

The Foreign Language Effect in International Crisis Communication

The influence of language of the message, proficiency in L2, comprehension of the message and crisis response strategy on consumer perceptions and behavioural intentions during an organizational crisis

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Abstract

During an organizational crisis, the top priority of the organization should be to keep their stakeholders safe and well-informed with effective crisis communication. Despite the rapid process of globalization, few studies to date have examined what constitutes effective crisis communication in an international context. This study aimed to do so by exploring the effects of language of the message and crisis response strategy on consumer perceptions (emotional intensity of the message, crisis severity, organizational responsibility, organizational reputation) and behavioural intentions (intention to spread negative word-of-mouth, intention to boycott, loyalty to the organization). Since research has found that the processing of messages in an L2 can reduce emotional bias and stimulate more rational decision making (the Foreign Language Effect), it was assumed that a crisis communication message in L2 (English) would lead to more beneficial post-crisis outcomes for the organization (H1-H3). The possible moderating effects of proficiency in an L2 and comprehension of the message on the FLE were also explored (H4) by including two nationalities of participants with significantly different levels of English proficiency in the research, namely Dutch (high proficiency) and Hungarians (low proficiency). Possible effects of crisis response strategy were examined by employing either a diminish or a rebuild strategy from Coombs' Situational Crisis Communication Theory in the message (H5a / H5b).

240 people (120 Dutch, 120 Hungarians) took part in this research with a between-subjects design for all factors. Results showed that there was no effect of language of the message alone on consumer perceptions and behavioural intentions (with the exception of intention to boycott). H1-H3 were therefore rejected. However, proficiency in L2 and comprehension of the message were found to moderate the relationship between the language of the message and the dependent variables to an extent (H4). This suggests that not the language of the message alone, but the proficiency of bilinguals in their L2 and their understanding of the message is what determines the extent to which the FLE occurs. Other potential contributing factors to this process, such as language immersion in L2 and pre-existing language attitudes of bilinguals are discussed. No significant results were found for crisis response strategy (H5a / H5b), which suggests that the choice of strategy does not necessarily need to match the crisis type as recommended by SCCT. Practical implications based on these findings and suggestions for future research are also discussed.

Preface

Acknowledgements

This Master's Thesis is the final product of roughly ten months of hard work that (hopefully) culminated in the most thorough application and dissertation of research of my academic career to date. While I am proud of my work, I could definitely not have achieved this end result without the help of others.

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1. Introduction

An organizational crisis is an emotionally turbulent time for organizations and their consumers alike. Effective crisis communication is of paramount importance for organizations to control the perceived severity of a crisis, thereby preventing potential damage to their organizational reputation (McDonald, Sparks & Glendon, 2010).

Despite the incessant expansion of organizations and their supply chains beyond their national borders, there has been limited research to date pertaining to what constitutes effective crisis communication in an international context (Coombs & Laufer, 2018). Multinational enterprises (MNEs) face the difficult challenge of communicating equally effectively with their culturally diverse stakeholder base, often prompting the debate between the use of a country's local language or the company's standardized lingua franca (e.g. English) to get the message across (Louhiala-Salminen, Charles & Kankaanranta, 2005).

Conclusions of previous studies regarding bilinguals' perceived emotional intensity of language suggest that a person's second language (L2) is generally perceived to have a greater emotional distance than their mother tongue (L1) (Puntoni, De Langhe & Van Osselaer, 2008). Moreover, the use of a foreign language can impact decision making by reducing emotional bias, which is known as the Foreign Language Effect (Keysar, Hayakawa & An, 2012). In the case of international crisis communication, this could indicate that potential consumers could perceive a troubling message as less emotionally laden when it is conveyed in their L2. In addition, this could lead to a less severe perception of the crisis and different behavioural intentions than when the message would be presented in their L1.

Furthermore, prior research suggests that an organization's choice of crisis response strategy can affect consumers' perceptions of an organization's post-crisis reputation. (Claeys, Cauberghe & Vyncke, 2010; Coombs, 2007). The perception of the organizational reputation can in turn directly influence the behavioural intentions of consumers regarding future interactions with the organization (Hegner, Beldad & Kraesgenberg, 2016; Schultz, Utz & Göritz, 2011; Utz, Schultz & Glocka, 2013). However, the effects of crisis response strategy on perceived organizational reputation and consumers' behavioural intentions have not yet been explored in an international context.

