

# ANALYZING SPEECH ACTS IN LEBANESE ARABIC, FRENCH AND ENGLISH BEER ADVERTISEMENTS: A CROSS CULTURAL STUDY OF SPEECH ACTS<sup>[\*]</sup>

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*Abstract:* Speech act analysis won the interest of linguists, philosophers, and sociolinguists over time after the emergence of Austin and Searle's speech act theories in the sixties. Language was no longer investigated in isolation from the context it belonged too. Hence, analyzing speech acts within advertisements gave more and more insight into how speech acts are used across different cultures. Though the content of advertisements is carefully selected by promoters to attract a specific audience, the choice of speech acts usually takes into consideration the cultural framework that defines a particular community. For that reason, the present study attempts to analyze linguistically and cross culturally speech acts that are implemented in Arabic, English, and French beer written advertisements. This is achieved through Searle's (1969) model of speech act theory and qualitative content analysis. The purpose is to provide additional insight into how speech acts are implemented in different cultures within beer advertisements and subsequently compare the existent cultural elements within the latter. Thirty written beer advertisements divided equally in Arabic, English and French language were selected from various websites. After classification of speech acts and identification of themes through content analysis, dominant themes in advertisements were classified based upon Hofstede's (1980) and Pollay's (1983) cultural value system, the findings reveal that English ads deploy directives more than assertives compared to Lebanese Arabic and French beer ads where assertives seem to be prioritized. Thematically, English ads focus on individualism and self-satisfaction whereas Lebanese ads focus more on collectivism and patriotism French beer ads focus on origin and country of product which could be related to patriotism as well. This indicates that though speech acts are universal, their usage relies heavily on the cultural values of the country.

*Key words:* Advertisement, culture, speech acts, themes

## 1. Introduction

Language is not just a tool of communication but an effective means of bringing thoughts together, improving society and reflecting changes upon communities. It is actually part of the wider socio-cultural context where the aim is "to look into language from the outside and specifically, to interpret linguistic processes from the standpoint of the social order"

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<sup>[\*]</sup> Previously unpublished. [Editor's note]

(Halliday 1978, p. 3). In each context, language serves multiple functions like raising awareness, advocating concepts and promoting items. For instance, the language of advertisements shares that last purpose promoting items and objects to increase the selling process. It is widely known that advertising is in fact a tool to promote products that companies manufacture with the purpose of selling within a competitive industrial environment. The main purpose of advertisements is to attempt to persuade potential customers to purchase or to consume more of a particular brand of products or services (Widyatama, 2007, p. 141). In order to fulfill its targets, there exists a strategy that most commercial advertisements adopt which lies in the message itself. The message has a crucial role in the advertising process. It is the core of advertisement (Kotler, 2000, p. 13).

If we examine messages in a commercial advertisement, we can easily notice that they are usually conveyed through two ways. The first one consists of the visual part where there is an image that depicts the content of the advertisement. This image reflects the product it is promoting to catch the eye of the consumer and increase the selling process. On the other hand, commercial advertisements also use written messages to address their audience or potential buyers. The written messages often comprise speech acts to call for action beside other purposes. However, this approach might prove risky because if the message is not accessible and comprehensible, loss of interest and vagueness might arise. This is what compels advertisers to carefully choose the content of their advertisements by referring to poetic and linguistic devices like speech acts to enhance the idea they want to present to the consumers. If the message is not transmitted well, the communication process will be disturbed (Kotler, 2000, p. 3). Therefore, to guarantee their success, advertisers have to study carefully the needs as well as the cultural background of the customers.

### *1.1 Background*

Advertisements are in general defined as cultural mirrors, which reflect the culture in question, but also most familiar and stereotypical ideals, norms and values. In her book *Advertising as Communication*, Gillian Dyer (1982) points out that most advertisements “present what appears to be the only ideal and the desirable way of living” (Dyer, p. 11). Advertising and culture are closely connected to the extent that advertisements can never be analyzed without reference to the cultural background of the audience that those advertisements target. Within that scope, Marieke de Mooij (2005) states that we all have universal needs, but the way we satisfy them differs among cultures” (de Mooij, p. 37). Advertising may vary across cultures not in brand specifically but in the usage of speech acts since generally speech acts reflect the cultural make up of society. Though previous studies have tackled cross cultural analysis of advertisements in different countries, there is still need of further analysis of advertisements in Arabic language as compared to English and French advertisements to investigate whether speech acts are universal or not. This issue needs further investigation since cultural differences may impose differences in the use of speech acts. Therefore, commercial ads have to take into account the cultural elements that exist in different countries.

### *1.2 Purpose*

The purpose of this study is to compare and contrast the types of speech acts implemented in Arabic, English and French beer ads and subsequently draw a cross cultural comparison between them. This is achieved based on Searle's taxonomy of speech act classification and content analysis. The implementation of qualitative analysis of speech acts and content analysis of English, Arabic and French beer ads leads to a clearer picture regarding how advertisements are realized in some eastern and western countries. Furthermore, the study focuses on the cultural impact embodied in those advertisements and how the use of speech acts across cultures reveals different cultural elements. Taking this into consideration might help advertisers realize the needs of each society; thus improving the quality of commercial ads to increase sales in a particular country. This might also be important in avoiding cultural clash through transferring values that some people would consider strange in their community.

### *1.3 Limitations*

The limitations of the study lie in the small sample offered from different cultures since the article is exploratory raising awareness about cultural issues through the analysis of speech acts in a number of ads. There are other limitations to be addressed including the lack of interviews with advertisers and recipients of the advertisements. This could be implemented as well for future research.

### *1.4 Research questions*

1. What are the types of speech acts that exist in Arabic, English, and French beer written ads?
2. What are the similarities and differences that exist in Arabic, English, and French beer ads?
3. What are the cultural elements underlying Arabic, English, and French ads?

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Speech act theory*

Messages in commercial advertisements usually comprise speech acts since speech acts according to Searle (1969) speech act theories extend to being used in different pragmatic situations to express states and actions (Muller, 2016, pp. 3–7). This implies that speech acts work the best within their social context that grants them their effectiveness and functionality. Though the use of speech acts might seem artificially implemented within advertisements, nevertheless, these advertisements target a specific audience that is part of

a society and part of a culture. Hence, promoters are the main source behind these advertisements and are indirectly socially involved with their target audience. This is what Searle attempted to convey through his elaboration of speech act theory. Speech acts might extend to different types of communication including advertisements and derive their meaning from the cultural make up of a particular society.

