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An exploration of the online Anglicisation of French fashion brands - A case study of Louis Vuitton.

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Abstract

This dissertation focuses on the presence of anglicisms and franglais of luxury French fashion house, Louis Vuitton's digital marketing strategy. The research is done with reference to the literature on anglicisation, digital marketing and examples from Louis Vuitton's online platforms.

Acknowledgements

I want to thank my supervisor, Gwénola Bescond for helping me throughout my writing process. Your support gave me the confidence to follow through with my ideas and for that I am very grateful.

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Introduction

This dissertation aims to explore to what extent Louis Vuitton's digital marketing strategy is anglicised and understand why this is the case.

Founded in 1854, Louis Vuitton is a French luxury brand belonging to multinational conglomerate LVMH (Louis Vuitton Moet Hennessey). It is one of the world's leading luxury brands and between 2006 and 2012 it was the most valuable luxury brand (Louis Vuitton, 2022). Specialising in luggage and famous for its iconic monogram trunk, the Louis Vuitton brand grew successful due to the transport revolution that was taking place at the time (Rocamora 2016).

'Digital marketing is the use of technologies to help marketing activities to improve customer knowledge by matching their needs' (Bala & Derma 2018), examples of digital marketing include websites, social media accounts, emails, and videos. Digital marketing is also sometimes referred to as online marketing. Digital marketing encompasses SEO (Search engine optimisation), social media marketing and email marketing to name a few.

In recent years, digital marketing has grown as people are spending an increasing amount of time online, with over 2 billion people reported to use social media (Stephen 2016). Social media's role as a marketing tool gained further importance during the Covid-19 pandemic, where social distancing became common practice (Mason et al. 2021). This resulted in people spending a lot more time indoors, not as exposed to marketing in public, and thus a greater emphasis on digital marketing.

Digital marketing has a broad geographical reach and facilitates a marketing strategy that transcends traditional marketing strategies prior to the digital era. Due to its

accessible nature and the ability to rapidly communicate with people across the world, digital marketing has grown to become an important part of a brand's overall marketing strategy, particularly for the fashion industry. Chu and Seock (2020) write that 'social media provides an interactive channel of mass communication to amplify marketing strategy for fashion brands and that Instagram, in particular, has been recognised as the most influential source for fashion insight, due to its more visual nature compared to other online platforms. Instagram describes is described as 'a free photo and video sharing app available on iPhone and Android' (Instagram 2022).

There is some literature on digital marketing and social media marketing, but it is limited due to the fact it remains relatively new. A study by DEI worldwide (2008) found that 70% of consumers visited social media sites to get information on a brand, and 49% of these consumers made a purchasing decision based on the information they found on social media. The report further explains that as consumers use social media to pass information and opinions on a brand, the value of a single customer is more than just what they initially spend. Therefore, brands should not underestimate the influence their social media can have and should execute a social media strategy that effectively influences their target audience.

Rebours (2021) explains that 'the fashion industry is a major sector in the French economy, and Paris remains one of the four fashion capitals of the world and yet the study of the related terminology appears to be disregarded by linguistics and also by the official authorities in charge of the enrichment of the French language'. The reason for this is the perceived superficiality of the domain, its complexity, and its ambiguous, changing nature. (Rebours 2021)

The anglicisation of the French language has been a topic discussed in the literature for a long time, so it will be interesting to see the role it plays in digital marketing. What are the reasons behind the anglicisation of French luxury fashion brands? Is the use of English justified? How has digital media facilitated the anglicisation of this French brand? Has this affected LV's French identity? My dissertation therefore aims to answer these questions through the use of secondary resources and examples within Louis Vuitton's digital marketing strategy.

Louis Vuitton will be abbreviated to 'LV' throughout this dissertation.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

1.1 Attitudes towards anglicisms, loan words and franglais

It is important to first define some of the terms that will reappear throughout my dissertation. Jespersen (2007) discusses in *Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin*, the concept of 'loan-words' - words that are incorporated from one language into another language without translation (2007). Like any other, the French language employs loan words, for example, the English word 'marketing' is a loan word but may also be described as an anglicism. There is no consensus on what the criteria for classification of an Anglicism is (Saugera 2017). However, Görlach offers the following definition: 'a word or idiom that is recognisably English in its form (spelling, pronunciation, morphology, or at least one of the three), but is accepted as an item in the vocabulary of the receptor language' (2003). This same principle is applied to words that originate from the French language, referred to as 'gallicisms'.

Wise (1997) states that the histories of both France and Britain have been more intertwined than any other two countries and Europe, subsequently leaving traces on

each other. Due to close social-cultural ties between Britain and France, anglicisms within the French language and gallicisms within the English language are easily found. Furthermore, French is one of many languages to have experienced an influx of cultural influence from the US, perhaps the most controversial export being the English language. In popular linguistic discourse, France is well-known for its long-standing tradition of being linguistically protective of the French language (Barffour et al. 2016).

English has approximately 1,200 million speakers, it is the first language learned by non-native speakers and is well represented on all five continents (Saugera 2017). Čičmir (2020) writes that the Industrial Revolution which took place in Britain in 1760 is often cited as the reason for the expansion of English, particularly relating to fields of technology and science into other languages. 'The growth of the international banking system additionally reinforced the economic power and established a sort of economic imperialism with London and New York City as the major investment centres. Therefore, English is again a natural choice for communication, and this also shows how economic imperialism consequently created linguistic imperialism and the apparent predominance of one particular language' (Čičmir 2020).

In Saugera's (2017) *Remade in France: Anglicisms in the Lexicon and Morphology of French,* there is mention of a period of Anglomania which occurred during the Belle Époque (1817-1914) when Englishness was identified with being chic, and there was a borrowing of English terms in various domains. This perception of 'chicness' meant that Francophones were more inclined to adopt English terms. Northrup (2012:139) ascribes the prevalence of English as the dominating language according to four major events, one of which is the rise of the internet.

Crystal explains that ‘the relationship between the global spread of English and its impact on other languages attracted increasing debate during the 1990s’ (2003).

Figures 1 and 2 help demonstrate the usage over time of gallicisms in English, and anglicisms within French. The switch from the influence of French on English to English on French is illustrated and helps visualise the level of anglicisation of the French language.



Figure 9 Anglicisms in French from 1600 to the present
Source: Adapted from Gebhardt 1975 and Trescases 1982

Figure 1. Gallicisms in English (Riggio 2021)



Figure 8 Gallicisms in English from 1100 to the present
Source: Adapted from Gebhardt 1975

Figure 2. Anglicisms in French (Riggio 2021)

The steady decline of gallicisms contrasted with the rising usage of anglicisms is said to be visible through advertising and mass media in recent years, which has led to severe interventions from institutions that seek to defend the French language and reduce the use of English in commercial settings (Barffour et al. 2016). Unlike gallicisms or loan words in general, there are often negative connotations surrounding anglicisms. Discussions concerning anglicisms often label them as ‘excessive’, ‘an invasion’, ‘destroying the integrity of the French language’. Riggio asserts, ‘in their traditionally purist society, leaders and scholars of France have historically regarded cultural and linguistic borrowings with great suspicion, viewing such influential societies as a threat to the consummate society of France.’ (2021). The Académie Française is a testament to this linguistic purism, an institution that seeks to preserve the French language and attempts to prevent an influx of anglicisms. There is no British equivalent to the Académie Française, which makes

its existence seem extreme. The objective of keeping a language pure is complicated by natural processes of neology and language borrowing, new words often enter a language informally and in everyday speech before being officially recognised or added to dictionaries (Riggio 2020).

An article in The Local Fr (2013) discusses the debate of replacing English words creeping into French vocabulary by means on online communication. The French government has suggested ‘mot-dièse’ to replace ‘hashtag’. There are mixed opinions, some which like the idea of replacing English terms with Gallic versions if they make sense and are concise. Other believe that banning the use of words is not an effective way to promote the language, and that it is futile to come up with French equivalents of anglicisms, often finding them silly.

Similar attitudes to anglicisms are also held towards franglais. Étiemble (1954) coined the term ‘franglais’ (formed from the French words for French: français and English: anglais) to describe what he considered to be an excessive use of English words within the French language. An article published by The Local Fr. in 2016 discusses the ever-growing ‘franglais’, pointing to the world of social media and technology as a contributing factor. ‘Some popular franglais phrases include ‘relever le challenge’ (to rise to the challenge), ‘voyager low-cost’ (travel low cost), ‘faire un flop’ (to flop), ‘booster ses performances’, ‘sortir un best-of’ (bring out a best-of)’. It also explains that some franglais terms are formed from English words with the French verb ending ‘er’, such as ‘tweeter’ and ‘liker’ (2016). Franglais normally refers to phrases rather than individual terms. Unlike anglicisms, which sometimes have legitimacy in the French language due to lack of an alternative, Franglais is denounced because it is perceived as ‘linguistic laziness’ and is considered unnecessary.

