

Te quiero mama, I love you mum or Te quiero mum?

English, Spanish or a mix of both?

**Investigating Mexican consumers' response and attitude towards language use in
product advertising**



Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen

Master Thesis International Business Communication

Qudsiyah Braaf

s4315073 (qudsiyah.braaf@student.ru.nl)

Supervisor: Dr. Andreu van Hooft

Second supervisor: Dr. B.C. Planken

Radboud University, Faculty of Arts

August 2018

11162 words

Abstract

Language choice is often perceived to be of high importance for Multinational Corporations (MNCs) when operating internationally (Lin & Wang, 2016). Different studies have demonstrated that language and general language attitudes might or might not influence consumers' attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product and purchase intention (e.g. Krishna & Ahluwalia, 2008; Van Hooft et al., 2016). Previous studies concerning Mexico have demonstrated the presence and importance of English in its contemporary society. However, these studies have often studied Mexico in relation to the US and thus failed to include cultural notions like consumer ethnocentrism. Furthermore, little research has been done on the effects of language choice when advertising different product categories (e.g. Álvarez, Uribe & De-la-Torre, 2017). Finally, in most cases only the mixed version ad with the simplest grammatical structure (Luna & Perrachio, 2005) was used. Therefore, the current study investigated the effect(s) of language choice on Mexican consumers attitude towards the product, attitude towards the ad and purchase intention when evaluating low and high involvement products. Additionally, it was aimed to find out whether consumer ethnocentrism also influenced consumer responses. Lastly, it was studied whether attitude towards the English language and the use of English could predict consumer responses of ads containing English. A 4 x 2 x 2 mixed design (repeated measures) was applied with language of the ad (Spanish, English, mix +Spanish, mix +English) as the between-subject factor and product involvement (low vs. high) as the within-subject factor. Consumer ethnocentrism (between-subject factor) was entered in the model as moderator. The results showed that language choice of the ad did not significantly affect attitude towards the advertisement, nor attitude towards the product nor purchase intention. Individuals with a low consumer ethnocentrism had a more positive attitude towards the high involvement than towards the low involvement product. No differences were found in the evaluations of subjects with a high consumer ethnocentrism. Finally, neither attitude towards the English language nor use of English yield to be significant predictors of consumer response. It can thus be concluded that irrespective of consumer ethnocentrism, Spanish, English or mixed language could be used when advertising high and low involvement products in Mexico. However, more research is needed to determine adequate advertising strategies for international organizations who consider advertising in Mexico.

Keywords: language choice; marketing communication strategies; accommodation theory; Mexico; consumer attitudes; low involvement vs. high involvement products

Introduction

Language has proven to be a rather important marketing tool for international companies when positioning themselves and their brand overseas in countries in which a different language than the organizational language is spoken (Lin & Wang, 2016). For example, the case of a multinational corporation (MNC) that advertises products in English in Mexico, a country in which Spanish the official language. Given the importance of language for international business, existing language differences and perceptions cannot be overlooked (Harzing & Pudelko, 2013). Earlier research (e.g. Krishna & Alhuwalia, 2008; Nederstigt & Hilberink – Schulpen, 2017) has made it clear that organizations should make well-considered decisions when determining which language or languages will be used in their campaigns, as this might positively or negatively influence consumers' attitude towards an ad, attitude towards a product and intention to actually buy the product.

Various marketing strategies can be used with regards to language choice in advertising: *global*, *local* or *glocal* (a mix of global and local). English as a *lingua franca* has been commonly accepted as the dominant language in international business communication (Frederiksson, Barner-Rasmussen & Piekkari, 2006) and a large popularity can be noticed in non-English speaking countries since English is frequently used in campaigns presented in countries in which English is not the vernacular language. The use of ads (only) in English is considered to form part of a *global* approach and “one of the reasons advertisers use English is the assumption that this language has a symbolic value for consumers” (Van Hooft, Van Meurs & Spierts, 2017, p. 139). Krishna and Alhuwalia (2008) explain this symbolic value of English by referring to the fact that it is often associated with modernization, internationalism and sophistication, for example.

Whereas language choice in a *global* strategy could be defined as standardized since one language is used for all countries and target groups, both a *local* and *glocal* approach tend to use an adapted strategy in which content and language choice of the ads is chosen according to the language and other characteristics of a given target group. According to the linguistic accommodation theory, defined in Giles et al. (2007), using another individual's native language during communication could be seen as a desire to identify with this person and gain their respect and appreciation. In other words, this attempted rapprochement demonstrates empathy towards the other. One could thus assume that in accordance with this premise, the extent to which one person adjusts to another shows more or lesser empathy. Hence, taking this into consideration,

organizations may decide to apply a local language as part of a *local strategy* in their campaigns to show empathy towards their target group and by doing so earning their respect and attention when advertising abroad.

Besides English or the local language, companies can also choose to use a mixture of English and the local language in their advertisements (Luna & Peracchio, 2005; Hashim, 2010; Bishop & Peterson, 2011); the so called *glocal* approach in which code-switching is applied. The Markedness Model established by Myers-Scotton (1991, 1999) intends to clarify the social motives of code-switching. These authors explain the choice of language use as a manner of expressing desired or identified group belongingness and interpersonal relationships. In addition, Alonso García, Chemelski and González Hernández (2013) who studied advertising in Mexico, refer to findings regarding the effects of code-switching proving that individuals activate language associations that are similar to their attitude towards that specific language. In practical terms, if one has a negative attitude towards a language, the reaction evoked by the message in that language will be negative and thus cause a lower valuation of the ad or product. With positive associations, this works the other way around (Alonso García, Chemelski, González Hernández, 2013). This is why launching a product with advertising in which code-switching is used could be potentially beneficial for organizations. Firstly, because the use of English might activate existing positive associations with the English language and thus lead to a higher evaluation of the message. Secondly, because at the same time, empathy towards the consumer is demonstrated by taking the local culture into consideration through the use of its language, which is also likely to cause consumer appreciation (Van Hoof, Van Meurs & Spierts, 2017).

In 2008, Krishna and Alhuwalia investigated Indian bilinguals' attitudes towards MNCs and local businesses' choice of language (local language, English or a mixture of both languages) in advertisements. Their findings demonstrated that there was no significant effect of language choice in ads for necessity and luxurious products by local companies on consumers attitudes. In contrast to this result, respondents had a more favorable reaction to the foreign language when MNCs marketed luxurious goods (sophistication), whereas the local language was more effective for promoting necessity goods (belongingness). Accordingly, it can be said that MNCs should chose the language they use carefully in order to effectively reach their target group.

Contrary to Krishna and Alhuwalia's study (2008), the current research will focus on monolingual consumers in a society in which English is not the native language:

Mexico. According to Van Hooft, Van Meurs and Spierts (2017), “language attitudes consist of evaluations of different dimensions (e.g. affect, attractiveness, superiority), and the relevance of a particular dimension may depend on the context (e.g. monolingual vs. bilingual speakers, specific language and country, communicative setting)” (Van Hooft, Van Meurs, Spierts, p. 141). Whereas in India, Hindi and English are the official languages, the official language in Mexico is Spanish. This means that on a societal level Indians can be called bilinguals. On an individual level it could even be that some habitants speak one or more of the countries’ languages, which would make them multilingual. In comparison, on a societal level Mexicans are considered to be monolinguals, despite the scale of exposure of English and the fact that in some parts of the country indigenous languages are spoken. The difference between both India and Mexico thus lies within the societal level.

Furthermore, as suggested, in this study other product types, namely an adhesive paper note and camera (low involvement/high involvement; Zaichkowsky, 1985; Percy & Rossiter, 1992; Park, Lee & Han, 2007) will be investigated. The aim will be to gain more insight on whether the asymmetric language effects detected among bilinguals in previous studies can also be assumed for monolingual consumers. Finally, a description of the context that includes relevant linguistic, cultural, economic and geographic aspects will be provided.

Theoretic framework

Standardization or adaptation?

The effects of language choice (English, local language, mixed language) has been examined in different parts of the globe (e.g. Krishna & Ahluwalia (2008) focused on India, Hornikx et al. (2010) focused on the Netherlands; Van Hooft et al. (2016) focused on Egypt; Alonso, Chelminski & González Hernández (2013); Álvarez, Uribe and De-la-Torre (2017) focused on Mexico). From these studies it can be concluded that making use of English ads in countries in which it is not the native language, reflects a standardized approach (meaning that similar or even identical strategies in different markets are applied), which is likely to evoke different (general) language attitudes (Álvarez, Uribe & De-la-Torre, 2017).