The aim of the current study was therefore to examine to what extent the language of the message (L1 or L2) and the choice of the crisis response strategy (diminish or rebuild) within the message influence consumer perceptions and behavioural intentions during an

organizational crisis. The consumer perceptions examined in this study were the perceived emotional intensity of the message, the perceived crisis severity, the perceived organizational responsibility and perceived organizational reputation. The behavioural intentions examined consisted of the intention to spread negative word-of-mouth, the consumers' loyalty to the organization and their intention to boycott the organization.

In addition, prior research suggests that comprehension (Puntoni et al., 2008) and proficiency (Čavar & Tytus, 2018) in an L2 could play a moderating role in the Foreign Language Effect. Responses of potential consumers in the Netherlands and Hungary, two countries with a different level of L2 English proficiency, were compared in this research to test this hypothesis ('EF EPI 2019 - EF English Proficiency Index - Compare', n.d.).

1.1 The perceived emotional intensity of language in the context of international crisis communication

The concept of emotionality as a mechanism that influences consumer response remained largely unexplored until Puntoni, De Langhe and Van Osselaer (2008) published their research on bilinguals' responses to marketing communications. A set of five experiments yielded the conclusion that marketing slogans were perceived to be more emotional by bilinguals in their native language than in their second language. Moreover, Puntoni et al. (2008) clarified that although the lack of comprehension of an L2 message can play a role in this process, the defining factor for a higher perceived emotional intensity of slogans in L1 in their studies was the frequency with which words had been encountered and used in the native language versus the second language.

These conclusions regarding the perceived emotional intensity of language are in line with those of Dewaele's (2004) earlier research, in which a positive correlation was found between the frequency of the language chosen for swearing and the perceived emotional intensity of swearwords in said language. Results of a questionnaire on self-reported language choice for swearing among multilinguals revealed that the respondents primarily swore in their native tongue (L1).

The findings of both Dewaele (2004) and Puntoni et al. (2008) are further corroborated by those of Gawinkowska, Paradowski and Bilewicz (2013). In an experiment, Polish students were asked to translate texts filled with swear words (general expletives and ethnic slurs) from English to Polish or vice versa. The expectations based on the Emotion Related Language Choice theory were that the second language would be perceived as a less

emotionally powerful medium for conveying expletives, thereby allowing for harsher formulations in English than in Polish. While this effect was only observed for ethnic slurs, the results of the research still confirmed the general premise that the perceived emotional intensity of L1 is stronger for bilinguals than that of L2.

In the context of international crisis communication, this implies that conveying a message in the second language of a stakeholder or potential consumer could result in a lower perceived emotional intensity of the message. The first hypothesis of the current research is therefore:

H1 Conveying a message in the L2 of consumers leads to a lower perceived emotional intensity of the message than if it is conveyed in their L1.

Presenting the message in the L2 of the recipient could aid in easing the emotional turmoil that stakeholders usually experience during an organizational crisis (Jin & Pang, 2010). According to McDonald, Sparks and Glendon (2010), ensuring that the stakeholders maintain a positive outlook and stay engaged with the organization are the most important objectives of crisis communication. By lowering consumers' perceived emotional intensity of the message, their perception of the severity of the crisis could perhaps also be tempered. This is an important step to accomplish, because the greater the perceived severity of a crisis, the more negative the perceptions of consumers will be of an organization's post-crisis reputation (Claeys, Cauberghe & Vyncke, 2010).

Moreover, psychological research regarding mental imagery of bilinguals provides more evidence that the use of a second language in crisis communication could reduce the perceived severity of a crisis. In three experiments conducted by Hayakawa and Keysar (2018), the findings of the first two indicated that the use of a foreign language leads to less accurate and less vivid mental imagery than the use of a native language. The third experiment showed that the nerfed mental imagery was partly responsible for reduced decision biases regarding moral choices. This leads to the second hypothesis of this research:

H2 Conveying a message in the L2 of consumers leads to a lower perceived crisis severity than if the message is conveyed in their L1.