Usually, social media and advancements in technology are labelled as a culprit for an influx of anglicisms and franglais, but we can see preventative measures of action implemented prior to its existence, as demonstrated by the Loi Toubon (Toubon Law). ‘The Toubon Law was named after former Minister of Culture Jacques Toubon and was passed on 4th August 1994. It explicitly mandates the use of the French language in all government publications, advertisements, workplaces, and government–funded schooling’ (Languages in Conflict 2014). Although English is not mentioned within this law, it has been considered as a reaction against the Anglicisation of the French language (Hepford, 2017). It is important to note that this law is nearly 30 years old and introduced before the dawn of the digital era. We now live in a much more globalised society where English is omnipresent and is a lot harder to avoid. More and more multinational companies are mandating English as the common corporate language. (Neeley 2012). It has been demonstrated that the efforts of French language preserving institutions have not been entirely successful at preventing anglicisations from creeping into conversational French and becoming omnipresent in fields such as marketing and business. In order to not appear outdated, it would be recommended that brands embrace using the English terms that are widely accepted, for example ‘email’ is recognised within multiple languages other than English, but some francophones prefer to use ‘courriel’.

1.2 Anglicisms in the Fashion Industry

Despite France being described as the ‘fashion capital of the world’, the fashion industry is not immune to the ever-growing number of anglicisms. The pervasiveness of English within a domain that is typically French can be explained by the perceived notion of English as an international language that evokes modernity, sophistication, and openness to other cultures (Barffour et al. 2016).

France's role in the fashion industry is well established, so the use of English phrases and anglicisms exemplifies the extent to which English has managed to penetrate industries that were once dominated by other countries. We can observe English terms for trouser styles being commonly used in the French fashion world such as 'regular fit, relaxed fit, slim, skinny, oversize, bootcut, flare, extra-flare' (Chevalier-Karfis, 2020). An article published in The Times explains how 'the French culture ministry teamed up with the country's Federation of Feminine Prêt-à-Porter and Federation of Haute Couture and Fashion to publish a lexicon of French terms that it wants to be used in place of their English counterparts. The list proposes several French terms to replace English terms that have creeped their way into the French language, such as 'vintage' – 'd'époque', 'top models' – 'mannequins vedettes', 'la mode de la rue' – 'streetwear' (Sage, 2020). However, the world of fashion is so globalised, and French is not the only language that has incorporated these anglicisms. While the proposal of French alternatives to these anglicisms may provide a sense of taking back control of the language, it could be a detriment to brands within the fashion industry where English is omnipresent. Not only this, but it presents the challenge of replacing a word that is already in popular use.

1.3 Anglicisms in Marketing

Anglicisms within the marketing domain have been discussed for a long time. An article which was published in Le Monde, 1968 explains how the term 'marketing' is used in French due to a lack of a suitable translation, 'commercialisation', 'marchandage' and 'mercantage' are all proposed as alternatives that we would instinctively offer as a translation, but they fail to evoke the same sense or suggest a different meaning, so 'marketing' is resorted to instead. The author further argues

that the usage of anglicisms within the French language is due to the fact that these terms are conceptualised and popularised in English, in the same way the French term ‘haute couture’ is used in the English language, and that ‘defending a language should be through developing its ways of thought, techniques, and methods so that the vocabulary can follow suit, as opposed to translating words that do not have the same feeling.’ However, there is a lack of consistency with this argument, which can be observed by business concepts originating in English that do have an equivalent in French, for example, ‘de dernier délai’ (deadline), ‘d’échantillonage’ (sampling), ‘d’emballage’ (packaging). This would suggest that the prevalence of some anglicisms lies rather within a translation difficulty, or simply that francophones prefer to use English terms.

Develey (2017) writes that anglicisms and English are introduced to the French language through businesses and the work environment due to the English language being associated with innovation. Companies want to spread a sense of innovation, and anglicisms help meet this demand, indicating that the use of English within marketing as well as the fashion industry can also be due to preference.

Another reason for the propagation of anglicisms within French is that certain concepts become popularised at such a rapid rate that they become recognised and understood in English before they are assigned a French translation of equal usage. The lexical creativity of the English language has been regarded as being more concise than French language (Wise, 1997). This is particularly the case within marketing, where considerable advancements in technology have facilitated a dynamic environment in which new concepts are constantly created.

1.4 Luxury fashion and digital marketing

The evolution of luxury consumers' expectations has led to an increased favouring for digital media and communication (Kim, 2020). Digital marketing has become intertwined with the fashion industry, allowing fashion brands to ensure continuity of the customer experience outside the traditional temples of luxury and physical locations are complemented by an online presence. Due to its fast-moving, current nature and its ability for mass communication, Instagram offers a very 'current' reflection of fashion trends. Furthermore, luxury fashion brands are heavy users of online platforms.

Implementing digital strategies allows these fashion brands to benefit from increased brand visibility. This can be achieved by various forms of media: owned media, paid media and earned media (Sabri, El Hana & Arfi, 2021). The figure below defines each and gives examples of each type. The discussion with this dissertation will focus on owned media in particular, as this is heavily invested in by LV and is where they have the most control. Both paid and earned media tend to be localised and tailored to a certain audience, and LV do not have much control over earned media in particular.

Type of media	**Definition**	**Examples**
Owned media	Refers to media owned and controlled by the brand.	Brand website, social platforms, newsletters.
Paid media	Advertising space purchased to promote its products.	Sponsored posts, search engine advertising (SEA), partnerships.

Earned media	Content created on behalf of the brand without the brand paying for it.	Press coverage, posts by influencers, comments made on social media sites.

Another interesting dimension regarding the anglicisation of these brands is not just through the language used, but the faces and personalities of the brand too, as demonstrated ambassadors of the LV brand. This is not to say that these faces/personalities are not relatable for francophones, but this demonstrates another way in which anglophone culture is perpetuated.

Chapter 2: LV's Instagram

2.1 Language on Instagram

In almost every aspect of contemporary society, English is considered to be the default language, including online communication and social media. 'Even the users whose mother tongue is not English, mainly use English when communicating online due to its status' (Čičmir 2020). Launched in 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, Instagram initially started out as a photo-sharing social media app, later sold to Facebook in 2012. It has since added features including messaging, videos, stories, reels, and a shopping tab. Tankosić & Dovchin describe the platform as one of the most dynamic channels for branded fashion communication because of its ability to combine still and moving images with immediate social connectivity (2021). Luxury fashion brands typically use the platform to showcase products, campaigns,

insight into behind the scenes, fashion collections, and to promote ‘faces’ of the brand, all of which help build brand awareness.

Fashion is an industry with a short product lifestyle, highly dependent on trends. Revolutions in digital media have facilitated rapid communication which leads to the spreading of fashion trends quicker than before (Kaseva & Ikäpelto 2019). It is now commonplace for consumers to look to online opinions and be influenced to make purchasing decisions through social media, so it is important that LV implements an effective marketing strategy to capture its target audience.

Social media marketing has the unique quality of two-sided interaction, but there is a common trend among the leading luxury fashion brands to post on their Instagram accounts in English, even those which originate from countries where English is not the main language. This restricts who ‘can talk back to them’, and the implication of this is that LV send a message that they value communicating with their anglophone followers before their francophone followers.

As of January 2022, India ranks as the country with the largest number of Instagram users (230.25 million users), while France ranks 12th largest audience size (26.55 million users). Brands choosing to communicate primarily in English can be attributed to the large size of predominantly anglophone users worldwide on the platform, the US accounting for 195.75 million, and the UK which accounts for 31.75 million.