Wenden (1991) refers to the evaluative component of language attitudes; they may generate like or dislike (Wenden, 1991). In addition, Santello (2015) explains that

language attitudes consist of evaluations of different aspects, such as affect, behavior, attractiveness and superiority. The relevance of a specific aspect could depend on factors (e.g. monolingualism vs. bilingualism, particular language and country, communicative ambience) that influence the context (Santello, 2015). Linking general languages attitudes and attitudes towards language use in advertising, Yoon and Yoon (2013), clarify that attitudes play a significant role in processing advertising, partly since they often provide insight on consumers' personal convictions and frequently predict behaviors. Furthermore, Luna and Perrachio (2005) suggested the possibility that individuals' attitudes towards the use of language in advertisements are demonstrations of their general language attitudes (Luna & Perrachio, 2005). While for some consumer groups standardized advertising will yield more effective results, others favor an adapted approach that pays attention to message perception in accordance with their cultural background; one that demonstrates empathy.

As indicated earlier, there are various reasons why organizations might choose for standardization strategies in their campaigns. In these cases, English is frequently chosen for global communication (Hornikx & Starren, 2008), because it facilitates the establishment of a global brand image with a comparable positioning in global markets (Hornikx, Van Meurs & De Boer, 2010). A more practical argument could be the savings in translation, adaptation and registration expenses (Hornikx & Starren, 2008; Gerritsen et al., 2000). However, Melewar and Vemmervik (2004) alert not only to focus on cost reduction as this might cause lack of meeting consumers' demand for an appealing message. Furthermore, lack of respect of target groups' need could result in rather opposite (negative) consumers' reactions towards ads and products instead of those reactions (positive) organizations initially aimed at (Melewar & Vemmervik, 2004).

The adaptation strategy holds a contrasting view compared to the standardization strategy and believes that different benefits can be generated by expressing sensitivity to the local community and effective communication. The proponents of this strategy generally argue that due to differences among consumers with respect to culture, economic and political development, customer values and lifestyles adaptation is necessary because a standardized strategy does not take these elements into account (Melewar & Vemmervik, 2004).

As the present study investigates the effect of language choice in advertising it also takes into account language specific attitudes; the symbolic value of English. Therefore, consumers' attitude towards English and attitude towards the use of English

are measured to determine whether these variables predict Mexican consumer response in advertisements containing English.

Effectiveness of English: the Hispanic context and linguistic accommodation

Different studies (e.g. Ovesdotter-Alm, 2003; Baumgardner, 2006) have examined the rapid increase of advertising strategies using exclusively English or a mixture of English and Spanish in Hispanic Latin American countries (Álvarez, Uribe & De-la-Torre, 2017). These studies showed that diverging tendencies can be detected among the population with regards to the language attitudes towards English.

Spanish is spoken in 21 countries and the official language in eight of the twelve countries of South America. Together with Spanish, a significant presence of indigenous languages (and cultures) (e.g. Quechua and Aymara) can be observed. In many of these countries (e.g. Argentina, Peru, Colombia) English is perceived as a symbol of prestige and wealth, reflecting in the Americanization of their institutions and through content in media like movies, music and news (Boyd-Barett, 1977). This trend, however, is not visible in some countries like Chile in which the Americanization is seen as a threat to the local/indigenous culture (Uribe & De-la-Torre, 2017).

Although English is the majority language in the United States, Spanish is the second most spoken language, with almost 53 million (bilingual) Spanish speakers. Koslow, Shamdasani and Touchstone (1994) performed research on US Hispanic consumers' attitudes towards advertisements with varying extents of Spanish-language usage (manipulation of four ads: one completely in English, one completely in Spanish, one mixed advertisement with a dominant presence of English and one with a dominant presence of Spanish). This study demonstrated that the accommodation theory established by Giles et al., (1991) could be very useful in explaining the effectiveness of language use in advertising for minority groups. Koslow and associates (1994) found that Spanish has a complicated, or maybe better said, conflicting value in advertising for Hispanics in the US. Firstly, because it showed to be important for literal understanding of advertisements. Secondly, because Hispanic consumers appreciated companies' linguistic accommodation as a gesture of empathy and recognition of the cultural importance of the group. However, at the same time, exclusive use of Spanish resulted in a less positive perception of the ad than when a mixed-language advertisement was observed, which according to the researchers, might be a reflection of a linguistic inferiority complex by Hispanic consumers (Koslow, Shamdasani & Touchstone, 1994).

In short, this study found a relation between language attitudes in publicity and the attitude towards the ad in the USA and among Hispanic consumers.

Other researchers who recently investigated bilingual Hispanic consumers' language attitudes in advertising are Van Hooft, Van Meurs and Schellekens (2017) and Álvarez, Uribe and De-la-Torre (2017). The first group of researchers examined Spanish-speaking consumers' response to the use of English or Spanish in product advertisements in Spain and the United States. These investigators did not find differences in general language attitudes towards English between the Spanish and US Hispanic consumers. Furthermore, even though participants self-reported language frequency use and language proficiency in both languages differed, there was no influence of English and Spanish language use on the consumer attitudes towards the ad, the product or purchase intention. This study thus concluded that the language choice in advertising has no effect on the evaluations of these two groups (Van Hooft, Van Meurs, Schellekens, 2017).

Álvarez, Uribe and De-la-Torre (2017) examined language effects on print advertising among Chilean, Ecuadorian and Mexican consumers by proposing that stereotypes about English speakers and code-switching individuals provide potential aid in determining the most effective language when advertising in Chile, Ecuador or Mexico. The results of their study, in which a fictitious coffee creamer named 'Naturey' was advertised, showed varying effects of language-related stereotypes across the countries: in Chile, whether English yielded to be more persuasive depended on the degree of favorability of the stereotype of the code-switching individuals in the experiment; in Mexico, contrary to Chile, no significant attitude differences regarding ads in English, Spanish or mixed language were encountered. Lastly, English print ads in Ecuador were evaluated more favorable in comparison to the Spanish and mixed ads and language-associated stereotypes (Álvarez, Uribe, De-la-Torre, 2017).

The aforementioned studies have added to the field of research on the influence of general language attitudes on specific language acts such as advertisements in various Spanish speaking countries. It has been illustrated that English holds different status in these countries and that its effects vary on consumers' attitude towards the ad, towards the product and purchase intention. A possible explanation might be the factors influencing the context in which the studies were executed. The mentioned studies have analyzed the consumer groups as being bilinguals (e.g. in Mexico, Chile and Ecuador), in a bilingual context in which one of the languages is a majority and the other a minority language (in the US) and in a country in which English is a foreign language (in Spain).

In addition, some studies regarded US Hispanics, made a comparison with the US Hispanics or centralized the US impact on consumer responses. The present study will examine participants in a monolingual context, in which Spanish has the statistical majority status and strong national feelings are present. Mexico is not bilingual at societal level and even though English has a large presence in the advertising sector, for example, it is not an official language in the country. The next section will discuss language attitudes towards the English language in Mexico.

English in Mexico

As stated in Despaigne (2010, p. 55), “the political, cultural and economic relationship between the United States and Mexico is becoming more interdependent, and in general, Mexico’s participation in the world economy has increased the spread of English as a Second Language”. Nevertheless, the presence of English in Mexican business (communication) is nothing rare, given that from the early twentieth century there has been a large US participation in various subdivisions of the Mexican economy, leading to substantial exchange of goods, services and cultural perceptions between the two neighboring countries (Baumgardner, 2006).

According to the EF English proficiency index, however, English language proficiency in Mexico is ranked as “low proficiency”, at rank 44 out of 80 countries. The index also shows that the highest measured proficiencies can be found in the Federal District (capital), San Luis Potosi, Guanajuato and Jalisco (EF English proficiency index, 2017).

In his work, Baumgardner (2006, 2008) gives an elaborated overview of the presence of English in Mexican publicity. This researcher explains that English can be found in Mexican advertising, magazines, shops names and even Mexican product names. However, he argues that to have full comprehension of the position and impact of (US) English in Mexico, not only the proximity and shared border of the two countries is of importance. Mexico forms part of a growing group of countries whose languages and cultures reflect a presence of English, for which it is necessary to also take the role of English on a global scale into consideration.

