tukivat hypoteesia osittain.

Kolmannen kategorian tekstiesiintymät korostivat länsimaisten kulttuurien arvoja, jotka eivät ole olemassa Lähi-idässä samalla tavalla tai ovat ristiriitaisia tai huomattavan erilaisia. Esimerkkejä ovat yksilöllisyys, vapautuminen ja tasa-arvo. Hypoteesi 3.:n tekstiesimerkki sisälsi kaikki sanat, mutta kahden haastateltavan vastaukset kumosivat hypoteesin. Yksi haastateltavista koki kategorian tekstiesimerkin ongelmalliseksi.

Neljännen kategorian tekstiesiintymät olivat implisiittisiä viittauksia tabuaiheisiin. Hypoteesi 4. rakentui tekstiesimerkin ympärille, jossa kerrottiin kuukupin pitävän lakanat puhtaina. Oletin, että tämä viittaus toisi mieleen veriset lakanat ja loukkaisi Islamin puhtausoppeja. Kaikki haastateltavat kumosivat hypoteesin.

Viidennessä kategoriassa oli eniten esiintymiä. Nämä olivat suoria, eksplisiittisiä viittauksia tabuihin, kuten sana *veri* hypoteesi 5.:n esimerkkilauseessa. Oletin, että tämä rikkoisi selvästi Islamin siisteysoppeja. Haastateltavat kumosivat hypoteesin yksimielisesti, tosin yhden haastateltavan mielestä sanan *veri* käyttö oli outoa.

Kuudennen kategorian tekstiesiintymissä oli länsimaiselle kulttuurille arkipäiväisiä asioita ja käsitteitä, jotka eivät välttämättä ole olemassa samalla tavalla Lähi-idässä. Hypoteesi 6.:n tekstiesimerkissä mainittiin muun muassa festivaalien siirrettävät kuivakäymälät, ja useiden lähteiden mukaan Lähi-idässä ei järjestetä musiikkifestivaaleja samalla tavalla kuin länsimaissa. Yksi vastaajista nosti tämän kohdan esiin vastauksessaan, mutta muuten vastaajat kumosivat hypoteesin. Tosin yksi vastaajista koki, ettei hän kyennyt vastaamaan kysymykseen.

Seitsemännessä kategoriassa oli epäsoveliaita ilmauksia tai kirosanoja sisältäviä tekstiesiintymiä. Hypoteesi 7.:n mukaan nämä eivät olisi hyväksyttäviä Lähi-idän kulttuureissa, sillä kiroilua pidetään pahana ja syntinä. Kaksi haastateltavista tuki hypoteesia, yksi oli sitä vastaan.

8 Yhteenveto

Tämän tutkielman tarkoituksena oli tutkia Luneten global English -nettisivujen markkinointiviestinnällisen sisällön sosiaalista hyväksyttävyyttä Lähi-idän kulttuurien kontekstissa. Sosiaalisen hyväksyttävyyden puutteellisuus voisi haitata nettisivujen käytettävyyttä ja käyttäjäkokemusta. Tarkastelun kohteena oli myös lokalisaatio ja transkreaatio, joita tarkasteltiin sosiaalisen hyväksyttävyyden saavuttamisen työkaluina nettisivujen käyttäjäkokemussuunnitteluprosessissa. Luneten global English -nettisivuilta löytyi kirjallisia ja visuaalisia elementtejä sekä kulttuurisia nyansseja, jotka vaatisivat erityistä huomiota vietäessä sivut Lähi-itään. Yksi keskeisimmistä kulttuurisista normeista oli neitsyys, joka tuli usean kerran esiin niin kirjallisuudessa kuin haastatteluissa. Global English -kielivariantti ei siis pystynyt kattamaan kaikkien kuluttajien sisällöllisiä tarpeita loukkaamatta kuluttajien kulttuurisia normeja.

Tutkielman seitsemästä hypoteesista vain yksi sai selkeää tukea haastateltavilta. Haastateltujen vastaukset olivat keskenään ristiriidassa, sillä haastelluista iranilaiset edustivat kahta ääripäätä

liberaalin ja konservatiivisen välillä, ja syyrialainen haastateltava asettui näiden kahden välimaastoon. Niinpä vastauksista ei voi vetää aukottomia, täsmällisiä johtopäätöksiä.

Haastateltavien eroavat vastaukset yllättivät, sillä analyysin ensimmäisessä vaiheessa Luneten sivujen markkinointiviestintämateriaalin kategorisoiminen Lähi-idän kulttuurinormeja käsittelevän kirjallisuuden perusteella oli yksioikoista. Oman kulttuurini asettamat rajoitukset muiden kulttuurien ymmärtämiselle ja Lähi-idän kulttuureja käsittelevän lähdekirjallisuuden mahdollisesti sisältämät stereotypiat ja vanhentuneet kulttuurikäsitykset saattavat olla selittäviä tekijöitä. Lisäksi täytyy ottaa huomioon haastateltavien erilaiset sosioekonomiset taustat, esimerkiksi koulutustaso.

Tutkimusmetodin vajaavaisuudet ovat myös mahdollisuuksia tuleville tutkijoille parantaa tutkimusotetta ja saada täsmällisempiä tuloksia. Haastatteluissa olisi voitu käydä läpi kaikki materiaali vain valikoitujen esimerkkien sijaan, ja ryhmähaastattelut olisivat antaneet naisille tilaisuuden keskustella eriävistä mielipiteistään. Lopputuloksena olisi voinut olla mielenkiintoisia tuloksia. Samasta maasta olevien naisten haastatteleminen olisi voinut paljastaa eroja kulttuurin sisäisten alakulttuurien välillä ja antaa näin ollen olennaista tietoa markkinoijille. Teini-ikäiset tytöt Lähi-idästä olisivat olleet kiintoisa haastateltava joukko, sillä he ovat kenties avoimempia uusille tuotteille ja tottuneempia kohtaamaan nettisivujen mainostusta. Toisaalta teini-ikäisillä tytöillä ei ole välttämättä aikuisten, länsimaalaistuneiden naisten rohkeutta kyseenalaistaa kulttuurinsa normeja ja hyväksyä niiden vastaisia kuukautistuotteita.

Yksi suurimmista kysymyksistä, johon tämä tutkielma jättää vastaamatta on rajanveto kulttuurinormien, tabujen ja henkilökohtaisten mieltymysten välillä. Tämä olisi erittäin kiehtova, joskin kenties mahdoton, tutkimusaihe tulevissa tutkimuksissa. Seuraavat tutkimukset voivat myös rakentaa tämän tutkielman päälle, esimerkiksi sijoittamalla haastateltavat ensin asenteidensa perusteella arvoasteikolle liberaalien ja konservatiivisten näkemysten välille. Sen jälkeen olisi mahdollista tutkia, miten sijoitus arvoasteikolla korreloi sosiaalisen hyväksyttävyyden ymmärryksen kanssa. Kuukautistuotteiden ostamisesta päättää usein miespuolinen perheenpää, joka on vastuussa rahankulutuksesta. Perheenpäiden asenteiden tarkastelu Luneten kuukupin yhteydessä on vain yksi mahdollisista tutkimussuunnista, sillä tässä tutkielmassa käytetyn tutkimuskehyksen päälle pystyy rakentamaan uusia asetelmia lähes loputtomasti.