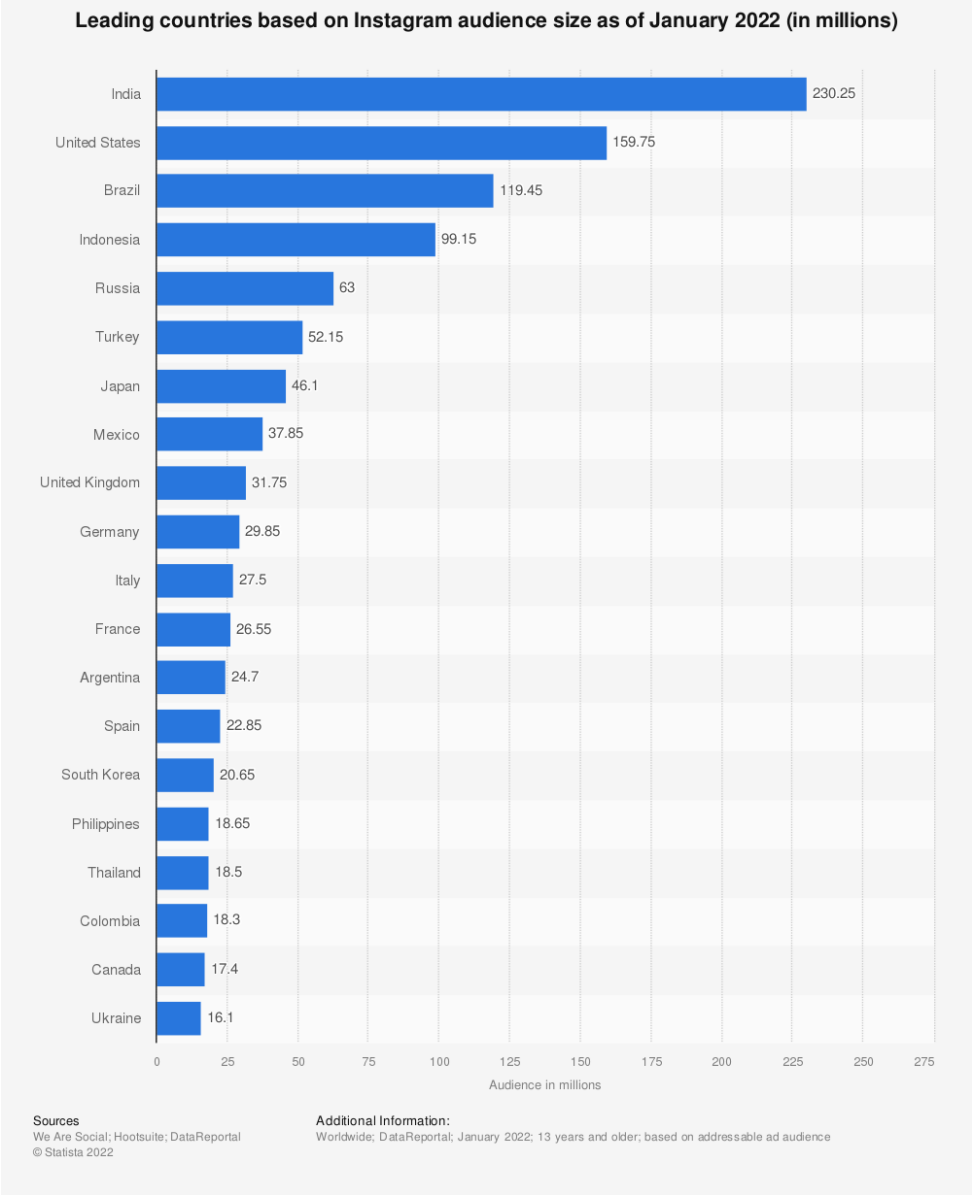


Figure 3. Leading countries based on Instagram audience size as of January 2022 (in millions). (Statista)

In 2016, Instagram introduced a translation function where users can view captions, comments, posts, and bios automatically translated to their language setting, facilitating users to access accounts posting in a different language. The translation feature was then further developed in July 2021 to include Instagram stories (Porter 2021). While this does support the inclusion of different languages, English is still predominantly used among luxury fashion brands as the original language and could

be described as the ‘lingua franca’ of luxury brands’ online platforms. Before this, some content would have been inaccessible to those that do not speak or understand English. Lingua franca has been defined by Thomason (2001) as ‘a language of wider communication between groups who do not speak each other’s languages, as well as native speakers (if any) of the lingua franca of other groups’. Thomas also notes that throughout history, the prominent lingua francas included Greek, Latin, French, and English in recent times (Thomason 2001:24).

Below is a post taken from LV’s Instagram account, accessed with the user language set to French. ‘Afficher la traduction’ (show translation) is displayed underneath the caption, allowing users to display the text in French as shown in the screenshot on the right. The same goes for LV’s other Instagram posts, captioned in English, denoting a preference over French. Even within French captions, we can identify the creeping English influence and anglicisms, as shown by the use of the word ‘looks’. Lupu (2010) claimed that ‘look’ has become a more modern version of the French term ‘apparence’ or ‘style’.

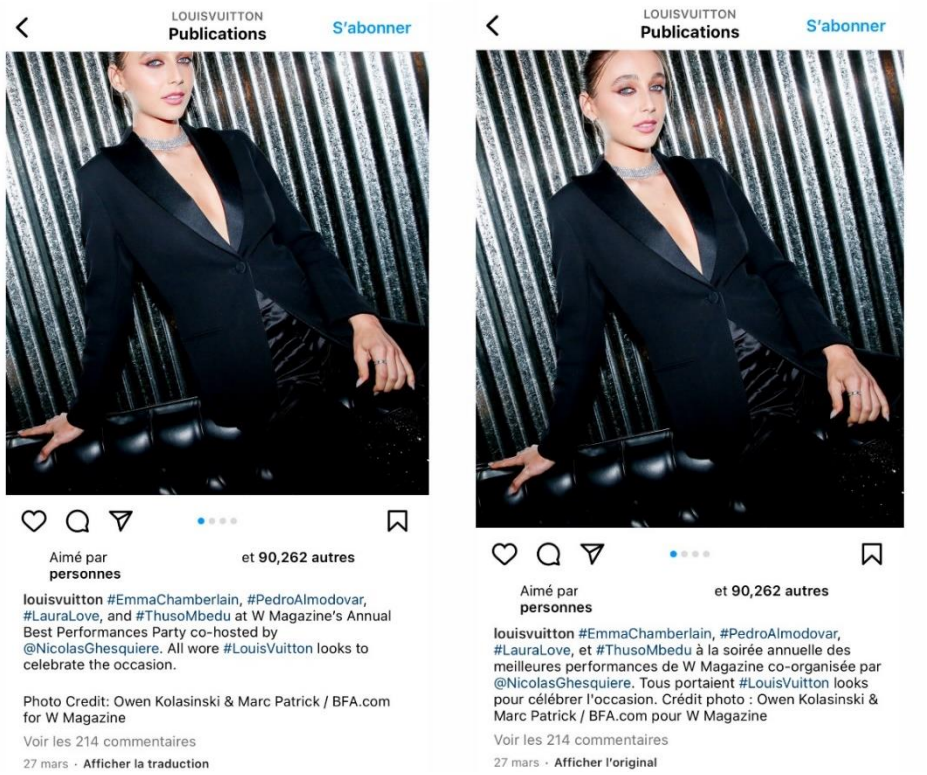


Figure 4. Posts from LV's Instagram @louisvuitton (Instagram)

Communicating in English facilitates a further reach for these brands. The US was valued at 55 billion euros in 2020, the largest market for luxury goods (Statista 2021). The number of predominantly anglophone users in the US combined with the fact they are the biggest consumers within the luxury goods market makes it clearer why brands opt to communicate in English. If French brands want to reach a large number of people, using English is arguably the strategic choice.

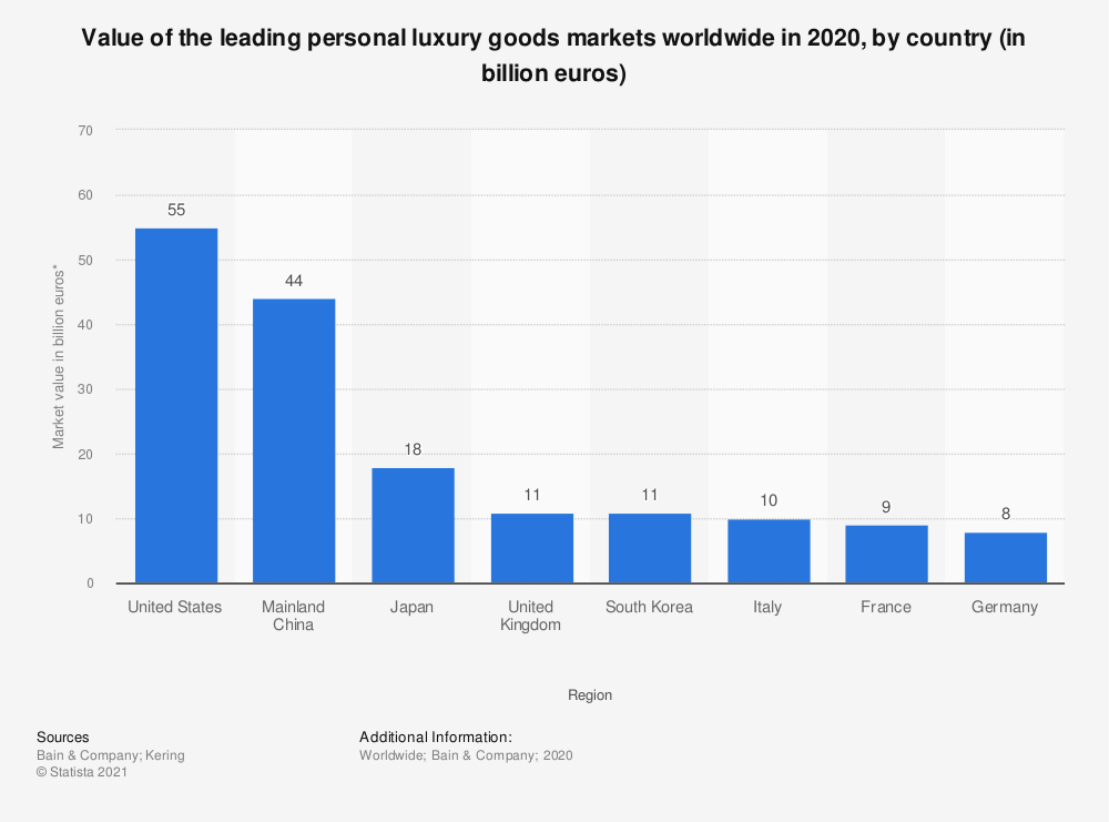


Figure 5. Value of leading personal luxury goods market worldwide, 2020. (Statista)

2.2 LV's French Identity

Not only does anglicisation of LV's online presence occur with regards to language, but there is also an 'anglicisation' with regards to the personalities and celebrities LV uses to showcase their brand, which appeals to anglophone followers.

LV frequently feature Emma Chamberlain on their Instagram, an American YouTuber/influencer, who has been referred to as 'the most popular girl in the world' (Elle 2019). As a digital celebrity with a large online following, (she is recognised more so on social platforms than traditional marketing campaigns such as TV ads and posters) and therefore brings a higher level of engagement for the LV brand. Emma Chamberlain's audience, being most English-speaking, are therefore more likely to engage with content featuring her. Using English speaking personalities and

influencers works well for LV because it attracts the wider anglophone audience, as well as French followers of the brand who can speak English and enjoy engaging with fashion content.