Thus, even though Spanish is the official language in Mexico and 68 Indigenous languages (or linguistic variants) are spoken (Despaigne, 2010), US influences are ubiquitous in Mexico’s present days. In the capital Mexico City, for example, billboards entirely written in English advertising luxurious imported goods can be observed. At the

same time, it is relatively common to encounter advertisements in English promoting functional national products (Álvarez, Uribe & León De-la-Torre, 2017). Nonetheless, the influence of English leads to positive as well as negative reactions. On the one hand knowing and speaking the English language provides social and economic advantages in business, for example. This is why knowledge of the English language is seen as a synonym of hope and more chances in life (Despaigne, 2010). On the other hand, the prestigious, and sometimes even dominant value and perception of English, might also lead to negative attitudes associated with invasion and imperialism (McArthur, 1998). These findings correspond to Guiles and Johnsons (1987) (as cited in Álvarez, Uribe & León De-la-Torre, 2017, p. 979) who state that “when an ethnic group is in constant contact with content and messages from a different culture, one language becomes dominant in status, prestige and recognition, even when there is no demographic superiority”.

The negative consumer attitudes towards English and English use in advertising could be possibly explained due to nationalism and consumer ethnocentrism. Alonso García, Chelminski and González Hernández (2013) explain that nationalistic feelings could be possible influencers of consumers’ attitude and purchase behavior for local and global brands. They mention the ethnocentrism theory that points out the more favorable perceptions individuals may experience towards domestic goods versus the less favorable attitudes towards foreign products. Existing Mexican notions of ethnocentrism are assumed to be based on “strong belief on the nation’s and region’s cultural and moral superiority” (Alonso García, Chelminski & González Hernández, 2013, p. 81). As the culture also includes the local language, using a foreign language is thus likely to evoke (more) resistance by ethnocentric Mexican consumers and influence their attitudes and purchase intention.

In Mexico and according to the literature, a part of the Mexican consumers could reflect a very strong desire for foreign-made products and prefer these products over national products; the so called *Malinchismo*, which is a notion firmly rooted among Mexicans (Bailey & Gutierrez de Piñeres, 1997; Alonso García, Chelminski & González Hernández, 2013). These perceptions and values could, indeed, influence the way consumers’ perception in Mexico are moderated by ethnocentrism. Consumer ethnocentrism will therefore be entered in the model of this study as it is expected to have a moderating effect on the consumer responds. The results will give more insight on the

influence of this assumed consumer ethnocentrism in Mexico on participants' response to an MNC's ad adopting a *global*, *local* or *glocal* language strategy.

Alonso García, Chelminski and González Hernández (2013), concluded from their study on the effects of language on attitudes toward advertisements (and brand trust) in Mexico, that local brands apparently are more restricted when choosing their advertising strategies: *global*, *local* or *glocal*. Their results showed that Mexican products and brands should exclusively be advertised in Spanish, which demonstrates the traditional and ethnocentric attitudes mentioned in the previous paragraph. Code-mixed messages seemed to be the best fit for English products/products with a global appeal. Nevertheless, the use of English did not directly enhance ad attitudes. Alonso García and fellow researchers have not examined the attitudes towards English advertisements only, nor have they investigated consumer involvement with the product.

Product involvement: low vs. high

Consumer involvement is a term defined as “the perceived personal relevance of a product based on the individual consumer's needs, interest and values” (Park, Lee & Han, 2007, p. 129). Involvement can be situational or enduring and be manipulated by making an ad that consumers find “relevant”. The degrees to which consumers experience involvement are classified as *low involvement* and *high involvement* (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Additionally, Zaichkowsky (1985) and Park, Lee and Han (2007) explain that involvement may range between a particular choice and a product category (Zaichowsky, 1985; Park, Lee & Han, 2007). Product category could vary from economic to expensive. According to Greenleaf and Lehmann (1995), expensive products are considered to have a *high involvement*. These products often require a considerable decision-making process (Greenleaf & Lehmann, 1995). Additionally, Percy and Rossiter (1992) also link *low involvement* products with more common products like shampoo or coffee, whereas *high involvement* products would be reflected by technological and electronic products, for example (Percy & Rossiter, 1992). For this reason, the present study will assume that a relatively economic product (a sticker) will be perceived as a *low involvement* product vs. a relatively expensive product (photo camera) as *high involvement* product. In this way the aim will be to measure whether English language use and the status of English (modern, technological, sophisticated, international) influences the relation between consumer and product and thus have an effect on the attitude towards the ad, the product

and purchase intention when advertising a *low involvement* (sticker) and *high involvement* (photo camera) product.

Álvarez, Uribe and De-la-Torre (2017) investigated language effects on print advertising in Mexico and found a more favorable cultural stereotype of English-speakers in comparison to Spanish-speakers and code-switchers. However, no significantly different attitudes were measured regarding English, Spanish or mixed language ads, which contrasts the findings of Alonso García and fellow researchers. Álvarez, Uribe and De-la-Torre assume that their results could be clarified because of the ubiquitous economic, cultural and social presence of English in Mexico. Based on these findings, they argued that a standardized approach on print ads to target bilingual Mexican consumers will have the same effects as the other two (Spanish only or mixed language) options. Nonetheless, in their study they did not make it clear whether the stimuli in their experiment derived from a fictitious local company or MNC. Furthermore, only one product type (coffee creamer), which according to the literature can be defined as a low involvement product was examined. Finally, only one code-switching print ad execution was tested. It could be that other code-switching structures (more Spanish or more English) reflect different results when examining Mexican consumers' attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product and purchase intention.

Relevance

The theoretic framework outlined shows that there are still existing literature gaps with regards to the effect(s) of language choice on consumer attitudes in a monolingual society like Mexico. For this reason, the present investigation could be of potential theoretical and practical contribution.

It has been clarified that English plays a relatively important role in the contemporary Mexican society. However, different results have been retrieved from previous studies regarding its effectiveness in advertising. Furthermore, it can be concluded that for various motives the use of English in advertisements evokes both positive and negative consumer responds of the ad, the product and purchase intention.

Mexico has often been studied in relation to the US due to the large visible US influence in the country and border proximity. Nevertheless, cultural notions like consumer ethnocentrism and the relation between the consumer and the product (low involvement/high involvement) could also be possible explanations of consumer attitudes and should not be forgotten when examining consumer groups. Additionally, earlier

research has assumed that there is an existing relation between language attitudes in publicity and consumers' evaluations of messages in one or more particular languages. This means that the attitude towards a certain language might influence the way individuals perceive messages transmitted in that language. What happens when an international organization wants to introduce its products in a foreign market? Does the product type matter in combination with the chosen language of advertising?

As Mexico is an upcoming participating economy in the global economic field, this study may be of use for international corporations who consider advertising or already advertise in the Mexican society and often have to decide which kind of strategy to develop in order to increase the persuasiveness to their ads.

The abovementioned framework has contributed to the formulation of the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What is the effect of the use of English, Spanish or mix Spanish-English (mixed: +English or +Spanish) when advertising low involvement or high involvement goods on Mexicans' (1) attitudes towards the advertisement, (2) attitudes towards the product and (3) purchase intention?

Research Question 2: What is the role of consumer ethnocentrism on consumers' response to the use of English, Spanish or mixed language when advertising low or high involvement products to Mexican consumers?

Research Question 3: Do general language attitudes towards the English language predict consumer responses of Mexicans in ads containing English?

Method

Materials

The experiment in the present study entailed two independent variables, which were: "Language choice" (Spanish, English, mixed language with a larger extent of Spanish, mixed language with a larger extent of English Spanish) and "Product involvement" (low vs. high). "Consumer ethnocentrism" (low vs. high) was also included in the model as this variable was expected to have a moderating effect on the consumer response. The stimuli were based on real product ads and products that are offered in Mexico. However,

the text on the advertisements were new Spanish, English or mixed texts and slogans. The mixed Spanish-English version was presented in two different options. One in which more English than Spanish was incorporated and one with a higher presence of Spanish than English. To prevent participants from making associations with existing brands, original brand names were changed into fictitious ones, that could be used in this study's country of interest, Mexico.

The first stimulus concerned an adhesive paper note, concerned to be a low involvement (economic) product, from the brand "*Sticker*". The completely Spanish version had the text "*Te quiero mama*", handwritten as if done by a little child, on an adhesive paper note. The slogan of the brand was "*Cuando la gente cuenta contigo, cuenta con las notas de STICKER*". The completely English had exactly the same format, however the handwritten text was "*I love you mum*" and the slogan "*When people count on you, count on STICKER notes*". The mixed versions had either a handwritten text in Spanish and the slogan in English or vice versa. Resulting in a mixed version with a larger extent of Spanish "*I love you mum*" and "*Cuando la gente cuenta contigo, cuenta con las notas de STICKER*" vs. a mixed version with a larger extent of English "*Te quiero mama*" and "*When people count on you, count on STICKER notes*".