Searle (1969) suggested replacing Austin's locution / illocution distinction with utterance acts in which the speaker utters words, propositional acts in which the speaker performs illocutionary acts, which have a particular force. He set some more detailed rules concerning felicity condition for each illocutionary acts. According to him, several conditions have to be fulfilled for a sentence to be felicitous. These rules mostly concern the psychological beliefs of the speaker or hearer and each one of them has to be fulfilled in order to create a felicitous act. These rules are propositional content, preparatory condition, sincerity condition, and essential condition as explained in the following:

1. Propositional content: The propositional content condition explains the illocutionary forces and specifies the acceptable conditions regarding propositional content. In other words, it is the proposed condition of the speaker or hearer.
2. Preparatory condition: In an attempt to conduct a felicitous illocutionary act the speaker has to have certain beliefs about the speaker's act and conditions, and is also required to have the power of authority or persuasion over the hearer.
3. Sincerity condition: In performing a felicitous act, the performer must have a certain psychological attitude concerning the propositional content of the utterance. For example, when a person is making a promise, he/she must have an intention of keeping it.
4. Essential condition: Essential condition of an utterance has to do with its intention to get the hearer to perform the intended act.

According to Searle, two different speech acts may have the same propositional content and different illocutionary forces. For example, the propositional content of "I will go to bed early" can be to make a promise or a statement. This implies that each kind of speech act obtains its fulfillment depending both on the propositional content and the illocutionary force. If I make a promise, it is fulfilled if I keep it; but if I make a statement, it is fulfilled if it is true. To perform a speech act is thus to generate a propositional content linked to an illocutionary force. But to generate an illocutionary force, there must be felicity conditions (pp. 35–38).

Searle's speech acts comprise assertives that commit the speaker to something such as suggesting, putting forward, swearing, boasting, and concluding. Directives make the addressee perform something like asking, ordering, requesting, inviting, advising, and begging. Commissives commit the speaker to doing something in the future (promising, planning, vowing, betting, opposing). Expressives express how the speaker feels about a situation, such as thanking, apologizing, welcoming, deploring, and declarations that change the state of the world in an immediate way. Since language might lead to intentional behavior, it should be treated like a form of action. Being part of pragmatics, speech acts analysis reveals the intentionality of messages conveyed within a context (Searle, p. 39).

Searle (1969) further elaborates the notion of context relating speech acts to their cultural relevance to chess. Hence, he considers that speech acts are universal just like chess game. The rules of speech acts are the same but what differs is the language they use and the context those speech acts are carried out. He states: “First, imagine that chess is played in different countries according to different conventions. Imagine, e.g., that in one country the king is represented by a big piece, in another the king is smaller than the rook. In one country the game is played on a board as we do it, in another the board is represented entirely by a sequence of numbers, one of which is assigned to any piece that moves to that number. Of these different countries, we could say that they play the same game of chess according to different conventional forms” (Searle, 1969, p. 39). Context really counted for Searle. Therefore, the context is what gives meaning to the sentences and not the opposite (Schiffrin, pp. 6–16). This implies that speech acts have the same classification but their cultural usage might differ.

Applying Searle’s theory in its notion of contextuality of speech acts, it becomes evident that the designers of beer advertisements are aware of the culture that they are addressing and attempt to simulate the occurrence of speech acts within their natural context in a different scenario that of a beer advertisement. The expected response is to leave influence on the customer but mostly call for action.

Another interesting theory is that of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) stating that some universal pragmatic features of speech acts are not just universal, but also subject to culture-specific variations. Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) say if claims for the pragmatic universality are to approximate any type of validity, they should be based on the empirical investigation of many more and diverse languages” (p. 8). Hence, they suggest investigating speech acts in a variety of languages and cultures other than English. This is what Gas & Neu suggest doing since they consider that speech acts are realized from culture to culture in different ways, and these differences may result in communication difficulties that range from the humorous to the serious (p. 150). Similarly, Gass & Selinker (2008) claim that all languages comprise speech acts and presumably speech acts themselves are universal, yet the form used in specific speech acts varies from one culture to another. This explains the presence of thousands of studies done around speech acts in different languages and different contexts as reflected as well in the present article.

## *2.2 Previous Studies on cross cultural advertisement*

Many studies have been conducted on speech acts in media contexts though fewer studies have investigated speech acts across cultures. The following studies provide an insight into what sociolinguists have achieved in the field of speech analysis across cultures. Chiluba (2006) attempts, in a study based upon Searle’s theory of speech act, to interpret the language of campaigns in terms of persuasive actions common to most marketing communications. The data comprised 20 adverts in the print media and outdoor advertising namely newspapers, magazines, billboards, posters and flyers between 2000 and 2006. Analyses show that the directive act and the representational act were more frequently demonstrated in the advert. The two acts involved requesting, appealing, claiming, reporting, asserting and suggesting. These appeared to be the best persuasive strategy in the adverts as they

particularly appealed to the consumer's sense of ego, sex, class and self-worth (pp. 29–38). Another study was led by Rahman (2008) who analyzed illocutionary acts in the movie *Monster in Law*. The study applied discourse analysis by using quantitative and qualitative descriptive method. His research was based on Austin's theory and the types of sentences and performative verbs in the illocutionary acts performed in the movie *Monster in law*. The objective of this research was finding out the performative verbs of the illocutionary acts that consist of verdictive, exertive, commissive, behabitive and expositive and types of sentences that consist of declarative, interrogative, exclamatory, and imperative sentences in the movie *Monster in Law*. The findings implied that there were four types of sentences such as declarative sentence, interrogative sentence, imperative sentence and exclamatory sentence. The performative verbs were verdictives, commissives, behabitives and expositives (pp. 6–20).