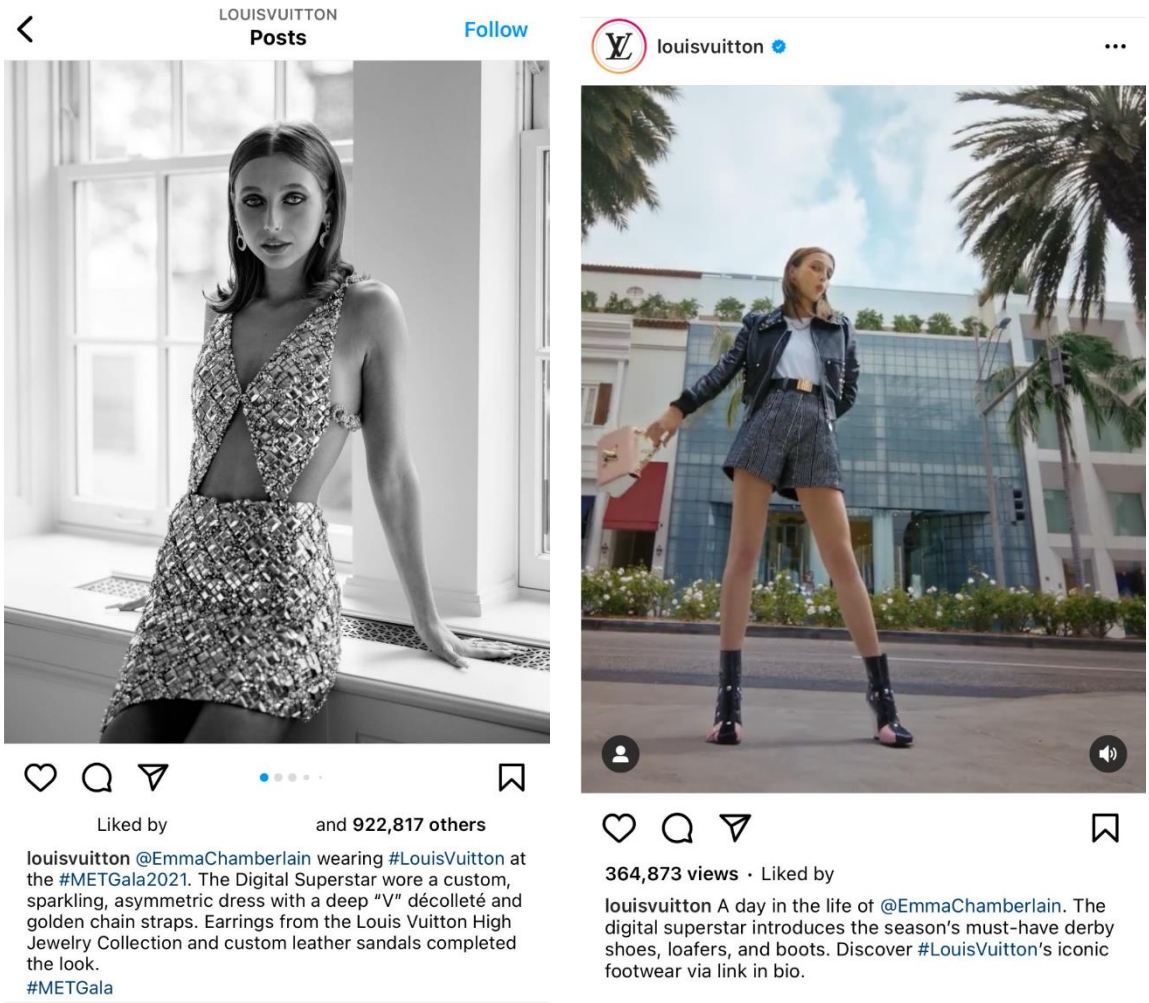


Figure 6 & 7. Posts from LV's Instagram @louisvuitton (Instagram)

The response to LV's content can be demonstrated by applying engagement rates. LV's engagement is rated at 0.16%, considered to be 'poor' for the size of its following (SocialTracker 2022), however, content featuring Emma Chamberlain tends to perform better. For example, LV's posts will typically gain 80,000-110,000 likes, but their post featuring Emma Chamberlain at the 2021 Met Gala fetched over 920,000 likes. Clearly, using digital celebrities is a way for brands to increase their level of engagement. The decision to do this with an American influencer rather than

a French influencer shows their objective is to appeal more so to the American market, where luxury goods consumption and the potential for consumers is larger.

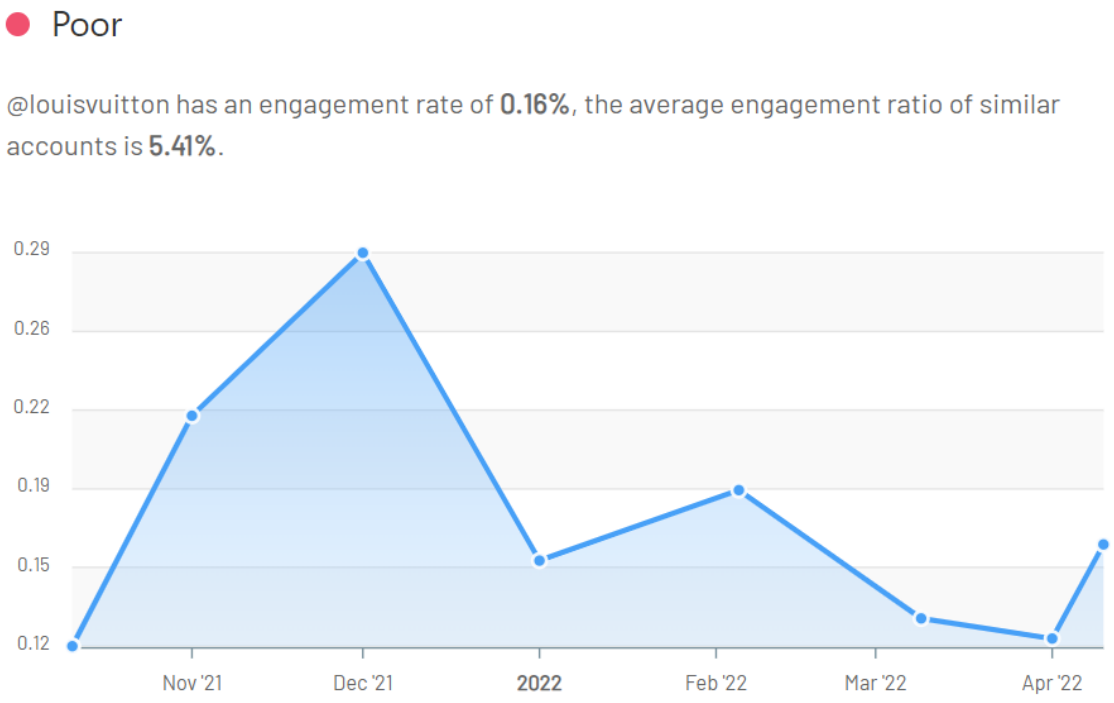


Figure 8. Engagement rate of @louisvuitton (SocialTracker 2022)

The question of how LV manages to retain its French identity, while communicating in English and using anglophone personalities to promote the brand, can be answered by its fashion shows. Twice a year during Paris Fashion Week (PFW), LV has typically held their shows in venues that showcase French culture and history. LV's Spring Summer 2022 show took place at Musée du Louvre, and their Fall Winter 2022 show took place in Musée d'Orsay. The brand then showcased videos

and snippets of the show on its Instagram page (Instagram 2022). and snippets of the show on its Instagram page (Instagram 2022).

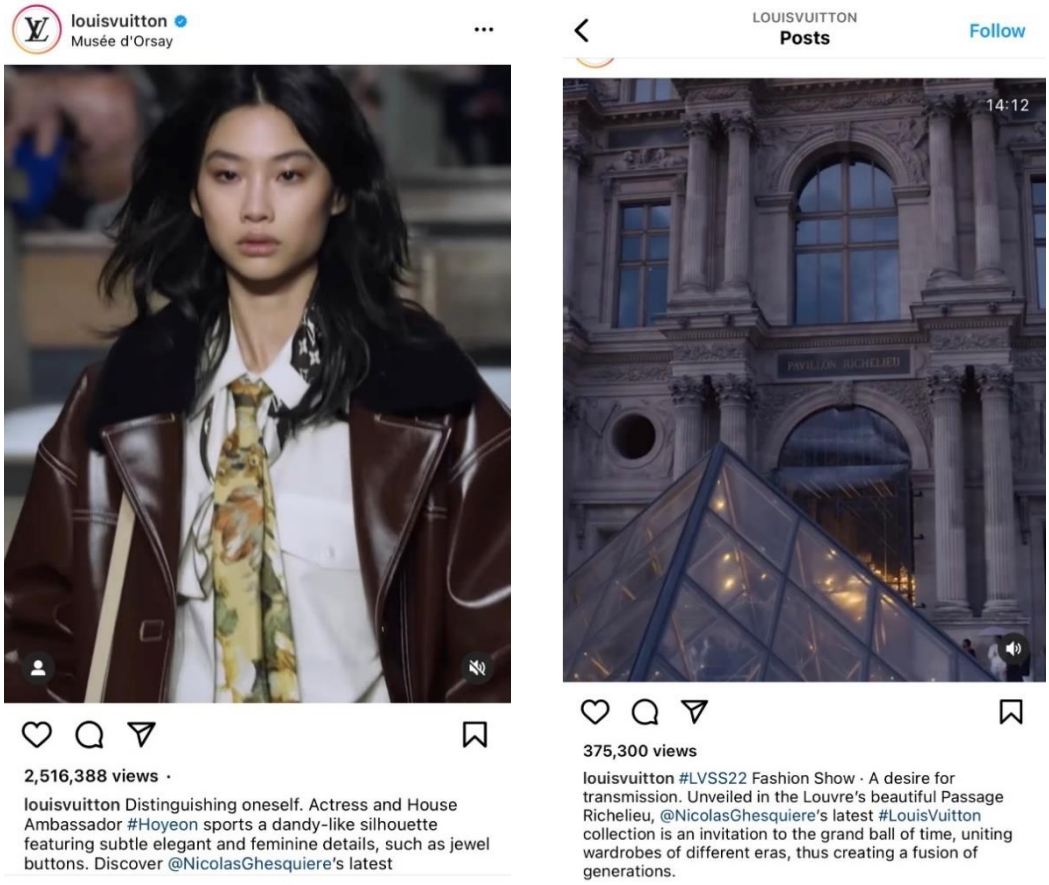


Figure 9 & 10. Posts from LV's Instagram @louisvutton (Instagram)