The second stimulus used, represented a high involvement (expensive) good: a photo camera. This camera was a product from the brand "*Magnus*" and went accompanied by the head slogan "*Capture every moment*". Two other slogans were included underneath the brand name "*The visible difference*" and above the camera "*Life is precious. Don't miss a second of it*". The advertisement also included two aspects of product description: "*The new Magnus F40 DIGITAL*" and "*13.2 million pixels in a weatherproof body*". The brand names and all other visual aspects were equal in the different language versions for each of the two product types. Participants evaluated both ads. In appendix 3 an overview of the eight different conditions is given.

Subjects

Eventually, the questionnaire reached 392 Mexicans of which 205 filled it out completely: 64% female; 100% with Spanish as (first) mother tongue, 73% considering themselves to be bilingual. A Chi-square test did not display a significant relation between language version of the ad and gender ($\chi^2(3) = 2.52, p = .471$), language version of the ad and mother tongue ($\chi^2(3) = 1.62, p = .655$) or language version of the ad and bilingualism ($\chi^2(3) = 4.19, p = .242$).

Even though no criteria were given for the selection of participants with regard to their ages, previous studies (e.g. De Mooij, 2013; Gerritsen et al. 2010) examining English language use in non-English speaking countries allege that ads in which English is used are (often) targeting young well-educated individuals. For this reason, the subjects exposed to the experiment would preferably be aged between 18 and 26 years and study at one of Mexico's higher education institutions. The data, however, showed that the average age was 27.64 ($SD = 7.82$); range = 18 - 59, that 39% of the respondents had completed an academic Bachelor, Master or PHD and that the mean for self-assessed English language proficiency was 4.85 ($SD = 1.46$) (1 = very low proficiency, 7 = like a native speaker). A one-way ANOVA for age showed a significant difference between the age groups ($F(3, 201) = 3.24, p = .023$). The difference could be found between the Spanish ($M = 30.20, SD = 10.92$) and English version ($p = .014$, Bonferroni-correction; $M = 25.61, SD = 5.86$). In addition, A Chi-square test did not show a significant relation between language version of the ad and study level ($\chi^2(12) = 8.16, p = .773$).

A one-way ANOVA for English language proficiency did not demonstrate significant differences between the participant groups ($F(3, 201) = 1.18, p = .319$). The statistical results conducted to assess the homogeneity of distribution of participant characteristics show that the 4 groups were comparable.

Table 1 gives an overview of the distribution of the four versions of the questionnaire.

Table 1. Distribution language conditions across the subjects

		Language	<i>n</i>
Condition	1	Spanish	51
	2	English	57
	3	Mixed (+ Spanish)	45
	4	Mixed (+English)	52

Design

A 4 x 2 x 2 mixed design (repeated measures) was used, in which "Product Involvement" was the within-subject factor and "Language choice" and "Consumer ethnocentrism" were the between-subject factors. According to the design, each participant was assigned

to both ads (the sticker and the camera) with one of the four possible language use conditions.

Instruments

The questionnaire in the present study was also used in the investigation of Van Hooft, Van Meurs & Schellekens (2017) who translated it from English to Spanish and back to English; the so called back-translation method. They also checked the equivalence on the different levels. The questionnaire was presented in Spanish to all respondents and aimed to measure the dependent variables: “Attitude towards the advertisement”, “Attitude towards the product” and “Purchase intention”. The variables and “English language proficiency”, “Consumer ethnocentrism” were assumed to moderate the outcomes, and thus also measured. Finally, to draw conclusions on whether “Attitude towards the English language” and “Attitude towards the use of English” were significant predictors for consumer responses, these variables were assessed as well.

Attitude towards the advertisement

The reliability of “Attitude towards the advertisement” comprising six 7-point semantic differential scales: e.g. “interesting – boring, original – ordinary, international – local” was acceptable for the sticker ($\alpha = .77$) and good for the camera ($\alpha = .82$); partly based on Hornikx, Van Meurs & Hof, 2013; Maes et al., 1996).

Attitude towards the product

The reliability of “Attitude towards the product” comprising eight 7-point semantic differential scales: e.g. “attractive – unattractive, beautiful – ugly, of low quality – of high quality, very good – very bad” was acceptable for the sticker ($\alpha = .78$) and the camera ($\alpha = .75$); partly based on Hornikx, Van Meurs & Hof, 2013).

Purchase intention

The reliability of “Intention to buy the product” comprising two statements anchored by 7-point Likert scales: “Buying this product is something I would definitely do – I would never do, I would consider buying this product – I would not consider buying this product” was good for the sticker ($\alpha = .90$) and the camera ($\alpha = .92$); partly based on Hornikx, Van Meurs & Hof, 2013).

English language proficiency

The reliability of participants' self-assessed "English language proficiency" comprising four 7-point semantic differential scales measured how participants evaluated their fluency when speaking, listening, reading and writing: 1 = very low – 7 = like a native speaker was good ($\alpha = .94$); based on Luna, Peracchio & Ringberg, 2008).

Consumer ethnocentrism

The reliability of respondents' degree of "Consumer ethnocentrism" comprising five statements anchored by 7-point Likert scales: e.g. "My culture should be the role model to be followed by other cultures" and "The lifestyles of the people of my culture are the best in the world" (1 = I completely disagree – 7 = I completely agree) was acceptable ($\alpha = .70$); revision of the 15-item version of the Generalized Ethnocentrism (GENE) established by Neuliep (2002), based on the original scale developed by Neuliep and McCroskey in 1997). Based on their degree of Consumer ethnocentrism, participants were categorized in two groups: low consumer ethnocentrism (1.0 – 4.0); (104 participants) and high consumer ethnocentrism (4.2 – 7.0); (101 participants). The split median for this variable was 4.0.

Attitude towards the English language

The reliability of "Attitude towards the English language" comprising five 7-point semantic differential scales: e.g. "beautiful – ugly, attractive – repellent, rude – comic" was acceptable ($\alpha = .78$); based on Schoel et al., 2012).

Attitude towards the use of English

The reliability of "Attitude towards the use of English" comprising seven 7-point semantic differential scales: e.g. "modern – old-fashioned, international – local, dynamic – passive" was good ($\alpha = .87$); based on Schoel et al., 2012)

To facilitate the regression analyses for the sticker and camera, a new variable including the three dependent variables ("Attitude towards the ad, "Attitude towards the product and "Purchase intention") was composed. This new variable was named "Consumer response". The reliability of "Consumer response" was acceptable ($\alpha = .74$).

Procedure

This investigation took place between February and Augustus 2018. Prospective participants were reached out to in May and June, primarily through social media platforms as Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. In addition, mails were sent to different higher education institutions in Mexico. Namely, the University of Quintana Roo, the University of Aguascalientes, the National University of Mexico, the University of Guadalajara and the University of Guanajuato. The subjects were asked to take part in an online investigation about language use in advertising in Mexico (Appendix 1). Everybody was allowed to participate. All the individuals needed to do was click on a link that would direct them to the head page on which all information and instructions were displayed (Appendix 2). By stressing Mexico's emerging economy and thus also its importance in the field of marketing and communication and also by mentioning the fact that respondents' participation would contribute to academic research, the subjects were motivated to take part in the experiment. No (financial) award or other incentive was offered.

The experiment conducted in Qualtrics was on an individual and anonymous basis. This program randomly assigned the participants to one of the four language conditions. Given the design of the experiment, the individuals taking part had to evaluate both advertisements with one of the corresponding conditions. Furthermore, subjects were debriefed at the end of the end of the experiment; questions regarding their background (e.g. gender and age), proficiency in English, general attitude towards English and the use of English, and degree of ethnocentricity were asked. The procedure was the same for all subjects. Lastly, the questionnaire consisted of a total of 35 questions, which took participants approximately 8 minutes to fill out. No difficulties or obstructing external factors were observed.

Statistical treatment

To provide answer(s) to the research questions, three three-way mixed ANOVA's (for RQ 1 and RQ 2) were run. The assumptions of normality, homogeneity of variances and random and independent residuals were checked. Moreover, six multiple regressions (for RQ 3) have been performed. The assumptions of homoscedasticity, linearity, normality, collinearity, and independency of errors were also checked. Additional one-way ANOVA's were run to disentangle the found significant interactions. All analyses were executed by means of IBM SPSS statistics 24; when needed, variables using Likert scales

were recoded. The assumptions are only mentioned in the results section when they were violated.

Lastly, the effect size is reported utilizing Cohen's standards (1988). With respect to the partial η squared, scores between .01 and .06 are considered to be small, scores between .06 and .14 as medium and scores exceeding .14 as large. For the adjusted R squared these scores between .02 and .13 are small, between .13 and .26 medium and higher than .26, large.