Cemalovic (2009) conducted a comparative analysis between Danish and British beer advertisements where the results showed a greater extent of similarities than differences. Although both cultures seem alike, they are dominated by different values and norms, which are reflected in Hofstede's and Hall's classification of the two cultures. In both cultures beer consumption is seen as a social phenomenon. It could be in some cases part of the national identity and consumed in company with others denoting relaxation. Coming to the differences, the Danish advertisement might depict beer consumption as being harmonic and reflective of feminine values while the British advertisement might be more focused on the high quality of the beer matching with masculine standards. This corresponds with Hofstede's classification of Denmark as a highly feminine culture, which values community and care for others. On the other hand, Great Britain could be more success-oriented due to its masculine values. Furthermore, the focus on the quality and the exclusivity of the beer could be related to the declining beer consumption, where Carlsberg is intending to reinforce a sophisticated and luxurious image of the beer (p. 10–31).

Naufalina (2017) examined speech acts used in *Bon Appetit* food advertisements by identifying the types of speech acts, and figuring out the speech act patterns in the advertisements. This research was conducted using a descriptive qualitative method. The data were collected from *Bon Appetit* published in March to May 2016 in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. After being collected, the data were analysed based on Searle's theory of speech acts. The results imply that statements serve as the highest type of locutionary acts which are aimed at providing information of the products, commissives serve as the highest type of illocutionary acts aimed at offering the benefits of the products, and getting the readers to expect something.

What can be concluded from all the studies that were conducted in speech act analysis within media and advertisements is that within the domain of advertisement, cultural elements affect the use of speech acts in different countries. Hence, in order to achieve their ultimate purpose, advertisements need to take into account the cultural values of a particular community.

Moreover, the choice of the latter studies in particular aim at pinpointing the social media context within which these speech acts occur ranging from advertisements to movies, newspapers and magazines. The occurrence of speech acts within these frames is not natural but devised by the promoters of these ads who attempt sometimes to imagine scenarios that reflect certain aspects of real life and expect similar responses. As has been shown from the

findings of those studies, cultural differences imply different types of speech acts to approach a particular audience. However, the functions of those speech acts might be somehow similar and more than often might imply a commitment, call for action or simply provoke desire.

### *2.3 Some aspects of Eastern versus Western culture*

Different cultures around the world have different norms, behaviors, and actions, which in essence are different ways of communicating with one another according to their rules and principles. However, different actions and behaviors carry different meaning depending on the context and the culture. According to Hymes (1962), part of being culturally competent speaker is understanding the speech events recognized by that culture (pp. 99–138). By this idea, Hymes (1962) implies that speech events are governed by norms or rules for the use of speech within a speech community. The speech event might consist of a single speech act, or it may comprise multiple speech acts. Examples of speech events include jokes, conversations, and arguments among many others and usually take place within a speech situation that is social or cultural context.

Hall & Hall (1987) consider that context is the inseparable piece of information that is surrounding an event and helps in giving the event some meaning. Different cultures communicate with different context, and that is why cultures can be compared on a scale from low to high context (Hall & Hall, p. 6). They define high context communication as where most of the information exists in the person and there is very little explicit information in the transmitted message while low context communication has most of the information in the explicit and transmitted part of the message. Cultures that prefer to have close personal relationships and have extensive information networks among colleagues, family, and friends are high context, such as some Arab and Japanese people. Therefore, the members of these cultures do not need to have background information about any activities or events since they keep themselves informed of what is going on with others especially if the people involved are considered important. On the other hand, Hall and Hall (1987) consider that cultures that separate themselves and stay discrete about every aspect of their lives are low context cultures, such as some Americans and Germans. As a result, they find themselves in need of detailed background information when interacting with others (pp. 8–12). Whereas Hall & Hall focus on low and high context cultures which affect the way individuals of a particular culture interact with each other and with other cultures, Hofstede (2011) views culture differently. He defines culture as a collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others. He also developed a model that consists of several dimensions that make up every culture. These dimensions are power distance, masculinity versus femininity, individualism versus collectivism, long versus short term orientation, indulgence versus restraint, and uncertainty avoidance (p. 5). Hofstede (2011) distinguishes five primary differences in cultural patterns and how they influence language.

The first one is power distance. Power distance index focuses on the degree of equality or inequality, between people in the countries. A high power distance ranking indicates that there exist inequalities of power and wealth within societies. These societies are supposed to follow a system that does not allow up citizens to rise up in class or power. A low power distance ranking implies that the society overlooks the differences between the citizen's

power and wealth. In these societies, everyone has equal opportunity. Because of the influences of feudalism culture, China is a high power distance ranking nation. America is a low power distance ranking nation because they believe that everyone is equal before God.

The second cultural pattern that I used some aspects of in my study is Hofstede's focus on individualism and collectivism since this reflects on the usage of speech acts by people of different cultures. In other words, if people belong to an individualistic culture, they might use different speech acts that reflect that individualism (pp. 10–20).

Hofstede (2011) states that individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose. Everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family. Collectivism, on the other hand, pertains to societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong cohesive in-groups, seeking protection and loyalty. In individualistic cultures, like America, people value their "I", and their independence and self-reliance, whereas in collective cultures, like China, people are more group-oriented and concepts such as "we" interdependence, duties, obligations, needs, and views of in-groups are cherished. Individualism and collectivism exist in all cultures. This permits members of individualistic cultures to acquire some collectivistic values as well. It is worth mentioning here that Hofstede's theory could be subject to criticism and inconclusive but I have implemented the general cultural dimensions of Hofstede in my analysis of Lebanese, English and French ads.

Masculinity-femininity is another cultural pattern. Masculinity means the culture in which the dominant values in a society are male oriented and is associated with behaviors such as ambition, sex rules, achievements and the acquisition of money. Femininity is a culture where man values equal responsibilities with a woman such as nurturing roles and believing in sexual equality. Therefore, a high masculine society is one where the man acquires superiority over a woman in all aspects of life whereas a low masculine society is one that values women and their rights. Since the 1960's, the women's liberation movements began to rise in western countries. Women called for the same rights as those granted to males. This is reflected in language itself. For instance, in the past, there was only the word "chairman" and "businessman" but nowadays the words "chairwoman" and "business-woman" came into use.