1.2 The Foreign Language Effect

As demonstrated by Hayakawa and Keysar (2018), the extent to which language influences the mental processes of a bilingual does not solely pertain to the perceived

emotional intensity of a message. The use of a foreign language can in fact affect one's decision making process as well (Cipolletti, McFarlane & Weissglass, 2016; Costa, Foucart, Arnon, Aparici & Apesteguia, 2014; Keysar, Hayakawa & An, 2012). This phenomenon is called the Foreign Language Effect (FLE) and was illustrated by Keysar et al. (2012) in their research on risk seeking and risk aversion in decision making. According to the researchers, if a decision is framed as a gain (e.g. saving 200 out of 600 lives for certain) people are likely to avert risk by choosing the safe option instead of taking a chance on an all-or-nothing choice. Conversely, if the dilemma is framed as a loss (lose 400 lives out of 600 for certain) people become more inclined to opt for the all-or-nothing risk. The conclusion of their experiment regarding choosing a medicine for a lethal disease was that participants were not influenced by framing manipulation in a foreign language and thereby decreased the risk and increased the expected value (odds of saving more people) of their choices. A logical explanation for this is that emotions play a prominent role in risk assessment and decision making, and using a foreign language leads to a decrease in emotional resonance. Thus, a second language enables a more distant and rational cognitive approach to issues rather than a closer and more emotional approach in one's mother tongue.

While there are numerous cognitive processes involved in decision making, Cipolletti et al. (2016) argue that manipulation of moral judgement is possible by conveying dilemmas in a second language instead of the native language. Their research with English-Spanish bilinguals demonstrated that participants engaged more in systematic reasoning when presented with a moral dilemma in their second language, which in turn led to more utilitarian decisions being made in the L2 condition than in the L1 condition. The findings of Costa et al. (2014) lend further support to this conclusion. Their experiment shows that people are more often inclined to make utilitarian decisions in moral dilemmas related to life-and-death scenarios when they are presented with these dilemmas in a second language. Along with similar explanations for their findings as the previous studies (Cipolletti et al., 2016; Keysar et al., 2012), which concluded that an L2 prompts more systematic and logical thought processes in dilemmas than an L1 due to a greater cognitive distance, the researchers offer the valid argument that the reduced emotional load of the foreign language also decreases an individual's (intuition for) emotional concern.

During an organizational crisis, concerned consumers tend to formulate their behavioural intentions depending on the organization's communication with them (Schultz, Utz & Göritz, 2011). These behavioural intentions can encompass decisions regarding

secondary crisis communication measures, such as spreading negative word-of-mouth (NWOM) about the organization, but can also extend to deliberating their loyalty as existing customers or boycotting the organization entirely (Schultz, Utz & Göritz, 2011; Utz, Schultz & Glocka, 2013). All three aforementioned factors were included in this research as facets of behavioural intentions, with the aim of creating a comprehensive overview of how consumer decision making is influenced during international organizational crises. Drawing from the literature on FLE and moral judgement (Cipolletti et al., 2016; Costa et al., 2014; Keysar et al., 2012), it can be assumed that consumers could rationalize a crisis situation more easily and exhibit less emotional decision making when reading about the crisis in a second language. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H3 Conveying a message in the L2 of consumers leads to less negative behavioural intentions than if the message is conveyed in their L1.

1.3 Proficiency and comprehension as moderators of the Foreign Language Effect

A well supported theory regarding FLE among researchers in the field of cognitive science is the general premise that a decrease in perceived emotional intensity of language can cause changes in decision making. However, when an individual is highly proficient in a foreign language, the question arises whether their comprehension and frequent use of the L2 could perhaps decrease the impact of the FLE (Čavar & Tytus, 2018). More research is therefore needed to investigate the largely unexplored role of comprehension and proficiency in the FLE by systematically testing bilinguals from varying language backgrounds and levels of language competence (Hayakawa, Costa, Foucart & Keysar, 2016).