Results

To investigate possible effects of language choice and product involvement on Mexican consumers' attitude towards the advertisement, attitude towards the product and purchase intention, three three-way mixed ANOVA's were carried out. Given the social context outlined, consumer ethnocentrism was also entered in the model. Two groups were made, namely low consumer ethnocentrism (1.0 – 4.0) and high consumers ethnocentrism (4.2 – 7.0).

Attitude towards the advertisement

A three-way mixed ANOVA for Attitude Towards the Ad with as within-subject factor Product involvement (high/low) and between-subject factors Language choice (English/Spanish/ mix +English/ mix +Spanish) and Consumer ethnocentrism (high/low) showed no significant main effect of Product involvement ($F(1, 197) < 1$), nor Language choice ($F(3, 197) < 1$), nor Consumer ethnocentrism ($F(1, 197) < 1$).

Furthermore, no interaction effects were found between Product involvement and Language choice ($F(3, 197) < 1$), nor between Product involvement and Consumer ethnocentrism ($F(1, 197) < 1$).

The three-way interaction between Product involvement, Language choice and Consumer ethnocentrism also turned out to be nonsignificant ($F(3, 197) < 1$). Table 3 below represents the means and standard deviations (between brackets) for the Attitude towards the advertisement.

Table 3. Means and standard deviations (between brackets) of the Mexican respondents' attitude towards the advertisement (1 = very positive, 7 = very negative).

Language of the ad	Product Involvement	Consumer Ethnocentrism	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>n</i>
Spanish	Low	Low	3.99 (1.40)	29
		High	4.07 (1.24)	22
		Total	4.03 (1.32)	51
	High	Low	4.13 (1.27)	29
		High	4.44 (1.17)	22
		Total	4.26 (1.23)	51
English	Low	Low	4.06 (1.24)	27
		High	4.37 (1.11)	30
		Total	4.23 (1.18)	57
	High	Low	4.05 (1.10)	27
		High	4.18 (1.21)	30
		Total	4.12 (1.15)	57
Mixed +Spanish	Low	Low	3.98 (1.45)	22
		High	3.88 (1.02)	23
		Total	3.93 (1.23)	45
	High	Low	3.83 (1.42)	22
		High	4.17 (1.28)	23
		Total	4.01 (1.34)	45
Mixed +English	Low	Low	3.75 (.91)	26
		High	4.17 (.99)	26
		Total	3.96 (.97)	52
	High	Low	4.15 (.96)	26
		High	4.38 (1.17)	26
		Total	4.27 (1.07)	52
Total	Low	Low	3.95 (1.25)	104
		High	4.14 (1.09)	101
		Total	4.04 (1.17)	205
	High	Low	4.05 (1.18)	104

High	4.29 (1.19)	101
Total	4.17 (1.19)	205

Attitude towards the product

A three-way mixed ANOVA for Attitude Towards the Product with as within-subject factor Product involvement (high/low) and between-subject factors Language choice (English/ Spanish/ mix +English/ mix +Spanish) and Consumer ethnocentrism (high/low) revealed a significant Box's M for the within-subject factor. The significance levels for the within-subject effects and interactions have therefore been reduced to $p < .010$ (Pallant, 2007). The analysis did not show a significant main effect of Product involvement ($F(1, 197) < 1$) nor of Language choice ($F(3, 197) < 1$).

Consumer ethnocentrism did show a significant main effect ($F(1, 197), p = .045, \eta^2 = .020$). Regardless of Language choice, participants with a high consumer ethnocentrism had a slightly more positive attitude towards both the sticker ($M = 4.20, SD = .83$) and camera ($M = 4.16, SD = .74$) than those with a low consumer ethnocentrism (sticker: $M = 3.89, SD = .72$); (camera: $M = 4.11, SD = .74$).

No interaction effect was found between Product involvement and Language choice ($F(3, 197) < 1$). Nevertheless, there was a significant interaction between Product involvement and Consumer ethnocentrism ($F(1, 197) = 5.13, p = .025, \eta^2 = .025$). To disentangle the interaction effect, two separate one-way repeated measures ANOVA's were run; one analysis for product involvement with as within-subject factor Attitude towards the product (sticker) and one with as within-subject factor Attitude towards the product (camera). The file was split on ethnocentrism. The output showed a significant effect of Product involvement when there was a low Consumer ethnocentrism ($F(1, 103) = 9.35, p = .003, \eta^2 = .083$). In this case, participants had a higher attitude towards the camera ($M = 4.11, SD = .74$) than towards the sticker ($M = 3.89, SD = .72$). There was no significant difference between high and low Product involvement when there was a high Consumer ethnocentrism ($F(1, 100) = .245, p = .622, \eta^2 = .002$).

The three-way interaction between Product involvement, Language choice and Consumer ethnocentrism was not significant ($F(3, 197) < 1$). Table 4 below represents the means and standard deviations (between brackets) for the Attitude towards the product.

Table 4. Means and standard deviations (between brackets) of the Mexican respondents' attitude towards the product (1 = very positive, 7 = very negative).

Language of the ad	Product Involvement	Consumer Ethnocentrism	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>n</i>
Spanish	Low	Low	3.97 (.79)	29
		High	4.11 (.75)	22
		Total	4.04 (.77)	51
	High	Low	4.17 (.80)	29
		High	4.19 (.67)	22
		Total	4.18 (.74)	51
English	Low	Low	3.99 (.63)	27
		High	4.27 (.69)	30
		Total	4.14 (.67)	57
	High	Low	4.07 (.58)	27
		High	4.17 (.70)	30
		Total	4.12 (.64)	57
Mixed +Spanish	Low	Low	3.74 (.70)	22
		High	4.14 (.92)	23
		Total	3.94 (.83)	45
	High	Low	4.05 (1.03)	22
		High	4.13 (.92)	23
		Total	4.09 (.97)	45
Mixed +English	Low	Low	3.82 (.76)	26
		High	4.26 (1.00)	26
		Total	4.04 (.91)	52
	High	Low	4.13 (.56)	26
		High	4.15 (.71)	26
		Total	4.13 (.64)	52
Total	Low	Low	3.89 (.72)	104

	High	4.20 (.83)	101
	Total	4.04 (.79)	205
High	Low	4.11 (.74)	104
	High	4.16 (.74)	101
	Total	4.13 (.74)	205

Purchase intention

A three-way ANOVA for Purchase intention with as within-subject factor Product involvement (high/low) and between-subject factor Language choice (English/Spanish/mix +English/ mix + Spanish) and Consumer ethnocentrism (high/low) did not display a significant effect of Language choice ($F(3,197) < 1$).

Product involvement did show a significant main effect ($F(1, 197), p = .015, \eta^2 = .030$). Regardless of Language choice and Consumer ethnocentrism, the Purchase intention was higher when the individuals were presented the ad containing the sticker (low involvement) ($M = 4.06, SD = 1.67$) than when they observed the ad with the camera (high involvement) ($M = 3.69, SD = 1.76$).

There was also a significant main effect of Consumer ethnocentrism ($F(1, 197), p = .012, \eta^2 = .032$). Irrespective of Language choice, for the sticker, individuals with a high Consumer ethnocentrism showed a higher purchase intention ($M = 4.29, SD = 1.56$) than those with a low Consumer ethnocentrism ($M = 3.83, SD = 1.74$). As for the camera, regardless of Language choice, respondents with a high Consumer ethnocentrism showed a higher purchase intention ($M = 3.94, SD = 1.73$) than respondents with a low Consumer ethnocentrism ($M = 3.46, SD = 1.77$).

No interactions were detected between Product involvement and Language choice ($F(3, 197) < 1$), nor between Product involvement and Consumer ethnocentrism ($F(1, 197) < 1$).

The three-way interaction between Product involvement, Language choice and Consumer ethnocentrism also turned out to be nonsignificant ($F(3, 197) < 1$). Table 5 below represents the means and standard deviations (between brackets) for the Purchase intention.

Table 5. Means and standard deviations (between brackets) of the Mexican respondents' purchase intention (1 = very high, 7 = very low).