Within that scope, Hofstede (2015) claims that the collectivism side of the dimension measures the degree to which individuals in a society are united in groups. Furthermore, individuals in such societies that fall on the collective side are integrated strongly into groups that are often extended families that protect them, and in return the family expects unquestioned loyalty. Moreover, societies that fall on the collectivism side prefer tightly-knit social framework, and individuals' self-image is defined as "We". This implies that in societies that are collectivist, maintaining harmony is of high importance. On the other hand, individualism is a focus on rights above duties, a concern for oneself and immediate family, an emphasis on personal autonomy and self-fulfillment, and the basing of one's identity on one's personal accomplishments. Individuals are expected to look after themselves and their immediate families, and the reason is that ties between individuals are loose. In other words, individualist societies prefer loosely-knit social framework, and individuals' self-image in such societies is "I" (pp. 11–30).

The fourth cultural pattern is uncertainty and avoidance. This cultural pattern focuses on the level of tolerance for uncertainty and unpleasant situations. Some nations know how to

cope with uncertainty through different ways. For instance, America is a nation whose culture is characterized by low uncertainty avoidance. This means that Americans do not feel so threatened or anxious about uncertainty. Hence, they do not feel the urge to limit or control it. This can be reflected in their language just like in the following examples: “Risks are opportunities” and “conflict in organization is natural, nothing is to be afraid of”.

The last cultural pattern that Hofstede discussed was time orientation. In Chinese culture, people believe strongly in that the past should be the guide for making decisions just like in the proverb: “Consider the past, you’ll know the present.” America is a future-oriented nation where people emphasize the future rather than the present. This is of course a generalization as, in every society, exceptions might arise and exist.

Many researchers have applied Hofstede’s dimensions to position their studies, and have mostly focused on comparing countries that are completely distant in terms of region, culture and economic status, such as Eastern countries and Western countries (Dahl, 2004). However, the model of cultural values of Hofstede did not prove sufficient for measuring all aspects of cultural elements. Shortly later, Pollay (1983) described advertising as a carrier of cultural values and proposed a methodology for measuring the cultural values manifest in advertising by synthesizing and examining the work of previous authors. As a result, Pollay identified 42 advertising appeals such as adventure, affiliation, casual, cheap, community, convenient, dear, distinctive, durable, effective, enjoyment, family, frail, freedom, healthy, humility, independence, magic, maturity, modern, modest, morality, nature, neat, nurturance, ornamental, plain, popular, productivity, relaxation, safety, security, sexuality, status, succorance, tamed, technological, traditional, untamed, vain, wisdom, youth. Three years later, he developed the distorted mirror metaphor implying that advertisement reflects only certain attitudes, behaviors and values... those that serve sellers’ interests (Pollay & Gallagher, 1990, p. 360). Hence, Pollay & Gallagher identified 25 cultural values frequently depicted in North American ads that manifested high consistency over time and across media (p. 359).

In short, the above mentioned cultural frameworks contributed to the development of research into cultural values in advertisement. Among them, Hofstede’s and Pollay’s cultural framework models proved to be the most effective for value measurement in cross cultural advertisement.

### **3. Method**

#### *3.1 Participants*

There are no participants in this study because the participants are replaced by the content of the Arabic, English and French beer advertisements.

#### *3.2 Design*

The study is a linguistic and cross cultural one utilizing a qualitative method of content analysis because it fits the purpose of the study in determining the types of speech acts used in beer advertisements plus their themes and the cultural similarities and differences

embedded in the messages. The study is cross cultural since it deals with cultural elements across various cultures in written messages of beer ads.

Searle's (1969) speech act theory is implemented in categorizing speech acts in the written messages of Arabic, English, and French commercial advertisements. Searle's taxonomy of speech acts permits the classification of types of speech acts into their respective functions while content analysis allows theme classification. From theme classification, cultural elements could be pinned down based on Hofstede's-Pollay's framework. Hence, the design relies on a combination of Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions and Pollay's (1983) concept of values.

### *3.3 Materials*

The material consisted of thirty beer advertisements, divided equally between Arabic, English, and French.

### *3.4 Data Collection*

The Arabic, English, and French advertisements were collected online from different websites like pinterest, google, and others. The selection done was based on speech acts and thematic content.

## **4. Data Analysis**

Since twenty advertisements were in Lebanese Arabic and French, I had to translate them all into English. Keeping the written text in Arabic and French would have prevented me from accurately comparing the speech acts with their English counterparts.

The translation process required many readings of each written text since a literal translation would affect the meaning. This is generally considered as an important first step in the process of analysis. After the completion of the translation, I started classifying speech acts based on Searle's taxonomy of speech acts. This was applied on all Arabic, English, and French advertisement written messages. The second step consisted of applying qualitative content analysis to reveal the themes that are embedded within the campaigns. According to Zhang and Wildemuth (2009), qualitative content analysis usually uses individual themes as the unit for analysis, rather than linguistic units (e.g., word, sentence, or paragraph) most often used in quantitative content analysis. Themes can be expressed in a single word, a phrase, a sentence, a paragraph, or an entire document (p. 310). "Theme" could be described as the subjective meaning and cultural-contextual message of data. Codes with common points of reference, a high degree of transferability, and through which ideas can be united throughout the study phenomenon can be transformed into a theme. In other words, a theme is a red thread of underlying meanings, within which similar pieces of data can be tied together and within which the researcher may answer the question "why?" (Erlingsson &

Brysiewicz, 2013). Determining the themes might help in mapping the cultural elements that exist in advertisement messages.

The coding frame was based on Hofstede's (1980) and Pollay's (1983) framework of advertising cultural values. Each message was coded for one dominant theme. The themes were then grouped under one major theme and then classified according to Hofstede's and Pollay's cultural values paradigm.

## 5. Results

### *a. English advertisements*

1. *Log off. Lime in. Find your beach.*  
Speech act: Directive.  
Theme: Seeking a break (Relaxation)
2. *Enjoy life with Miller high life.*  
Speech act: Directive.  
Theme: Individual pleasure.
3. *Why is Heineken America's number one imported beer. Taste.*  
Speech act: Directive.  
Theme: Sensory pleasure.
4. *Oceans apart from the ordinary. Heineken tastes tremendous-no wonder it is number one.*  
Speech act: Assertive.  
Theme: High quality.
5. *Heineken tastes tremendous.*  
Speech act: Assertive  
Theme: High quality.
6. *She found she married two men. She found she has it all.*  
Speech act: Assertive.  
Theme: Personal satisfaction.
7. *Get some summer.*  
Speech act: Directive.  
Theme: Personal satisfaction.
8. *Have fun and taste beer.*  
Speech act: Directive.  
Theme: Personal satisfaction.
9. *Watch out. Love is in the air.*  
Speech act: Directive/ Assertive.  
Theme: Sensory experience.
10. *Enjoy refreshing taste in relaxing time.*  
Speech act: Directive.  
Theme: Personal satisfaction.