In a study about affective word processing in L1 and L2 for German and French bilinguals, affective priming effects were recorded in the L1 condition, but also in the L2 condition (Degner, Doycheva & Wentura, 2012). However, emotional connotations in the second language were only present in cases where the participants used their L2 regularly and had a high level of immersion in that language. These findings suggest that emotional connotations in the second language were only triggered if the participants' level of proficiency was comparable between L1 and L2, indicating that the FLE may not apply to bilinguals who have a high level of proficiency and comprehension in both of their learned languages.

Furthermore, Čavar and Tytus (2018) found that Croatian-German bilinguals showed no signs of increased utilitarianism in the L2 condition compared to the L1 condition of their

study, in which participants were presented with six life-or-death dilemmas regarding other peoples' fate. Given the fact that participants were either long-time immigrants in the country of their L2 (Germany) or successive bilinguals (children exposed to the L2 language from age 3 onwards), there was a possibility according to the researchers that their high level of proficiency in the L2 and frequent use thereof played a part in the absence of the FLE.

The current research will attempt to explore whether proficiency and comprehension act as moderators of the FLE by examining the difference between Dutch bilinguals with English as L2 and Hungarian bilinguals with English as L2. According to the English Proficiency Index 2019 (n.d.), the Netherlands is currently the #1 non-native English speaking country in the world with a 'very high' proficiency rating, while Hungary is at #15 with a 'high' rating. This gap suggests is a substantial difference in L2 proficiency between the countries which is worth a comparative exploration in the current research. Based on the statistics of the English Proficiency Index and the studies by Degner et al. (2012) and Čavar and Tytus (2018), the following hypothesis regarding proficiency and comprehension is put forward:

H4 Due to the moderating roles of proficiency and comprehension in FLE, messages conveyed in L2 to Hungarian bilinguals will lead to a lower perceived emotional intensity of the message, a lower perceived crisis severity and more positive behavioural intentions than messages conveyed in L2 to Dutch bilinguals.

1.4 The role of crisis response strategies in crisis communication

One of the greatest challenges of crisis communication is ensuring that consumers maintain a positive perception of the organization despite the crisis at hand (Coombs, 2007; Jin & Pang, 2010; McDonald, Sparks & Glendon, 2010). Based on empirical research, Coombs (2007) developed the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) to aid organizations in protecting their reputation with a framework that aims to systematically predict stakeholder responses to crises. Within said framework, the current research focuses on exploring the effectivity of crisis response strategies as defined by SCCT in an international context. As seen in the model (Figure 1), the choice of crisis response strategy directly affects the perceived crisis responsibility and the perceived organizational reputation,

thereby indirectly influencing the behavioural intentions of consumers as well. Therefore it is of great importance to organizations to choose the correct crisis response strategy for the situation at hand. However, one must first assess the crisis type correctly to be able to make such a choice (Coombs, 2007).

1.4.1 The relevance of crisis type and perceived organizational responsibility for choosing a crisis response strategy

Coombs (2007) defines three clusters in which organizational crisis types can be sorted: the victim cluster (e.g. natural disasters), the accidental cluster (e.g. technical product error leading to a recall) and the preventable cluster (e.g. human error or organizational misdeed). According to SCCT, the perceived responsibility attributed to an organization for a crisis can range from *weak* in the victim cluster to *strong* in the preventable cluster. The employed crisis response strategy directly affects the perceived organizational responsibility for the crisis. For instance, if an organization were to apologize profusely for a crisis that belongs in the victim cluster, they could be perceived as taking responsibility for the events that transpired.

In the eyes of the stakeholders, the organization needs to show accountability and accept responsibility in proportion to their perceived crisis responsibility to prevent damage to their reputation (Coombs & Holladay, 2005). This is also the reason why choosing a crisis response strategy that is congruent with the crisis type can directly, positively influences the organizational reputation within SCCT. In theory, an incongruent choice leads to an adverse effect on the organizational reputation. The perceived organizational reputation in turn either positively or negatively affects the consumers' behavioural intentions towards the organization.