LV does not typically post much video content, but when they do, they often post videos with music (both French and English), content that is more accessible to anyone regardless of what language they speak. When LV have posted videos with French language in them, they included embedded English subtitles. The post below is a video of French author Caroline Bongrand, reading her book on Louis Vuitton in French. For followers of the brands, it sends a message that English needs to be catered for and reinforces the notion that English is the lingua franca of online platforms, as well as the fashion industry. While the video still embraces the French

language and its French identity, something that is threatened by the pervasiveness of English, it ensures to include its anglophone audience.

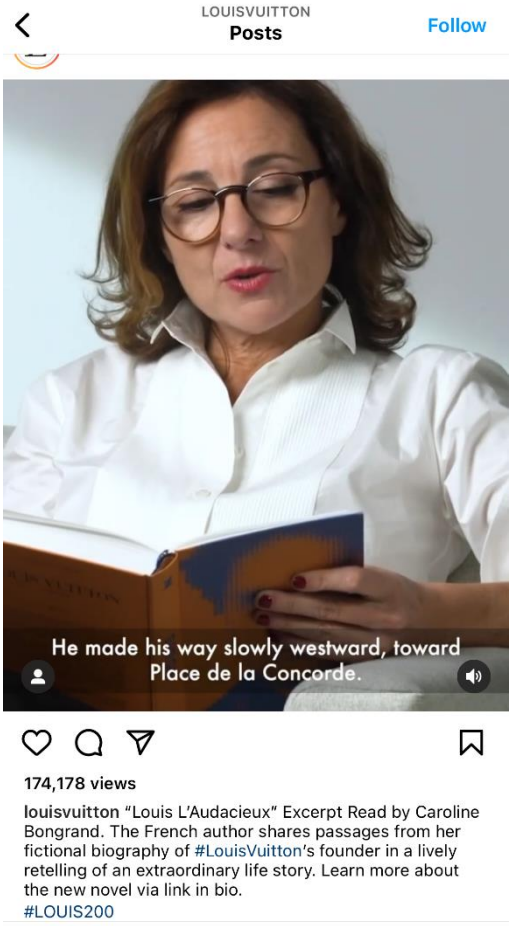
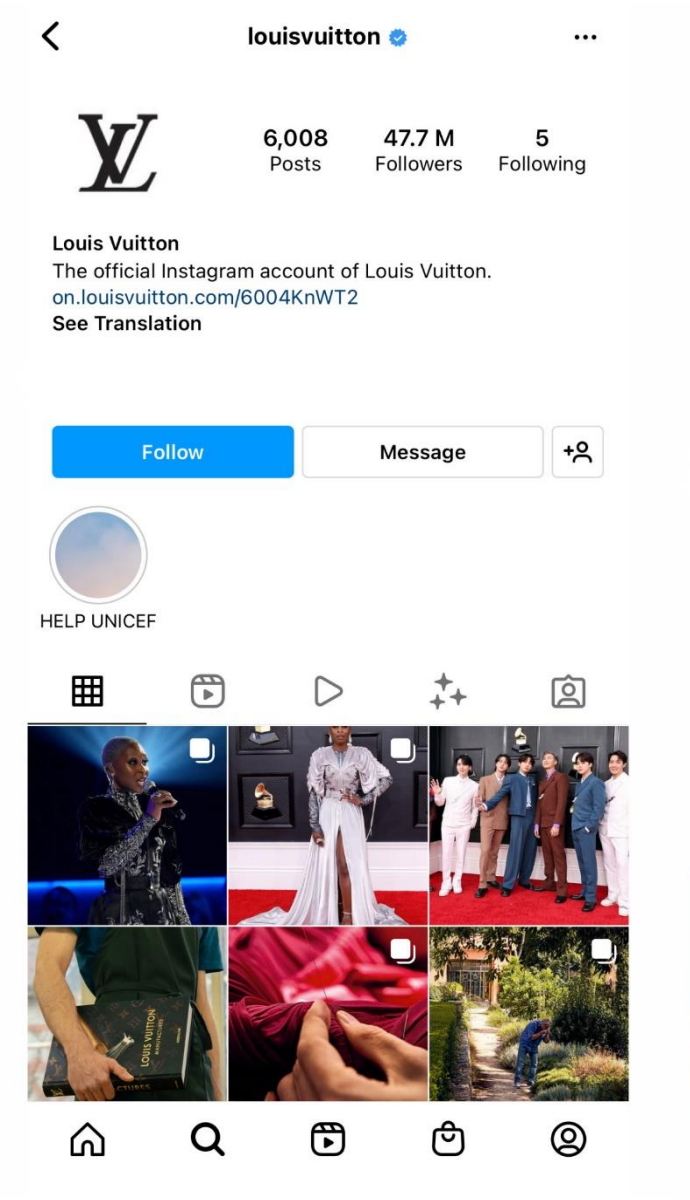


Figure 11. Post from LV's Instagram @louisvuitton (Instagram)



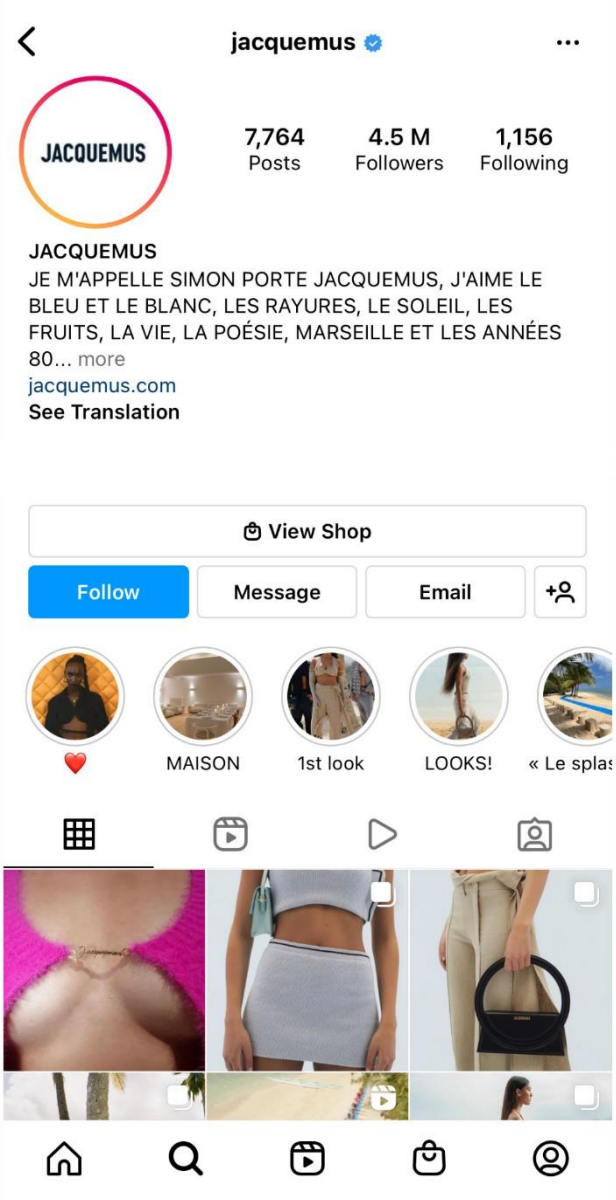


Figure 12. Posts from LV's Instagram @louisvuitton (Instagram)

Figure 13. Posts from Jacquemus' Instagram @jacquemus (Instagram)

While LV is one of the leading luxury fashion brands, their presence on Instagram does not enjoy as much interaction with users in France. In Q1 of 2021, French designer brand Jacquemus was the most interacted with profile in France (Statista, 2022), despite LV having over ten times the number of followers (Statista, 2022). As of April 2022, LV has 47.7M Instagram followers, compared to Jacquemus with 4.5M

(Instagram.com). Whilst it would be expected that a French brand with lots of interaction from its French audience may decide to communicate in French, Jacquemus features a lot of franglais and English within its Instagram profile. (Instagram, 2022). In fact, LV's low engagement rate (0.12%) in contrast to Jacquemus' (4%) would demonstrate that French brands can embrace English without detriment to a global audience as well as alienating their French audience (HypeAuditor, 2022). The reason for LV likely suffering from a lower engagement rate is likely because their marketing strategy is quite different from Jacquemus and is not as visually effective in comparison.