Dominant themes in French Beer Ads	Appeals based on Hofstede's-Pollay's Framework
Relaxation	Individualism
Pleasure	Pleasure
Personal Satisfaction	Individualism
Quality (of product)	Quality

Table 1: English Beer Ads

*b. Translated Lebanese advertisements*

1. في انا ما بنقطع هيدا جونا هيدا نحنا  
*I'm the only who does not shut down (Unlike electricity). This reflects the atmosphere we live in.*  
 Speech act: Assertive.  
 Theme: Continuity.
2. الليلة ليلة عيد و البيرة شكلها جديد  
*Tonight is Christmas Eve and the beer has a new shape.*  
 Speech act: Assertive.  
 Theme: Renewal.
3. بس اكبر بدي صير مثلك  
*When I grow up, I want to become like you.*  
 Speech act: Assertive.  
 Theme: Family role models.
4. تنيناتنا للراشدين فقط  
*Both of us are for adults only (Eyeglasses and beer).*  
 Speech act: Assertive.  
 Theme: Wisdom.
5. مش معقول هينيكن 0.0 كحول  
*Incredible. Heineken with 0.0 alcohol.*  
 Speech act: Assertive.  
 Theme: Uniqueness.
6. اوعى خيك  
*Take care of your brother. (National beer day)*  
 Speech act: Directive.  
 Theme: Brotherhood.
7. ما حدا بغير عليي  
*No one can talk bad of me. (Leave dust on me)*  
 Speech act: Assertive.  
 Theme: Reputation.
8. خبطة قدمكم  
*The sound of your feet (Lebanese Independence Day).*  
 Speech act: Assertive.  
 Theme: Patriotism.

9. صار وقتنا  
*It's about time.*  
Speech act: Assertive.  
Theme: Season change.
10. هيدا قلبي... و مفتاحو  
*This is my heart and its key.*  
Speech act: Assertive.  
Theme: Romantic love.

<b>Dominant themes in Lebanese Arabic Beer Ads</b>	<b>Appeals based on Hofstede's-Pollay's Framework</b>
Family	Family
Quality (Beer)	Quality
Patriotism	Patriotism
Love (couple goals)	Collectivism
Wisdom	Wisdom

Table 2: Lebanese Beer Ads

*c. Translated French advertisements*

1. *Biere de Paris. C'est la meilleure.*  
*Paris beer is the best.*  
Speech act: Assertive.  
Theme: Taking pride in French beer.
2. *Biere Perle. La perle des bieres d'Alsace.*  
*Pearl beer. The beer pearl of Alsace.*  
Speech act: Assertive.  
Theme: Alsace fame for its beer quality.
3. *Enfin une grosse production. 100% francaise. Kronenbourg l'originale.*  
*Finally a huge production. 100% French. The original Kronenbourg.*  
Speech act: Assertive.  
Theme: Taking pride in French production.
4. *Actuellement en tournée dans toute la France. Kronenbourg l'originale.*  
*Currently on tour throughout France. The original Kronenbourg.*  
Speech act: Directive.  
Theme: Focus on pleasure and tourism in France.
5. *Face au meilleur la biere "33" export est prete a relever le defi.*  
*Faced with the best "33" export beer is ready to meet the challenge*  
Speech act: Assertive.  
Theme: Taking pride in the French beer production.
6. *La Grande Blonde de Champigneulles. La grande blonde a du corps.*  
*The Tall Blonde of Champigneulles. The tall blonde has body.*  
Speech act: Assertive.  
Theme: French femininity.

7. *La Grande Blonde de Champigneulles. Une grande blonde dans une bouteille.*  
*The Tall Blonde of Champigneulles. The tall blonde in a bottle.*  
Speech act: Assertive.  
Theme: French femininity.
8. 1664. *Une marque. Une empreinte.*  
1664. *A brand. A fingerprint.*  
Speech act: Assertive.  
Theme: Quality guarantee of French beer.
9. 1664. *Le gout a la francaise.*  
1664. *The French taste.*  
Speech act: Assertive.  
Theme: Quality of French beer.
10. 1664. *Quatre chiffres. Une biere.*  
1664. *Four letters. A beer.*  
Speech act: Assertive.  
Theme: Quality of French beer.

Dominant themes in French Beer Ads	Appeals based on Hofstede's-Pollay's Framework
Quality	Quality
Uniqueness	Uniqueness
Beauty	Beauty
Patriotism	Patriotism

Table 3: French Beer Ads

## 6. Discussion

The present study aimed to analyze qualitatively the speech acts that are present in Arabic, English, and French beer advertisements. For that purpose, thirty Lebanese Arabic, English, and French beer advertisements were collected and analyzed based on Searle's taxonomy of speech acts consisting of five categories: directives, assertives, commissives, expressives and declaratives.

The speech act analysis of English advertisements implies the dominant use of directives in order to address consumers. Directives usually request the audience to do something or take action. Hence, English advertisements use sometimes directives to encourage beer consumers to buy their products.

The content analysis of English beer advertisements revealed dominant themes like relaxation, pleasure, personal satisfaction and quality which compared against Hofstede's and Pollay's framework reflect individualism, pleasure and quality. This implies the importance of individualism as reflected in some ads in western culture. Hence English beer advertisements prioritize the life of the individual and their personal pleasure and satisfaction in general.

The speech act analysis of Lebanese Arabic advertisements indicates the use of assertives as means to address the audience. By implementing assertives, statements that are factual

are confirmed. This is how Lebanese promoters address their consumers. The content analysis of Lebanese beer advertisements shows that the dominant themes are family, quality, patriotism, love and wisdom equivalent to family, quality, patriotism, collectivism and wisdom in Hofstede's and Pollay's cultural framework.