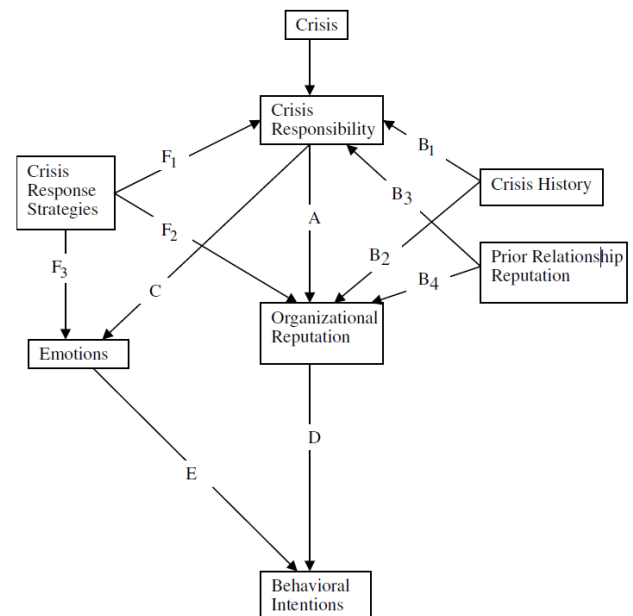


Figure 1: Crisis situation model of SCCT (Coombs, 2007)¹

¹ The current study focuses on a fictitious organization. Therefore, the SCCT model variables “Crisis History” and “Prior Relationship Reputation” are beyond the scope of this research.

1.4.2 Crisis response strategies in SCCT – Diminish and Rebuild

The three primary crisis response strategies defined in SCCT are the *deny*, *diminish* and *rebuild* strategy.

- A *deny* crisis response strategy means an organization will maintain that there is no crisis, or try to attack its accuser or shift the blame to a scapegoat.
- A *diminish* crisis response strategy means an organization will attempt to minimize responsibility for the crisis by claiming they had no control over the crisis. It can also be used to try and minimize the perceived damage caused by the crisis.
- A *rebuild* crisis response strategy involves the organization taking full responsibility for the crisis, issuing an apology and offering compensation or other gifts to the stakeholders involved.

The current research focuses on a comparison between the *diminish* and *rebuild* crisis response strategies pertaining to a crisis from the accidental cluster, namely a product recall crisis. According to Coombs (2007), a *deny* strategy often attempts to eliminate any connection between the organization and the ongoing crisis. This approach is rather implausible to succeed in a crisis involving an organization's own products, therefore the *deny* strategy is considered beyond the scope of this study. Ideally, according to the SCCT guidelines for choosing appropriate crisis response strategies, a product recall crisis warrants a *diminish* strategy (Coombs, 2007). This strategy should be used for crises with low perceived organizational responsibility (accident crises).

The recommendations made by Coombs' SCCT guidelines were supported by the findings of Hegner, Beldad and Kraesgenberg (2016). In their scenario-based research, Dutch respondents were presented with crisis communications containing a *diminish* or *rebuild* strategy regarding a product error or moral harm crisis in the context of an institutional or promotional CSR program. The aim of the experiment was to test the effects of these variables on consumers' attitudes towards the organization and their behavioural intentions following the crisis. Main effects were found for all independent variables, but the most interesting finding was perhaps an interaction effect between crisis type and crisis response strategy, suggesting that organizations indeed need to adjust their crisis response strategy to the crisis at hand, as Coombs (2007) suggested.

Based on the SCCT model, Coombs' (2007) guidelines for appropriate crisis response strategies and the findings of Hegner et al. (2016), the following hypothesis can be formulated for this experiment with a crisis in the accidental cluster:

H5a In case of a product recall crisis, a rebuild crisis response strategy leads to a higher perceived organizational responsibility, a more negative perceived organizational reputation and more negative behavioural intentions (NWOM, loyalty and boycotting) than a diminish crisis response strategy.

However, other empirical studies that were conducted based on the SCCT model have also yielded different results on the matter of matching crisis response strategies to crisis types. Studies have shown that the *rebuild* crisis response strategy can lead to more positive consumer perceptions than the *diminish* strategy, regardless of congruence with the crisis type, as per Coombs' guidelines (Claeys, Cauberghe & Vyncke, 2010; Van der Meer & Verhoeven, 2014).