Chapter 3: Louis Vuitton's website

3.1 Comparing versions of LV's website

In 1997, the first LV website was launched, signalling the brand's entry into the web sphere (Rocamora 2017). Websites play an important part in the marketing strategy, and luxury fashion brands are paying more and more attention to the quality of their website and online services to meet the expectations of their customers. When used correctly, it as a useful tool for businesses to maintain their relationship with consumers. For example, LV offers a service in which customers can book a personal in-store appointment in store. The service is only available in selected countries, even those with store locations. Sometimes the services can differ according to the region, for example, LV does not offer personal shopping experiences in the UK, but it does in France and the US. LV operates care services in the US, but this is not offered on the French or UK website (LouisVuitton.com).

In contrast from LV's Instagram, LV's website is available in sixteen languages including French, but does default to English for a number of other countries in

Europe and Asia (LouisVuitton.com), despite being a French brand, this exemplifies it caters to English foremost. Unlike Instagram, LV's website is localised according to whichever country you are shopping from, which makes it easier to see to what extent they use English within their French-language site.

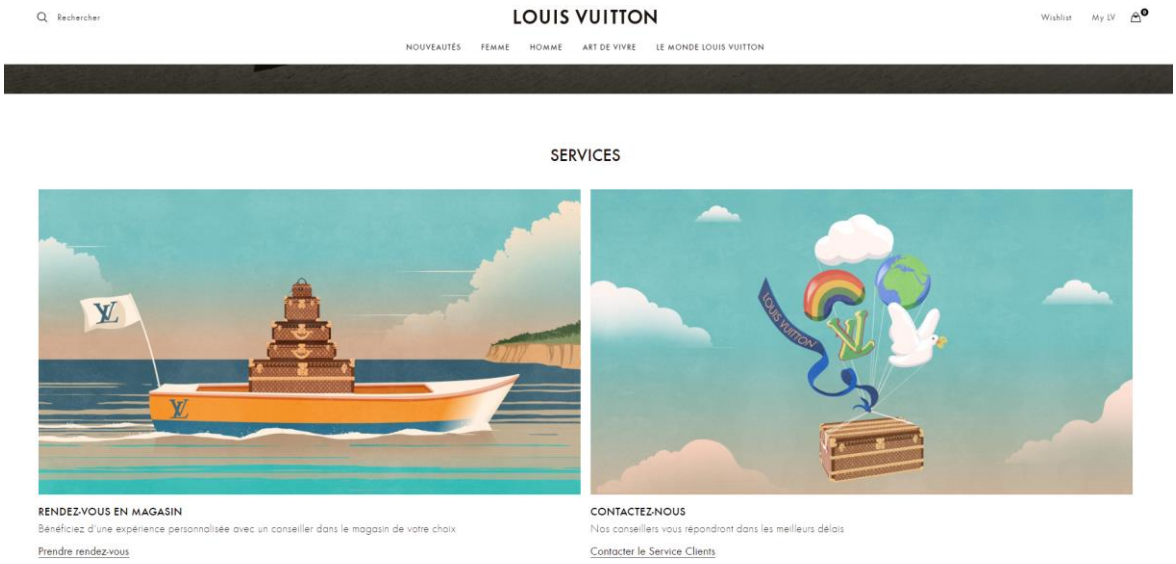


Figure 14. Services offered on LV's French version website (Louis Vuitton FR)

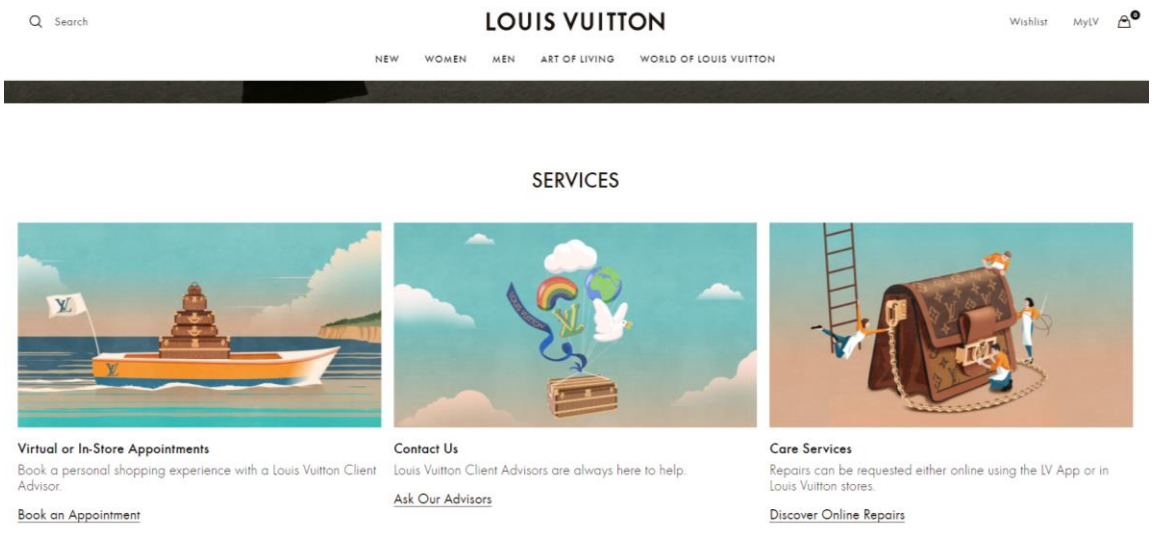


Figure 15. Services offered on LV's US version website (Louis Vuitton US)

Similar to LV's Instagram, we can see faces and personalities of the brand that are famous in the sphere of Anglophone media. Kid Cudi, Miranda Kerr and Hoyeon Jung (who has previously worked with LV but was appointed as an ambassador after starring in Netflix's most successful series ever, Squid Game) (Vanity Fair FR). The images below show the French version of LV's website, where multiple anglicisms can already be identified.

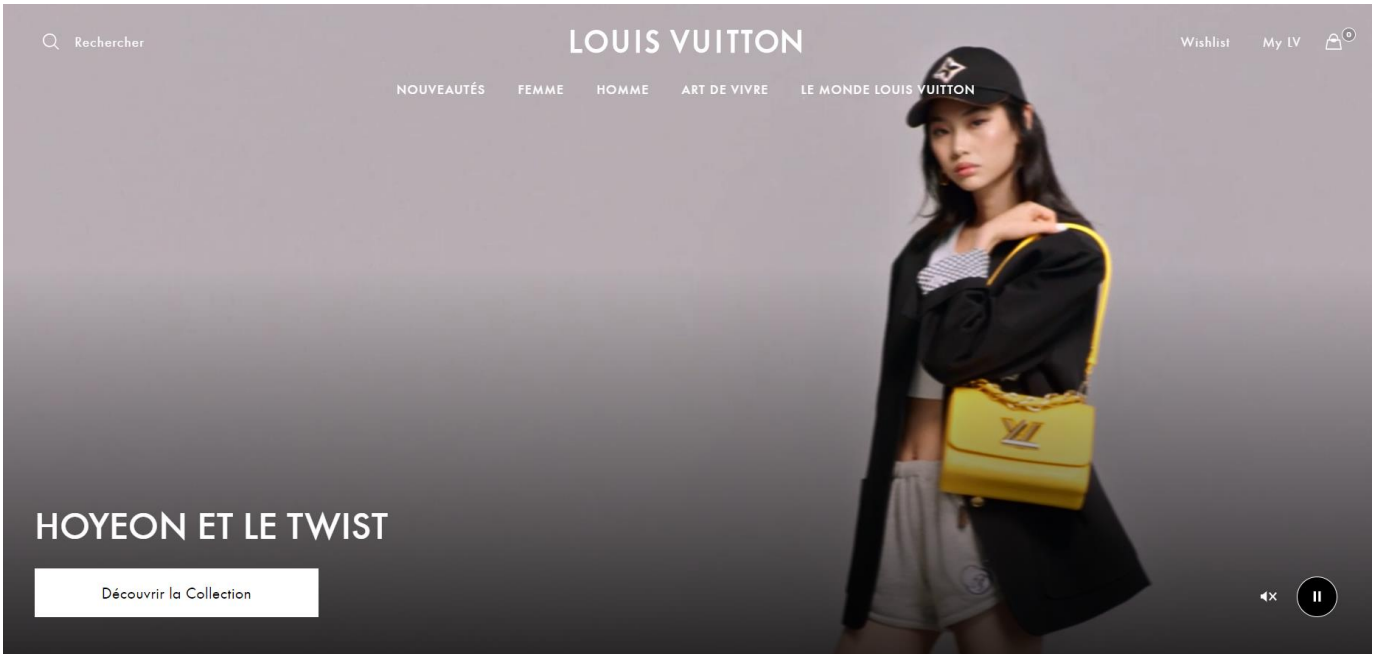


Figure 16. Hoyeon Jung pictured on the French version of Louis Vuitton's website homepage (Louis Vuitton FR).