Language of the ad	Product Involvement	Consumer Ethnocentrism	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>n</i>
Spanish	Low	Low	3.97 (1.70)	29
		High	4.52 (1.68)	22
		Total	4.21 (1.69)	51
	High	Low	3.19 (1.79)	29
		High	4.46 (1.82)	22
		Total	3.74 (1.90)	51
English	Low	Low	3.65 (1.55)	27
		High	4.27 (1.54)	30
		Total	3.97 (1.56)	57
	High	Low	3.07 (1.62)	27
		High	3.90 (1.73)	30
		Total	3.51 (1.71)	57
Mixed +Spanish	Low	Low	3.68 (2.04)	22
		High	4.48 (1.47)	23
		Total	4.09 (1.79)	45
	High	Low	3.52 (1.92)	22
		High	3.96 (1.80)	23
		Total	3.74 (1.85)	45
Mixed +English	Low	Low	3.98 (1.78)	26
		High	3.96 (1.59)	26
		Total	3.97 (1.67)	52
	High	Low	4.10 (1.66)	26
		High	3.52 (1.58)	26
		Total	3.81 (1.63)	52
Total	Low	Low	3.83 (1.74)	104
		High	4.29 (1.56)	101
		Total	4.06 (1.67)	205
	High	Low	3.46 (1.77)	104

High	3.94 (1.73)	101
Total	3.69 (1.76)	205

Additional analyses: consumer response

To determine whether respondents' attitude towards the English language or attitude towards the use of English could be possible predictors of the way they evaluated the different advertisements containing English, six multiple regression analyses were performed: three (for the English, +Spanish and +English version) per product.

Sticker

English

A multiple regression showed that the variables, Attitude towards English and Attitude towards the use of English, entered in the model did not explain any of the variance of consumer response Sticker ($F(2, 65) = 2.38, p = .100$). Neither Attitude towards English ($\beta = -.236, p = .092$), nor Attitude towards the use of English ($\beta = -.043, p = .742$) were significant predictors of participants' response when evaluating an advertisement containing a sticker written completely in English. See table 6 for the test results.

Table 6. Regression analysis for Attitude towards English and Attitude towards the use of English as predictors of consumer response ($n = 57$).

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Attitude towards English	-.24	.13	-.24
Attitude towards the use of English	-.04	.14	-.05
R^2	.07		
F	2.38		

Mixed language + Spanish

A multiple regression showed that the variables, Attitude towards English and Attitude towards the use of English, entered in the model explained did not explain any of the variance of consumer response Sticker ($F(2, 49) = .228, p = .797$). Neither Attitude towards English ($\beta = -.042, p = .781$), nor Attitude towards the use of English ($\beta = .103, p = .503$) turned out to be significant predictors of respondents' attitude when evaluating an advertisement containing a sticker written in mixed language with a higher presence of Spanish. See table 7 for the test results.

Table 7. Regression analysis for Attitude towards English and Attitude towards the use of English as predictors of consumer response ($n = 45$).

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Attitude towards English	-.05	.173	-.04
Attitude towards the use of English	.12	.18	.10
R^2	.10		
F	.23		

Mixed language + English

A multiple regression showed that the variables, Attitude towards English and Attitude towards the use of English, entered in the model did not explain any of the variance of consumer response Sticker ($F(2, 61) = .376, p = .688$). Neither Attitude towards English ($\beta = .115, p = .417$), nor Attitude towards the use of English ($\beta = -.087, p = .540$) were significant predictors of respondents' attitude when evaluating an advertisement containing a sticker written in mixed language with a higher presence of English. See table 8 for the test results.

Table 8. Regression analysis for Attitude towards English and Attitude towards the use of English as predictors of consumer response ($n = 52$).

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Attitude towards English	.10	.13	.12
Attitude towards the use of English	-.08	.13	-.09
R^2	.11		
F	.38		

Camera

English

A multiple regression showed that the variables, Attitude towards English and Attitude towards the use of English, entered in the model did not explain any of the variance of consumer response Camera ($F(2, 65) = .051, p = .950$). Neither Attitude towards English ($\beta = -.045, p = .753$), nor Attitude towards the use of English ($\beta = .029, p = .842$) reflected to be significant predictors of respondents' response when evaluating an advertisement containing a camera written completely in English. See table 9 for the test results.

Table 9. Regression analysis for Attitude towards English and Attitude towards the use of English as predictors of consumer response ($n = 57$).

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Attitude towards English	-.05	.14	-.05
Attitude towards the use of English	.03	.13	.03
R^2	.00		
F	.05		

Mixed language + Spanish

A multiple regression showed that the variables, Attitude towards English and Attitude towards the use of English, entered in the model did not explain any of the variance of consumer response Camera ($F(2, 49) = .818, p = .447$). Neither Attitude towards English ($\beta = -.160, p = .294$), nor Attitude towards the use of English ($\beta = .157, p = .301$) turned out to be significant predictors of participants' attitude when evaluating an advertisement containing a camera written in mixed language with a higher presence of Spanish. See table 10 for the test results.

Table 10. Regression analysis for Attitude towards English and Attitude towards the use of English as predictors of consumer response ($n = 45$).

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Attitude towards English	-.19	.18	-.16
Attitude towards the use of English	.20	.19	.16
R^2	.03		
F	.82		

Mixed language + English

A multiple regression showed that the variables, Attitude towards English and Attitude towards the use of English, entered in the model did not explain any of the variance of consumer response Camera ($F(2, 61) = .032$). Neither Attitude towards English ($\beta = -.226, p = .097$), nor Attitude towards the use of English ($\beta = -.158, p = .244$) reflected to be significant predictors of participants' response when evaluating an advertisement containing a camera written in mixed language with a higher presence of Spanish. See table 11 for the test results.

Table 11. Regression analysis for Attitude towards English and Attitude towards the use of English as predictors of consumer response ($n = 52$).

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Attitude towards English	-0.21	.13	-0.23
Attitude towards the use of English	-0.15	.13	-0.16
R^2	.11		
F	3.64		

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate Mexican consumers' response and attitude towards language use (Spanish, English mixed Spanish-English) in product advertising. Another objective was to determine whether general language attitudes towards the English language predict consumer responses in ads containing English. To do so, three research questions were formulated. Given the social context in Mexico, consumer ethnocentrism was also entered in the model as this variable was estimated to have a moderating effect.

RQ1 intended to determine the effect of language choice (Spanish, English or mixed Spanish-English) on Mexican consumers' attitude towards the advertisement, attitude towards the product and purchase intention when advertising low or high involvement goods. The results have shown that language choice had no significant effect on neither attitude towards the advertisement, attitude towards the product nor purchase intention. Furthermore, no significant interactions were found between language choice and product involvement.

RQ2 intended to determine the role of consumer ethnocentrism on consumers' response to language choice when low or high involvement products were advertised. The findings demonstrated that consumer ethnocentrism did have certain effect on the attitude towards the product and purchase intention. However, this variable did not result to have an effect on the attitude towards the advertisement. In addition, an interaction was detected between product involvement and consumer ethnocentrism for the attitude towards the product. Additional separate one-way repeated measures ANOVA's then

showed that the subjects with a low consumer ethnocentrism had a more positive attitude towards the camera than towards the sticker. There were no differences between evaluation of the sticker (low involvement) or camera (high involvement) for consumer with a high consumer ethnocentrism.

RQ3 intended to determine whether attitude towards the English language and attitude towards the use of English were predictors of Mexican consumer responses in ads containing English. However, no significant results were retrieved from none of the analyses. It can thus be concluded that neither attitude towards the English language nor attitude toward the use of English predict consumer responses of Mexican subjects when assessing advertisement that contain English.

Discussion

In the current study, no effects of language choice, product involvement or consumer ethnocentrism were detected on the attitude towards the product. These findings thus mean that the language of the advertisement, the product type advertised, or the consumers' degree of ethnocentrism do not influence the way Mexican consumers evaluate an advertisement. Even though previous researchers have referred to the assumed symbolic value of English for consumers (modernization, internationalism and sophistication, for example) (Baumgardner, 2006; Krishna & Alhuwalia, 2008; Van Hooft, Van Meurs & Spierts), the use of English did not cause individuals to have a more positive attitude towards the ad or product. In other words, the use of English did not enhance the message evaluation. This finding coincides with Gerritsen et al., (2010) and Van Hooft et al., (2017), who also did not find enhancement of the attitude towards an ad, containing English, for a modern and expensive product (Gerritsen et al., 2010; Van Hooft et al., 2017). Similarly, Planken et al. (2010) did not encounter significant differences between the attitude towards the ad of English and Polish advertisements (Planken et al., 2010). However, this conclusion contradicts both Koslow and fellow researchers (1994) who found a relation between specific language attitudes in advertising and the attitude towards the ad, as well as literature stating that the attitude towards a particular language could have an influence on the way messages in that language are assessed (Alonso García, Chemelski, González Hernández, 2013). A possible explanation for abovementioned findings could be the normalization of English in Mexico. Given the fact that it is used frequently and on a wide scale in advertising in

the contemporary society, it could be that consumers do not consider it to be special or exclusive anymore (Attitude English ($M = 2.43$, $SD = 1.04$); Attitude use of English ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.00$). However, this assumption does not explain how come a low score (on a scale from 1 – 7) for these variables does not have a negative influence on the way in which the advertisement or product is evaluated. In addition, despite of the fact that the different abovementioned studies have referred to the possible effects of language attitudes, none of them has performed regression analyses to assess its (non) predictive ability. Therefore, future research could include the perception of English and the use of English in Mexico and moreover regard the possibility (augmentation of) aversion towards the US and English language due to the Donald Trump administration, for example.