Claeys et al. (2010) examined the effects of crisis type (victim, accidental, preventable) and crisis response strategy (deny, diminish, rebuild) on the perceived organizational reputation of their respondents. Their results yielded no significant interaction effect between crisis type and crisis response strategy. Moreover, in general the *rebuild* crisis response strategy was the one that led to the most positive organizational reputation, regardless of crisis type. This prompts the question whether a thorough apology and compensation could be more beneficial than other crisis response strategies for any crisis type.

Similar findings were reported from an experiment conducted by Van der Meer and Verhoeven (2014). The researchers sought to explore the effects of crisis response strategy (*diminish* or *rebuild*) and emotion in the message (shame and regret) on perceived organizational reputation. The post-crisis reputation proved significantly higher when a *rebuild* strategy was utilized than in the case of a *diminish* strategy being used. It is interesting to note that all conditions in this research contained a technical product error or product recall as crisis type, which would typically require the use of a *diminish* strategy according to Coombs (2007) for the optimal effect on the organizational reputation.

Based on the findings of Claeys et al. (2010) and Van der Meer and Verhoeven (2014) (2007) the following hypothesis can also be formulated for the current experiment with a product recall crisis:

H5b In case of a product recall crisis, a rebuild crisis response strategy leads to a higher perceived organizational responsibility, but also towards a more positive perceived organizational reputation and more positive behavioural intentions (NWOM, loyalty and boycotting) than a diminish crisis response strategy.

The five hypotheses can be captured by the following research questions that the current study aims to answer:

RQ1 To what extent does the language of the message (L1 or L2) influence the perceived emotional intensity of the message, the perceived crisis severity and the behavioural intentions of potential consumers during an organizational crisis?

RQ1a To what extent do proficiency in an L2 and the comprehension of the message in an L2 play a role in influencing the perceived emotional intensity of the message, the perceived crisis severity and the behavioural intentions of potential consumers during an organizational crisis?

RQ2 To what extent does the choice of crisis response strategy influence the perceived organizational responsibility, the perceived organizational reputation and the behavioural intentions of potential consumers during an organizational crisis?

Since research conducted in the field of international crisis communication has been very limited (Coombs and Laufer (2018) only cite eight studies in their review article), this study aims to expand the scope of knowledge in this area. By exploring new variables such as the Foreign Language Effect and involving it in the exploration of crisis response strategy, newly applicable practical knowledge becomes available to MNEs who can choose accordingly to standardize or localize their communications and pick the most effective strategy to adequately communicate with their stakeholders in a time of organizational crisis.

2. Method

This research was conducted in the form of an experiment and aimed to examine the possible influence of the language of the message and the choice of crisis response strategy on consumer perceptions and behavioural intentions during an organizational crisis. The role of proficiency in an L2 and the comprehension of L2 messages within this process was also explored.

2.1 Materials

The three independent variables of this research were the *nationality* of the participants (*Dutch or Hungarian*), the *language of the message* (*L1 Dutch / Hungarian or L2 English*) and the *crisis response strategy* (*diminish or rebuild*) used within the message.

The stimulus material consisted of six versions of written crisis communication in the form of a product recall from a fictitious electronics manufacturer called Aquilla. All six versions of the materials were identical in terms of layout and were presented as a product recall statement on the website of the organization regarding a batch of faulty laptops. The recall statement was displayed on a picture of a webpage, in which the country code of the URL corresponded with the language of the product recall message (www.aquillatechnologygroup.nl, www.aquillatechnologygroup.hu or www.aquillatechnologygroup.com).

The source text of the materials was written in Dutch and then translated to both English and Hungarian by the researcher. To ensure that the contents of the texts were translated correctly and seemed authentic, an English native speaker and a Hungarian native speaker provided back translations for the translated materials.

In terms of content, all versions of the materials consisted of a title (e.g. “PRODUCT RECALL OF AQUILLA R400” in English), a date, four short paragraphs outlining the details of the product recall and a signature from Aquilla’s fictitious CEO.

Regarding the *language of the message*, participants in the L1 conditions were asked to read a Dutch or a Hungarian text (the language corresponding to their nationality), while all participants in the L2 conditions were asked to read a text in English.