Last but not least, the speech act analysis of French advertisements shows the use of assertives as means of persuading the consumers of the quality and uniqueness of French beer. The content analysis results imply the dominance of themes like quality, uniqueness, beauty and patriotism matching with Hofstede's-Pollay's cultural values.

As a conclusion, the overall analysis implies that English culture as reflected through the analyzed ads is more individualistic and focuses on self-satisfaction and relaxation as could be witnessed in beer ads. Lebanese and French ads share patriotism as a common theme since the focus is on the origins and traditions of the country. In the Lebanese case, the primary focus is given to festivities and national occasions like Christmas, independence day... whereas the French focus is more directed towards French regions, French originality and uniqueness. Collectivism seems to be more dominant in Lebanese beer ads as could be detected in themes such as wisdom, family, reunions and national occasions.

## **7. Conclusion**

This study attempted to investigate similarities and differences between English, Lebanese, and French beer advertisements. Applying Searle's (1969) speech act theory and qualitative content analysis, the findings conveyed through the analysis of Lebanese, English, and French ads revealed that English beer advertisements implement directives while the Lebanese and French ones deploy assertives as dominant speech acts. The disparity also lies on the cultural level since English beer ads value individualism and self-satisfaction as dominant themes. French ads focus on country of origin, beauty and uniqueness which are relatively connected with patriotism whereas Lebanese beer ads focus primarily upon patriotism, national celebrations and collectivism as means to promote products. This connection between themes and cultural values shows the direct relation between culture and speech act usage. The choice of speech acts in beer ads seems to be directly influenced by them. When assertives are implemented, the focus shifts towards confirming collective values in order to appeal to the consumer whereas directives impel the person to move to action directly by stressing the individuality of the experience.

Last but not least, the study is an attempt to explore the interplay of speech acts and culture in English, French and Lebanese beer ads knowing that more samples could be collected in the future to cover a wider range of ads. However, what is evident is that cultural values differ from one country to another and their representation through the use of speech acts in beer ads confirms that assumption.

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**Appendix 1: Pollay-Hofstede framework**

<b>Advertising Appeals</b>	<b>Cultural Dimensions</b>
Individualism	
Freedom	
Uniqueness	
Collectivism	
Family	
Patriotism	
Popularity	
Beauty	
Social Status	
Sex	
Respect for the elderly	
Health	
Economy	
Nurturance	
Wisdom	
Neatness	
Quality	
Safety	
Security	
Adventure	
Magic	
Youth	
Competition	
Convenience	
Effectiveness	
Work	
Courtesy	
Enjoyment	
Leisure	
Natural	
Technology	
Modernity	
Tradition	