Although this study has demonstrated some significant main effects and interactions of product involvement and consumer ethnocentrism for the attitude towards the product and purchase intention, only minimal differences in the consumer evaluations could be detected, for which it can be said that these results are not of high relevance. Moreover, in their study, Krishna and Aluwahlia (2008) did find a significant relation between the product and language when a MNC advertised in India, however, it can be concluded from a different context like the Mexican that such experimental research does not reflect the same results. This lies in line with earlier presented theory. Nevertheless, even though the present study took product involvement into consideration, it did not take into account whether and how consumers' attitudes, perceptions and purchase intentions were influenced by the products' country of origin. Future results could focus on whether a country of origin – effect may be an influencing factor when advertising in Mexico.

The age and educational level of the respondents could also be mentioned as limitations of this study. Namely, the median age was 27.64 and almost all participants indicated to study or have studied at a higher education institution. For this reason, they could be characterized as young educated professionals. Alonso et al., (2013) found in their study that ethnocentric tendencies could be mostly found in consumer groups aged 31 – 35. Could it be possible that a wider distribution of age would have led to different results? The same could be asked regarding the results if more subjects with a lower educational level had participated. In the future, studies could be done that focus more on the distribution of age and educational level.

Despite the different language tendencies in Mexico, the findings of the current research have shown that Spanish, English and mixed language could be used when

advertising low and high involvement products in Mexico. Linking this to the theory, it can be said that independent of the level of accommodation or quantity of national/foreign language used when advertising in Mexico, the consumer response is not likely to be affected. In other words, trying to gain consumers' respect and appreciation when advertising, will not (always) be possible only by using the language or marketing strategy. Variables such as consumer ethnocentrism and product involvement should not be underestimated. Additionally, complementary research with different participant groups (e.g. age groups, English language proficiencies, from different regions) and products, is necessary to draw more specific conclusions on the effects of language use in advertising in Mexico.

Mexico and its economy are growing for which it is a potential promising participant on the international market. Knowing how to reach different consumer groups through adequately use marketing strategies in this country could be of great advantage for MNC's with interests in Mexico.

References

- Alonso García, N., Chelminski, P., & González Hernández, E. (2013). The effects of language on attitudes toward advertisements and brands trust in Mexico. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 34(1), 77-92.
- Álvarez, C. M., Uribe, R., & León De-la-Torre, R. (2017). Should I say it in English? Exploring language effects on print advertising among Latin American bilinguals. *International Journal of Advertising*, 36(6), 975-993.
- Bailey, W., & Gutierrez de Piñeres, S. A. G. D. (1997). Country of origin attitudes in Mexico: The malinchismo effect. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 9(3), 25-41.
- Baumgardner, R. J. (2006). The appeal of English in Mexican commerce. *World Englishes*, 25(2), 251-266.
- Baumgardner, R. J. (2008). The use of English in advertising in Mexican print media. *Journal of Creative Communications*, 3(1), 23-48.
- Bishop, M., & Peterson, M. (2011). Comprende Code Switching?: Young Mexican-Americans' Responses To Language Alternation in Print Advertising. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 51(4), 648-659.
- Boyd-Barrett, O. (1977). Media Imperialism: Towards an International Framework for the Analysis of Media System. In *Mass Communication and Society*, 116–135. London: Edward Arnold/The Open University Press.
- De Mooij, M. 2013. *Global marketing and advertising: Understanding cultural paradoxes*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Despagne, C. (2010). The difficulties of learning English: Perceptions and attitudes in Mexico. *Comparative and International*, 39(2), 55-74.
- EF English proficiency index. (2017), “Mexico.” <https://www.ef.nl/epi/regions/latin-america/mexico/>.
- Frederiksson, R., Barner-Rasmussen, W., & Piekkari, R. (2006). The multilingual corporation as a multinational organization. *Corporate Communication: An International Journal*, 11(4), 406-423.
- Gerritsen, M.; Korzilius, H.; van Meurs, F. & Gijsbers, I. (2000). English in Dutch Commercials: Not Understood and not Appreciated. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 40 (3), 17–31.
- Gerritsen, M., Nickerson, C., van Hoof, A., van Meurs, F., Korzilius, H., Nederstigt, U.,

- & Crijs, R. (2010). English in product advertisements in non-English-speaking countries in Western Europe: Product image and comprehension of the text. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 23(4), 349-365.
- Giles, H., Coupland, N., & Coupland, I. U. S. T. I. N. E. (1991). Accommodation theory: Communication, context, and consequence. *Contexts of accommodation: Developments in applied sociolinguistics*, 1, 1-68.
- Giles, H., Willems, M., Gallois, C., & Anderson, M. C. (2007). Accommodating a new frontier: The context of law enforcement. *Social communication*, 129-162.
- Greenleaf, E. A., & Lehmann, D. R. (1995). Reasons for substantial delay in consumer decision making. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 22(2), 186-199.
- Harzing A. W., & Pudelko, M. (2013). Language competencies, policies and practices in multinational corporations: A comprehensive review and comparison of Anglophone, Asian, Continental European and Nordic MNCs. *Journal of World Business*, 48(1), 87-97.
- Hashim, A. (2010). Englishes in advertising. In *The Routledge handbook of world Englishes*, 520-534. London: Routledge.
- Hornikx, J., Van Meurs, F., & de Boer, A. (2010). English or a local language in advertising? The appreciation of easy and difficult English slogans in the Netherlands. *The Journal of Business Communication*, 47(2), 169-188.
- Hornikx, J., van Meurs, F., Hof, R. J. (2013). The effectiveness of foreign-language display in advertising for congruent versus incongruent products. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 25(3), 152-165.
- Hornikx, J., & Starren, M. (2008). Overtuigen met vreemde talen: de rol van taalimago. *Levende Talen tijdschrift*, 9(3), 14-20.
- Koslow, S., Shamdasani, P., & Touchstone, E. (1994). Exploring language effects in ethnic advertising: A sociolinguistic perspective. *Journal of consumer research*, 20(4), 575-585.
- Krishna, A., & Ahluwalia, R. (2008). Language choice in advertising to bilinguals: Asymmetric effects for multinationals versus local firms. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35(4), 692-705.
- Lin, Y. C., & Wang, K. Y. (2016). Language choice in advertising for multinational corporations and local firms: A reinquiry focusing on monolinguals. *Journal of Advertising*, 45(1), 43-52.
- Luna, D., & Peracchio, L. A. (2005). Advertising to bilingual consumers: The impact of

- code-switching on persuasion. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(4), 760-765.
- Luna, D., Ringberg, T., Peracchio, L. A. (2008). One individual, two identities: Frame switching among biculturals. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35(2), 279-293.
- Maes, A., Ummelen, N., Hoeken, H. (1996). *Instructieve teksten: Analyse, ontwerp en evaluatie*. Bussum: Coutinho.
- McArthur, T. (1998). *The English languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (1991). Making ethnicity salient in codeswitching. *Language and ethnicity*, 2, 95-109.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (1999). Compromise structural strategies in codeswitching. *Bilingualism and migration*, 14, 211.
- Nederstigt, U., & Hilberink-Schulpen, B. (2017). Advertising in a Foreign Language or the Consumers' Native Language?. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 1-12.
- Neuliep, J. W. & McCroskey, J. C. (1997). The development of a US and generalized ethnocentrism scale. *Communication Research Reports*, 14(4), 385-398.
- Neuliep, J. W. (2002). Assessing the reliability and validity of the generalized ethnocentrism scale. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 31(4), 201-215.
- Newman, A. J., Tremblay, A., Nichols, E. S., Neville, H. J., & Ullman, M. T. (2012). The influence of language proficiency on lexical semantic processing in native and late learners of English. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 24(5), 1205-1223.
- Ovesdotter-Alm, C. O. (2003). English in the Ecuadorian commercial context. *World Englishes*, 22(2), 143-158.
- Pallant, J. (2007). *SPSS survival manual* (3rd ed.). Maidenhead: Mcgraw-Hill.
- Park, D. H., Lee, J., & Han, I. (2007). The effect of on-line consumer reviews on consumer purchasing intention: The moderating role of involvement. *International journal of electronic commerce*, 11(4), 125-148.
- Park, H., Sha, M. M., & Willis, G. (2016). Influence of English-language Proficiency on the Cognitive Processing of Survey Questions. *Field Methods*, 28(4), 415-430.
- Planken, B., Meurs, F. van, & Radlinska, A. (2010). The effects of the use of English in Polish product advertisements: Implications for English for business purposes. *English For Specific Purposes*, 29(4), 225-242.
- Percy, L., & Rossiter, J. R. (1992). A model of brand awareness and brand attitude