In each of the three languages, participants were either presented with a text that employed a *diminish* or a *rebuild crisis response strategy* (Coombs, 2007). A *diminish*

strategy attempts to decrease organizational responsibility by minimizing the perceived impact of the crisis, denying intent to do harm and stating an inability to control the events leading up to the crisis (e.g. “unfortunate incident” in the *diminish* closing statement of Table 1). A *rebuild* strategy clearly indicates to the stakeholders that the organization takes responsibility for the crisis at hand and asks for their understanding or forgiveness (e.g. the *rebuild* closing statement in Table 1).

Manipulation of the *crisis response strategy* was based on Coombs’ (2007) descriptions of the various crisis response strategies and occurred in the closing statement of the product recall, namely the fourth paragraph of each text. An example of the manipulation in the L2 condition can be found in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Closing statements of the materials in English (L2 condition) with the *diminish* or the *rebuild* crisis response strategy employed.

Crisis response strategy	Contents of closing statement
Diminish	<i>We are working closely with our suppliers and other partners to determine the cause of this problem. Our goal is to put this unfortunate incident behind us as soon as possible and to deliver quality again in the future.</i>
Rebuild	<i>We are working closely with our suppliers and other partners to determine the cause of this problem. We take full responsibility for the current situation and we offer our sincere apologies to our customers for the inconvenience caused.</i>

A full overview of all six versions of the stimulus material can be found in Appendix A.

2.2 Subjects

A total of 240 participants took part in this experiment. Anyone above the age of 18 with Dutch or Hungarian as their nationality and native language was eligible to take part. Restrictions regarding nationality and native language for the participants were set because one of the main focuses of this study was comparing various effects of an L1 versus an L2 on dependent variables. Dutch and Hungarian were explicitly chosen as the desired nationalities

for this experiment due to the possible moderating role of proficiency in an L2 in the Foreign Language Effect. Dutch people are reported to be significantly more proficient in English than Hungarians are, ('EF EPI 2019 - EF English Proficiency Index - Compare', n.d.).

For the comparative purposes of the study, participants were to be equally distributed among conditions in terms of their nationality and native language. Data collection was only concluded once this was actually the case. Six participants from the Netherlands and four participants from Hungary were omitted from the final dataset and the analyses, because their native language was not Dutch or Hungarian. The final total of 240 participants was made up of four conditions with 30 Dutch speakers each (120 in total) and four conditions with 30 Hungarian speakers each (120 in total).

Participants of all genders were allowed to take part in this experiment. A majority of 59.2% of participants was female and the remaining 40.8% was male. A Chi-square test showed no significant relation between gender and condition ($\chi^2(7) = 10.69, p = .153$).

Subjects could take part in this experiment regardless of their educational level. The highest level of education completed by participants ranged from primary school to university. A majority of 37.1% of participants had Higher Vocational Education (NL: HBO, HU: Főiskola) as their highest completed educational level, followed by university (34.2%), secondary school (25.0%) and primary school (2.1%). Four participants (1.7%) indicated that they had a non-standard educational level. A Chi-square test showed no significant relation between educational level and condition ($\chi^2(28) = 31.98, p = .275$).

The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 64 years old ($M = 35.94, SD = 11.56$). A one-way analysis of variance showed a significant effect of condition on age ($F(7, 232) = 4.62, p < .001$). The mean age of participants in the condition "Rebuild strategy, English text for Hungarians" ($M = 41.87, SD = 10.60$) was higher than that of participants in the conditions "Diminish strategy, English text for Dutch" ($p = .031$, Bonferroni-correction; $M = 32.50, SD = 11.97$), "Rebuild strategy, English text for Dutch" ($p = .002$, Bonferroni-correction; $M = 30.50, SD = 9.03$), and "Diminish strategy, Dutch text" ($p = .026$, Bonferroni-correction; $M = 32.33, SD = 12.57$). Furthermore, the mean age of participants in the condition "Rebuild strategy, English text for Dutch" ($M = 30.50, SD = 9.03$) was lower than that of participants in the conditions "Diminish strategy, English text for Hungarians" ($p = .043$, Bonferroni-correction; $M = 39.60, SD = 9.97$) and "Rebuild strategy, Hungarian text" ($p = .034$, Bonferroni-correction; $M = 39.80, SD = 12.24$).