## Appendix 2: English Advertisements



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

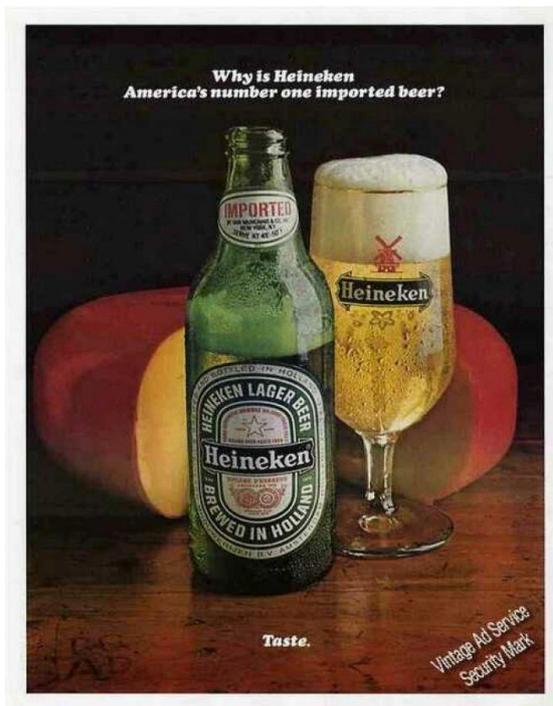


Fig. 3

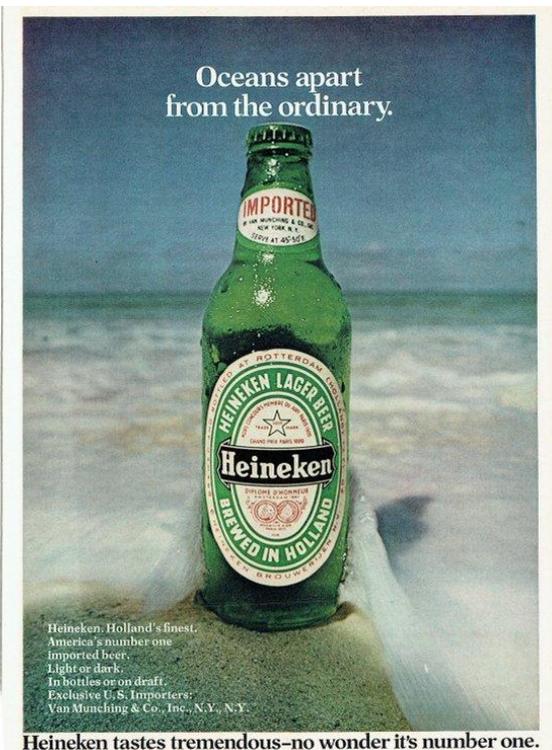


Fig. 4

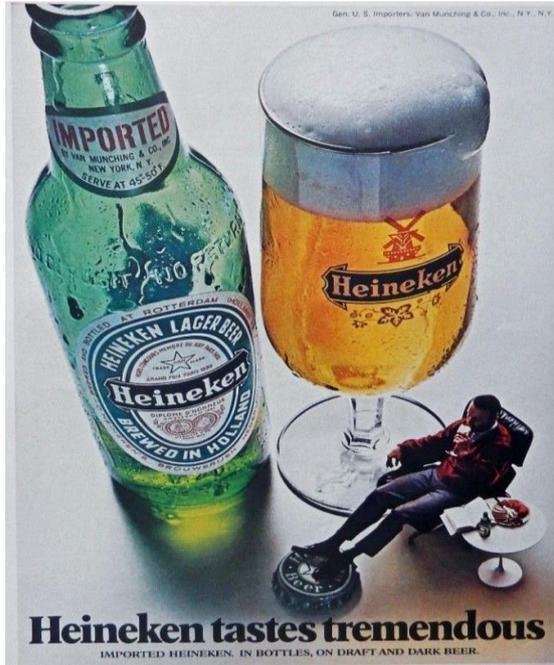


Fig. 5

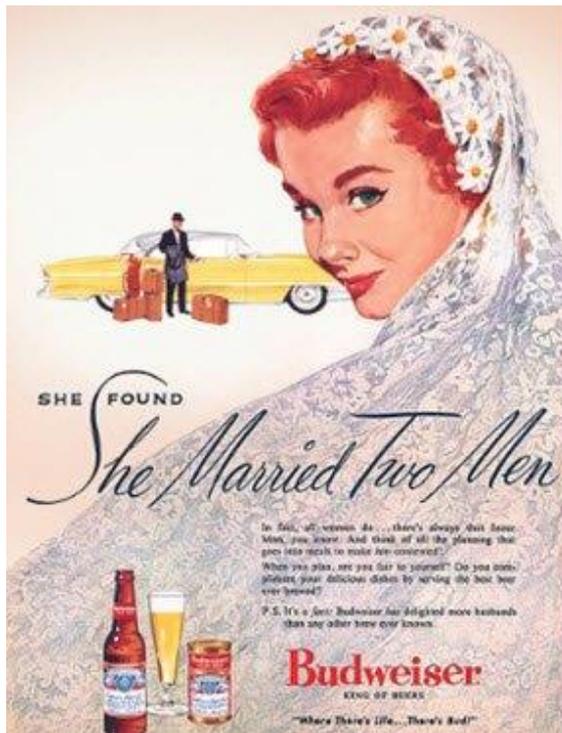
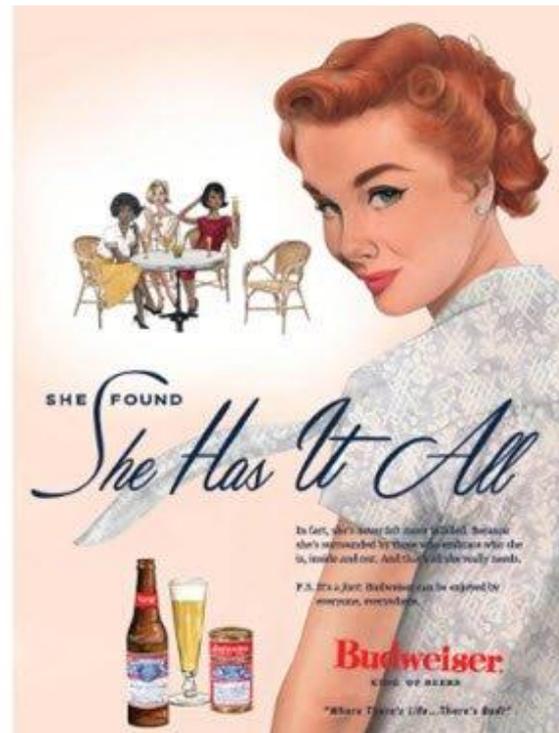