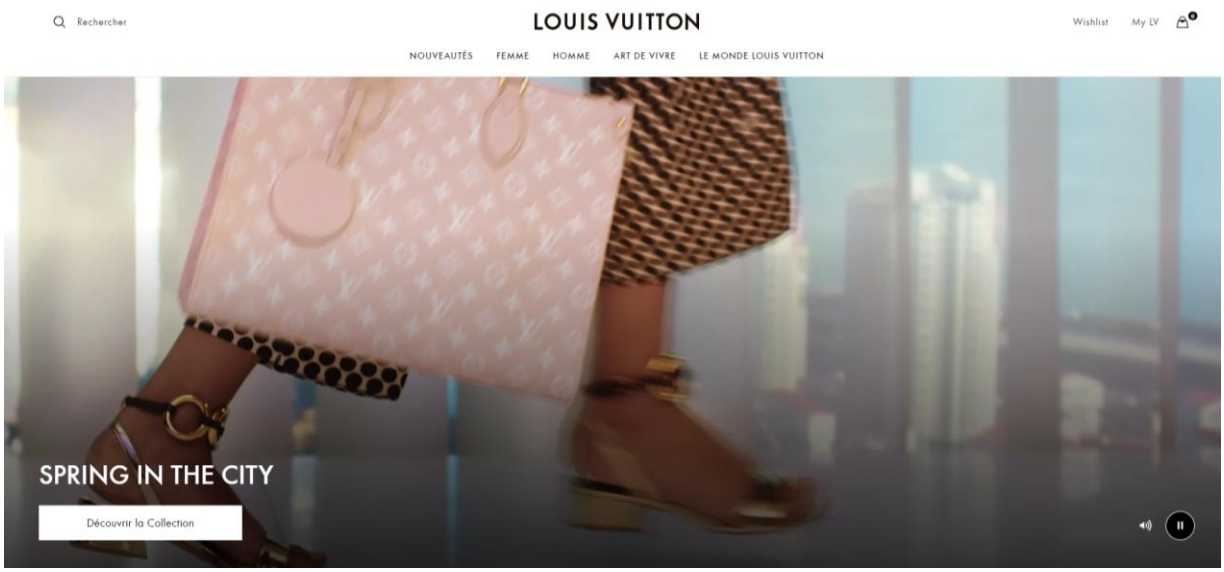


Figure 17. English used within Louis Vuitton's French website (Louis Vuitton FR)

Figure 17 shows LV named their collection 'Spring in the City'. The nature of the collection is not distinctly French, it is likely LV have chosen to use English because it evokes an 'international' feel to this collection.

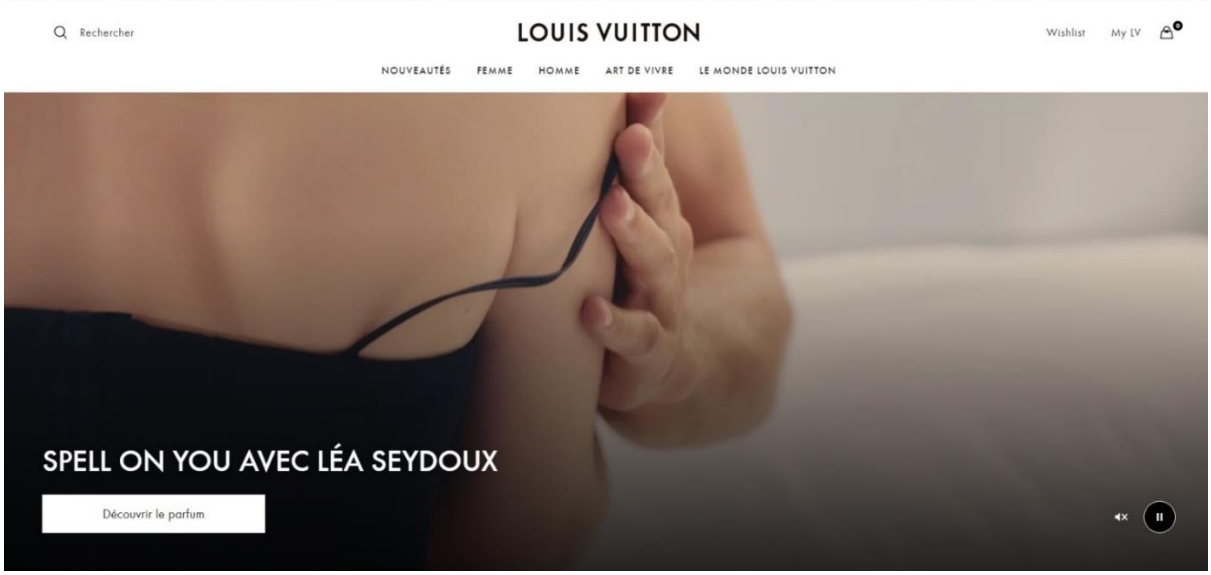


Figure 18. English used within Louis Vuitton's French website (Louis Vuitton FR)

Figure 18 shows an advertisement for one of LV's perfumes, 'Spell on You'. The product goes by this English name, inspired by the song 'I Put a Spell On You'. The song plays in the campaign videos, featuring famous French actress, Léa Seydoux.

Creator of the perfume, Jacques Cavallier Belletrud, said in ELLE magazine that

« Parfois quand on tombe amoureux, on se dit ensorcelé »

(Sometimes, when we fall in love, we say we are bewitched) (ELLE Fr, 2021). [1]

The decision to name the perfume ‘Spell on You’ rather than ‘ensorcelé’ or ‘envoûtement’ is a strategic marketing decision, the phrase ‘Spell on You’ holds cultural significance, it is already more recognisable than the French alternative due to its associations with the song. It also exemplifies the conciseness of English lexical creativity, as mentioned in chapter one. The name of the perfume helps cater to a global audience because anglophone media is more globalised than francophone media, so consumers are more likely to be familiar with an English song/phrase as opposed to a French term. However, LV could have instead taken advantage of the positive perceptions of French perfume and used a French name to communicate its French identity.

Since French actress Léa Seydoux is feature in the campaign for this perfume, she is more likely to be recognised by French consumers, so it is important that LV continue to make French faces a part of the brand. There is an obvious lack of francophone ambassadors of the brand and if LV started including French personalities it could strengthen their French identity.

3.2 Anglicisations within LV’s website

Examples of anglicisms/franglais used within French version of LV website	**Possible French alternative**	**Why is an English term used here?**

Wishlist	‘ma liste’ ‘mes favoris’ ‘ma liste des envies’	Easy to pronounce in French, the word ‘wish’ evokes something more special than ‘my list.
My LV	‘mon espace personnel’ ‘mon compte’	‘My LV’ is more concise, however a French term would have worked well too.
Botte moonlight	‘botte au clair de lune’	English term offers a more concise name.
Sneaker frontrow	‘baskets de première ligne’	Both words are likely to be recognised in French. ‘Front row sneakers’ would be the correct English term, but this is likely because it is following French grammatical rules and placing the adjective after the verb.
Daily pouch	‘pochette pour le quotidien’	‘Daily pouch’ is more concise.
Collier LV Get Dressed	Collier LV habillez-vous	English is used almost as an adjective; the French version makes less sense.
Sac speedy	Sac de vitesse	The alliteration works well in English compared to in French, French meaning may not give off the intended meaning.
Lunettes de soleil forme cat eye	Lunettes de soleil style yeux de chat	Franglais version is slightly shorter.

Something to note from this table is that some of the example terms do not make much sense in English, suggesting that the use of English here is included for its linguistic appeal, and whether it makes sense is of little concern. Furthermore, there is a consistency in that French nouns are kept in French ‘boucles d’oreilles’ (earrings) ‘sandales’ (sandals) ‘sac’ (bag) and ‘lunettes’ (sunglasses), but the

variation of these products will use English terms. There appears to be a pattern of using a French noun followed by an English adjective, even where there are already perfectly appropriate French terms to use in place of these English ones. The ‘core’ of the word is French, but it is given an English ‘flavour’. This idea is explained by Saugera (2017), who writes that ‘in the borrowing process of English terms, the donor form can be assigned to a new or additional grammatical class. The loan word ‘fashion*’* has been lexicalised as an adjective in French from the borrowed nominal: ’lunettes fashion’ (trendy/fashionable glasses)’ Rebours (2021).

Roberts writes in an article published by Bloomberg, that ‘in 2015, the LVMH perfume and cosmetic sales grew more than 600 million euros to 4.5 billion euros, and the division accounts for about 13 percent of LVMH’s business’ (2016). Among the LV range of perfumes, English terms are more common, for example ‘City of Stars’ ‘Afternoon Swim’ and ‘On the Beach’. The use of English is inconsistent, as LV also sells perfumes under French names such as ‘Coeur battant’, ‘Heures d’absence’ and ‘Etoile filante’. However, the globalised society we live in today means that people are more likely to understand and relate to English-name products, and thus there is a larger appeal for them. France has been described as the epicentre for perfume development and culture (Herz 2012), so it would make sense for them to embrace French terms for their products and use COO (Country of Origin) effect to their advantage. Particularly in the Chinese market, where data has shown that there is a significant advantage for overseas luxury brands and Chinese consumers consider French perfumes to be of a higher quality (Yani & Jintao 2011). The Chinese market follows the American market, as the second largest group to consumer luxury personal goods, valued at 44 billion euros in 2020 (Statista).

Chapter 4: Discussion of findings

Online platforms have increased the exposure of anglophone media, especially to the younger, French generation. As we have seen, LV among other leading luxury brands, has played a role in propelling online anglicisation through its online platforms.

Consumers aged 20 – 39 years old accounted for the largest consumption of luxury goods within France in 2021, 48% of purchases were made by this group (Statista, 2022). The use of English within online platforms corresponds to the younger generations, the ones who are most frequently using anglicisms and franglais**.** I would therefore make the case that LV's use of English most likely resonates with the ones that are buying their products and engaging with their platforms.