- advertising strategies. *Psychology & Marketing*, 9(4), 263-274.
- Schoel, C., Roessel, J., J. Eck, J., Janssen, B., Petrovic, A., Stahlberg D. (2013).
“Attitudes Towards Languages (AToL) Scale: A global Instrument,” in: *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 32 (1), 21–45.
- Van Hooft, A., van Meurs, F., & Schellekens, L. (2017). The same or different? Spanish-speaking consumers’ response to the use of English or Spanish in product advertisements in Spain and the USA. In monograph or in proceedings (Cauberghe, V.; Hudders, L. (ed.), *Power to the consumers: how content becomes the message. Conference Proceedings*, 2-10.
- Van Hooft, A., van Meurs, F., & Spierts, D. (2017). In Arabic, English, or a Mix? Egyptian Consumers’ Response to Language Choice in Product Advertisements, and the Role of Language Attitudes. In *Advances in Advertising Research VIII*, 139-153. Wiesbaden: Springer Gabler.
- Wenden, A. (1991). *Learner strategies for learner autonomy*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Yoon, T. I., & Yoon, D. (2003). Cultural influences on consumers' processing of advertising: A structural equation approach. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 13(1), 55-78.
- Zaichkowsky, J. L. (1985). Measuring the involvement construct. *Journal of consumer research*, 12(3), 341-352.

Appendix 1 – Questionnaire



Introducción

Estimada/estimado:

Quiero invitarle a participar en un estudio sobre el uso del lenguaje de la publicidad. Esta investigación se realiza en el departamento de Ciencias de la Comunicación e Información de la Radboud University de Nimega (Países Bajos).

Le quiero pedir que dé su opinión sobre dos anuncios publicitarios. Su participación es indispensable para poder formar una idea de cómo funciona la publicidad. Necesitará aproximadamente 8 minutos para responder todas las preguntas del cuestionario.

Todas sus respuestas serán anónimas y confidenciales. No se dará ningún tipo de referencia personal que pueda relacionarle con este estudio. Junto a ello, su participación en este estudio es voluntaria. Al rellenar esta encuesta da permiso para que utilicemos sus respuestas. Puede dejar de participar cuando quiera y no se aplicará ningún tipo de penalización.

En caso de participar, pase a la hoja siguiente.



Appendix 2 – Instructions

Instrucciones

A continuación, encontrará un cuestionario y dos anuncios. Sobre cada uno de estos anuncios se harán algunas preguntas sobre qué opina de cada uno de ellos. Se le pide que conteste en el orden en que se presentan y que no hojee el cuestionario ni vuelva hacia atrás cuando haya contestado una pregunta. Antes de terminar el cuestionario, habrá otras preguntas de carácter general que se le pide rellenar.

Un ejemplo del tipo de preguntas que se encontrará más adelante es lo siguiente:

Mi opinión es que el anuncio está:

A la Moda Pasado de moda

El círculo en el medio indica una opinión neutral.

Se recalca que en este cuestionario no hay respuestas correctas ni incorrectas. Su opinión es el foco del interés del presente estudio. Una vez leídas estas instrucciones podrá empezar a dar respuesta a este cuestionario.

Para cualquier pregunta, duda o comentario sobre esta encuesta puede ponerse en contacto con Qudsiyah Braaf (qudsiyah.braaf@student.ru.nl) o su supervisor Dr. Andreu van Hooft (a.vanhooft@let.ru.nl).

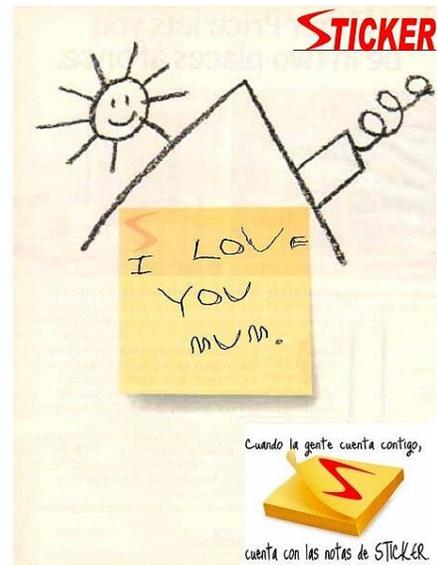
¡Muchas gracias por su participación!

Appendix 3 – Conditions

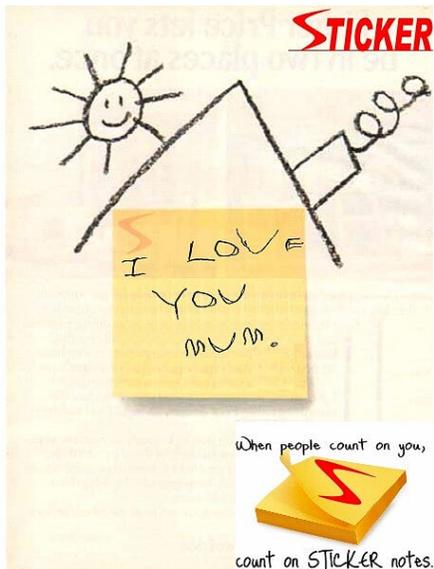
Condition 1: Sticker ad – Spanish



Condition 3: Sticker ad – mixed language (more Spanish)



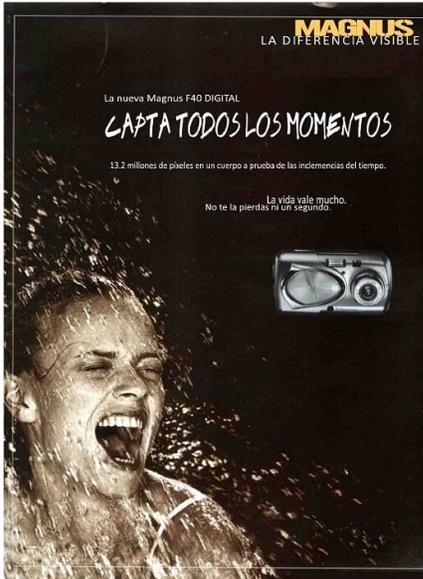
Condition 2: Sticker ad – English



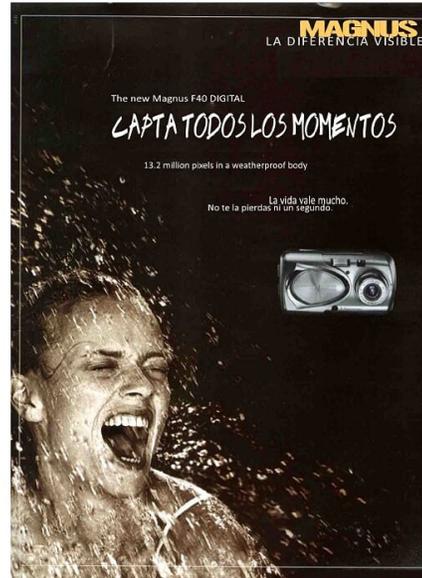
Condition 4: Sticker ad – mixed language (more English)



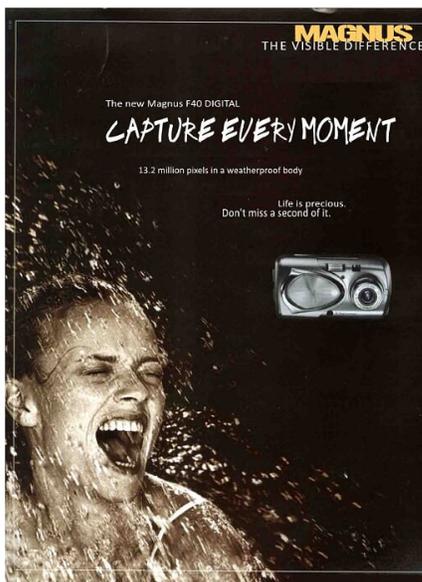
Condition 5: Camera ad – Spanish



Condition 7: Camera ad – mixed language
(more Spanish)



Condition 6: Camera ad – English



Condition 8: Camera ad – mixed language
(more English)