Fig. 6



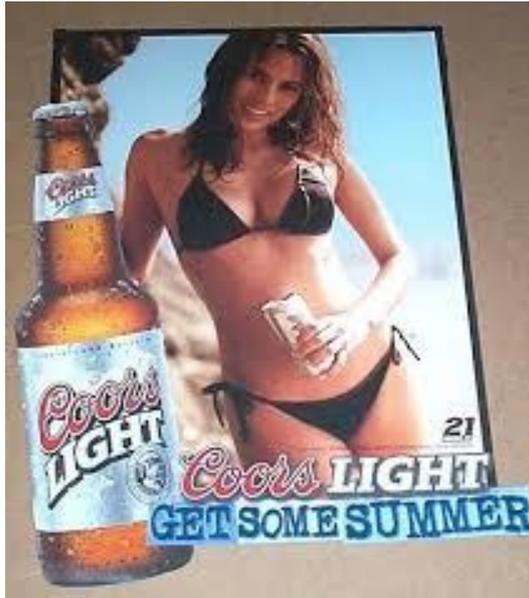


Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10

### Appendix 3: Lebanese Advertisements



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10

#### Appendix 4: French Advertisements

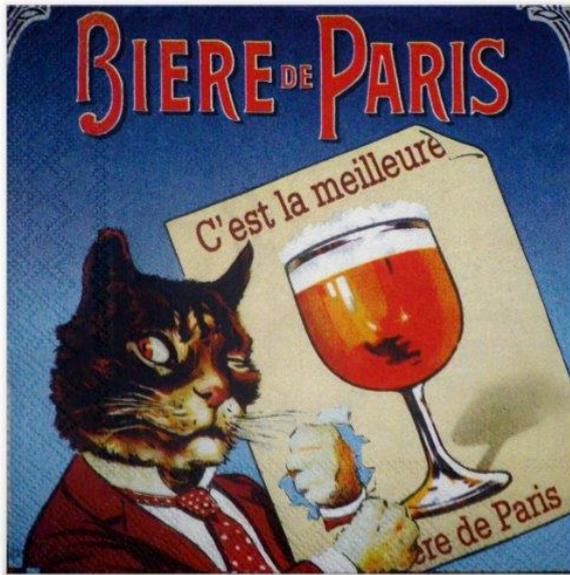


Fig. 1

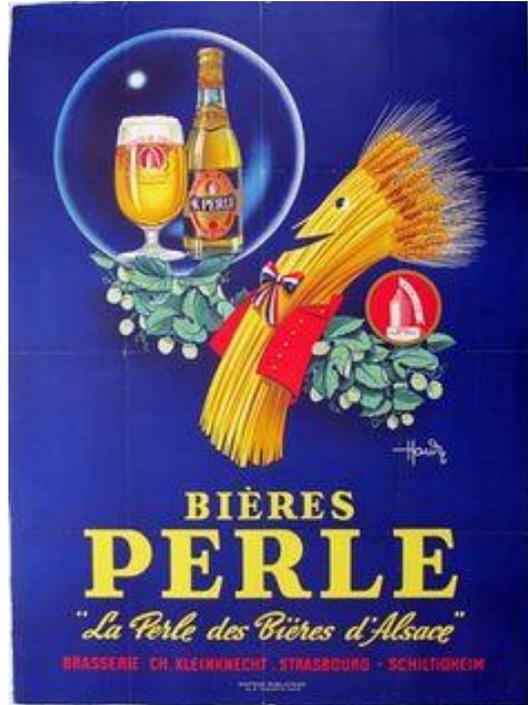


Fig. 2

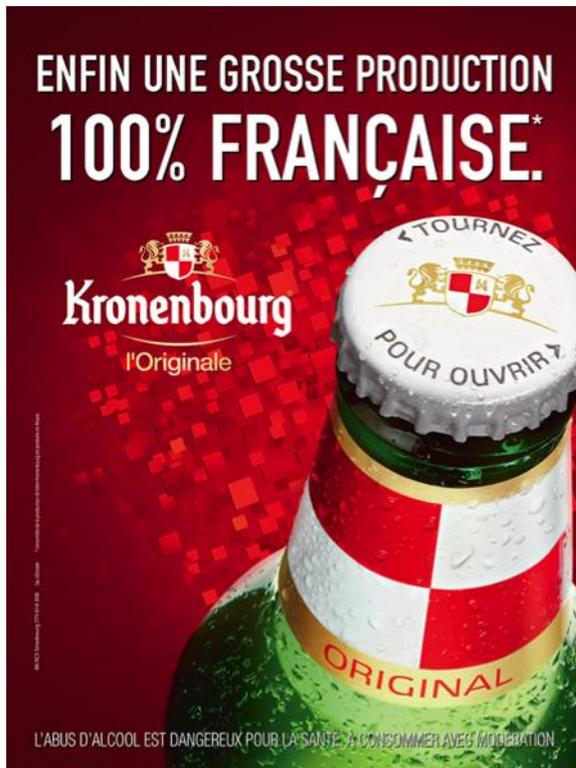


Fig. 3

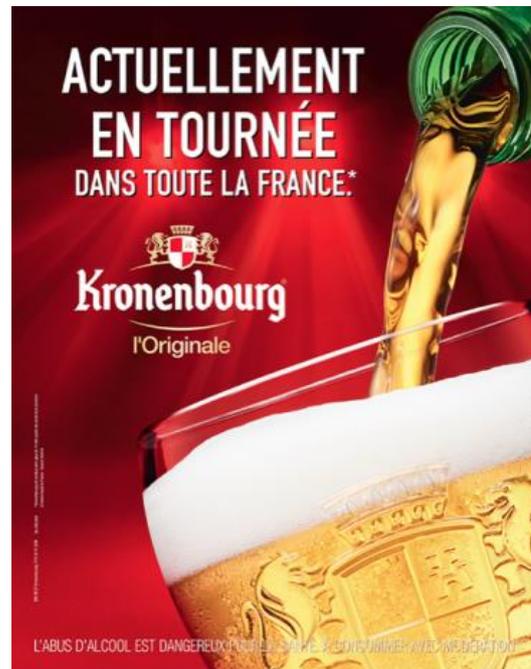


Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

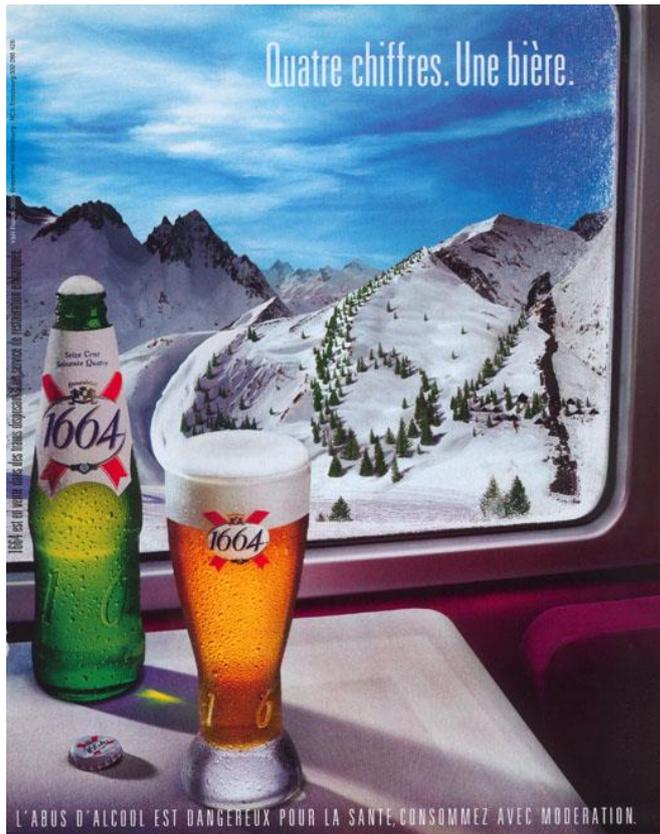


Fig. 10

## Sources of advertisements

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6. <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/a4/a3/7d/a4a37deed3e44c954d5bd981367bc3b9.jpg>
7. <http://www.adclassix.com/images/62millerbeer.jpg>
8. <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQVKHs-WJOB00JA0buKHMBLw-bww4DAj1yzt71nszNg7Z91Zl>
9. <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/01/89/9e/01899e014a2614818f50266ec84a40db.jpg>
10. <https://cdn.ebaumsworld.com/mediaFiles/picture/2183782/85021155.jpg>

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1. [https://pbs.twimg.com/media/COZ\\_weMVAAA\\_KFp.jpg:large](https://pbs.twimg.com/media/COZ_weMVAAA_KFp.jpg:large)
2. <https://www.lstatic.org/UserFiles/images/2017/divert/may2017/almaz-beirut-beer-ou3a-khayak.jpg>
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5. [https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-bPq3iuBONvk/WhUSsvIVP2I/AAAAAAAAAqBI/Uyc-X6JAPuUQ7Y-\\_gPWTvh0UcO2YQPgwwCLcBGAs/s1600/Beirut%2BBeer.jpg](https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-bPq3iuBONvk/WhUSsvIVP2I/AAAAAAAAAqBI/Uyc-X6JAPuUQ7Y-_gPWTvh0UcO2YQPgwwCLcBGAs/s1600/Beirut%2BBeer.jpg)
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