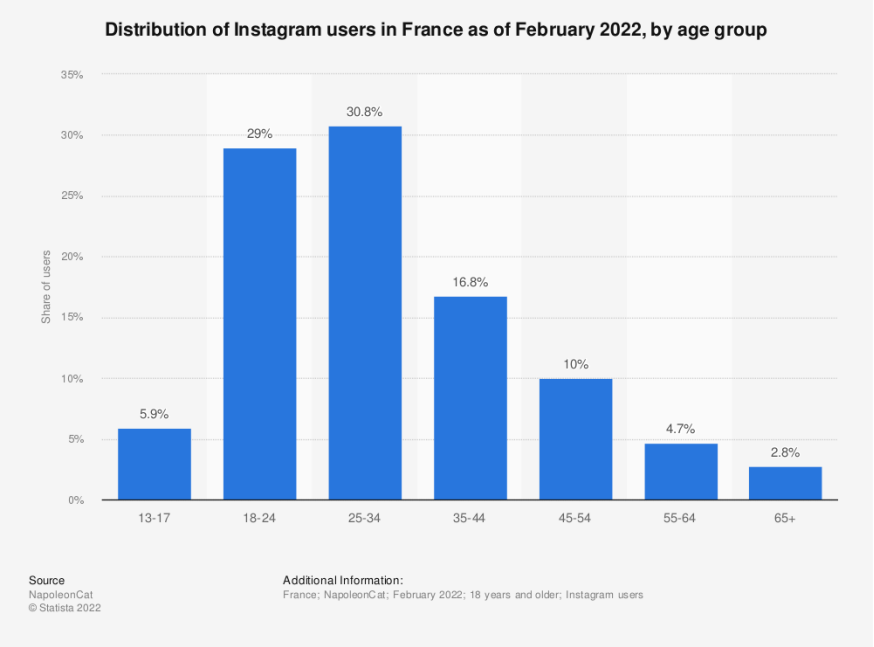


Figure 19. Distribution of Instagram users by age in France in 2022 (Statista)

As of 2022, nearly 60% of Instagram users are aged 34 and under. The proportion of younger users on Instagram (it should also be noted that this does not show the level of activity within these age groups, and social media usage is typically higher among younger generations), supported by the research on younger generations being more inclined to use English borrowings, would lead me to believe that the anglicisation that institutions such as the Académie Française seek to prevent, is not considered to be of an issue to the younger, French generation. ‘Leaders and scholars represent a minority of French speakers; the nation’s reception of foreign influences is materially driven, instead, by its majority of ordinary citizens’ (Riggio 2021).

Guilford published in La Linguistique (1997), a survey which gathered a list of French terms and English borrowings with the same meaning and found that 73% of the respondents favoured using the English borrowing over the French term. Lupu (2010) found that among young francophones, they would often use an anglicism because the semantics of English terms can be ‘larger’, ‘richer’ and ‘more general’ than its French equivalent.

Riggio (2021) conducted a study of francophones in Montpellier on their use of anglicisms, and from their research they found that younger francophones (within the 18-24 category) considered the use of anglicisms to be ‘fun and cool’ whereas older francophones (those aged 24 years and above) found them less so. It was also found that both groups agreed that they do not make effort to avoid using anglicisms, and this was more apparent with the 18-24 age group. This shifting change in attitudes towards anglicism implies that linguistic purism beliefs and the efforts of language-preserving institutions are gradually having less effect on the younger

francophone generation, perhaps ‘due to the greater culturally mixing in the internet era’ (Riggio 2021).

Instagram and social media in general have played a role in solidifying English as the language of the internet and this has been demonstrated through the large number of anglophone users and non-anglophone users that communicate in English. It has become the default method of communication, especially among young users.

Sometimes the English terms/anglicisms used within French are not always used correctly. Lee (2017) writes that ‘social media users are the architects of ‘peripheralised Englishes’ – Englishes that are deemed ungrammatical, non-standard, or not legitimate’. English borrowings can be assigned a different meaning and can become into popular usage, this occurs with franglais in particular, as we have seen.

Caillou (2021) wrote about young francophones and how using social media has led to them adopting English is way of fitting in and belonging to a wider community. Caillou furthermore writes that daily life exchanges in French are contrasted with the natural instinct to communicate in French online, some of the expressions noted being used by young francophones were purely English phrases like ‘such a mood’ or franglais ‘tu reach soon’. Calliou clarifies that it is not a refusal of the French language by younger generations, or a lack of pride in their mother tongue, and that we should not look negatively upon what is a sign of curiosity, interest, and openness to the world (Caillou 2021).

The attitudes of linguistic purism have shown to be a reflection more so of the Académie Française, and less so among French people in general. The Académie

Française has been criticised for its reluctancy to approve English words and phrases, despite when they come into common usage amongst Francophones. They are also known for their approval of terms that are less efficient or too stilted, for example ‘toile d’araignée mondiale’ for World Wide Web, translating into ‘Web of the global spider’ (Smith, 2005). The aversion of not formally acknowledging terms that have been popularised among Francophones in daily the use raises the question as to whether these rules actually serve the French language or hinders their progression in the global environment. They certainly hold influence over institutions in France, but the extent to which they hold influence over casual speech and online communication is limited.

It might be assumed that the anglicisms and franglais used in French indicates a preference for the English language, but this is not what my research is trying to suggest. It is more so the case that, as we have seen through LV’s website, there is an affinity for English terms used almost for simplicity and conciseness. English words are used almost to just give a ‘flavour’ to French terms without making much sense, but the point is that they convey a different sense where French would not make as much sense or would look obviously incorrect.

Boogards (2008) writes in *On ne parle pas anglais :*

> [A cote de ce dynamise qui constitue un trait inhérent aux langages bien vivants, il faut relever l’afflux massif des termes de spécialité qui font de plus en plus partie du langage auquel chacun peut être confronté dans sa vie professionnelle ou tout simplement dans les médias.]
>
> (Alongside this dynamism, which is an inherent feature of living languages, it should be noted the massive influx of specialised terms that make up an increasing part of the language that everyone may encounter in their professional lives or simply in the media.) [2]

I believe this makes a good point in response to the aversion of English borrowings in the French language. Languages have and will continue to evolve to best suit the needs of its speakers, its function is to facilitate communication, and the adoption of anglicisms is an indication of the language's vitality. Using anglicisms within the French language is justified, particularly as other languages pick them up too.

Conclusion

If there is one key takeaway I want to make from my findings in this dissertation, it is that while LV amongst other fashion brands is not responsible for the spreading of anglicisation to francophone audiences, they do, however play an important role in contributing to the notion that English is the online lingua franca. English was reported to be the most used language on the internet in 2020, with 25.9% of users communicating in it (Statista 2020). Adopting English in the 21st century is a strategic tool for conducting business in our interconnected society and sharing a common language can solidify these connections. Therefore, LV ensures that their online marketing strategies are inclusive of the English language. The anglicisation of LV's digital marketing strategy has shown to correlate with their audience, the extent to which English terms are present in the French language of the digital era.

There are often arguments made in support of making English as the common language of business, making communication easier and connecting people more. Neeley (2020) argues that 'Adopting a common mode of speech isn't just a good idea; it's a must, even for an American company with operations overseas, for instance, or a French company focused on domestic customers.' On the other hand, Crystal (2003) writes that the use of a common language does not guarantee

harmony among people, and even when people are united by a single language, they can still de racial, religious, or political divisions.'

In reflecting on the question posed at the beginning of this dissertation, I will outline briefly how my findings have answered them.

The reason behind the anglicisation of French luxury fashion brands has been demonstrated by the impact of globalisation in the 20th century; English has often been the first language where terminology is conceptualised; the size of anglophone users is the largest compared to any other language; francophones embrace English borrowing and anglicisms online; and the failings of the Académie Française to officislly acknowledge anglicisms that have come into popular usage among the majority of French people.

The nature and culture of digital media has facilitated an anglicisation of the brand by positioning it an environment in which English is pervasive, and a requirement to compete in global business (Neeley 2012). Even though we have seen how LV is anglicised in order to resonate with its online audience, it does not post a lot of audio content, relying instead on music and visual elements. This is because photos and clips with music can be watched and enjoyed by anybody regardless of language.

The use of English is certainly justified on LV's Instagram. Translation tools are improving and have enhanced the multilingual potential of the app, so brands now have more potential to reach those that do not speak English with the majority of their content. Crystal (2003) made an interesting point that automatic translation could be a possibility for people to communicate directly with each other, eliminating the need for a global language. It would be interesting to see if fashion

brands/brands in general decide to communicate using languages other than English, if automatic translation continues to develop.

With regards to how online anglicisation has affected the brand identity, the most obvious examples are through the use of anglicisms/franglais in LV's product names, English terms within their French website, and communicating in English rather than French on social platforms. Furthermore, it is usually English speakers who work with the LV brand to make audio visual content. The messages of a French brand are often being communicated by anglophones, but this could be an opportunity to amplify francophones in an industry that has lost already its linguistic influence.

I found that the literature on digital marketing strategies of fashion brands was quite limited, and as we move to an increasingly online society, it would be interesting to see whether the research is developed. It would also be interesting to review the online marketing environment in years to come and see what the role of certain languages play in online marketing, especially as it seems to be heading towards a monolinguistic future.

Word count: 7328

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