2.2.1 Proficiency of participants in the L2 condition

To measure their proficiency in their second language, participants in the L2 condition were asked to complete a LexTALE test in English with possible scores ranging from 0% to 100%. The mean LexTALE score of all participants in the L2 condition was 72.57% ($SD = 16.41$). A one-way analysis of variance for participants in the L2 condition showed a significant effect of condition on proficiency in an L2 ($F(3, 116) = 14.62, p < .001$).

Proficiency in L2 of Dutch participants in the condition “Diminish strategy” ($M = 81.25, SD = 13.39$) was higher than that of Hungarian participants in the conditions “Diminish strategy” ($p = .001$, Bonferroni-correction; $M = 66.42, SD = 13.46$), and “Rebuild strategy” ($p < .001$, Bonferroni-correction; $M = 61.92, SD = 15.70$).

Furthermore, proficiency in L2 of Dutch participants in the condition “Rebuild strategy” ($M = 80.71, SD = 13.93$) was higher than that of Hungarian participants in the conditions “Diminish strategy” ($p = .001$, Bonferroni-correction; $M = 66.42, SD = 13.46$), and “Rebuild strategy” ($p < .001$, Bonferroni-correction; $M = 61.92, SD = 15.70$).

No differences were found between the proficiency in L2 of Dutch participants in the condition “Diminish strategy” and the condition “Rebuild strategy” ($p = 1.000$, Bonferroni-correction). Similarly, no differences were found between the proficiency in L2 of Hungarian participants in the condition “Diminish strategy” and the condition “Rebuild strategy” ($p = 1.000$, Bonferroni-correction).

2.2.2 Comprehension of the L2 message

Participants in the L2 condition indicated their level of comprehension of the message on three seven-point semantic differential scales (1 = Very low, 7 = Very high). The mean comprehension score of all participants in the L2 condition was $M = 5.27 (SD = 1.12)$. A one-way analysis of variance for showed no significant effect of condition on comprehension of the L2 message ($F(3, 116) < 1, p = .773$).

2.2.3 General attitudes regarding emotional intensity of language

The general attitude of participants towards the emotional intensity of their L1 and L2 (without the context of a message) was also measured in this study using eight items (four pairs of identical statements; one for L1, one for L2). Because the reliability of the relevant

scales, adapted from Dewaele & Pavlenko (2001) was deemed moderate for both L1 ($\alpha = .56$) as well as L2 ($\alpha = .49$), the four pairs of items were tested separately instead to gain an understanding of the participants' general perceived emotional intensity of languages. The four pairs of statements presented to the participants covered the following aspects of language: perceived emotionality (1 = Not at all, 5 = Absolutely), perceived coldness (1 = Not at all, 5 = Absolutely), frequency of expressing anger (1 = Never, 5 = Always) and frequency of expressing (deep) feelings (1 = Never, 5 = Undoubtedly).

A paired samples t-test showed a significant difference between the perceived emotionality of L1 and L2 ($t(239) = 2.61, p = .010$). Perceived emotionality of L1 ($M = 3.04, SD = 1.22$) was shown to be higher than perceived emotionality of L2 ($M = 2.82, SD = .95$).

A paired samples t-test showed a significant difference between the perceived coldness of L1 and L2 ($t(239) = 2.60, p = .010$). Perceived coldness of L1 ($M = 1.97, SD = 1.11$) was shown to be lower than perceived coldness of L2 ($M = 2.16, SD = .95$).

In addition, a paired samples t-test showed a significant difference between the frequency of expressing anger in L1 and L2 ($t(239) = 23.11, p < .001$). The frequency of expressing anger in L1 ($M = 4.49, SD = .71$) was shown to be higher than the frequency of expressing anger in L2 ($M = 2.28, SD = 1.04$).

Lastly, a paired samples t-test showed a significant difference between the frequency of expressing (deep) feelings in L1 and L2 ($t(239) = 28.11, p < .001$). The frequency of expressing (deep) feelings in L1 ($M = 4.56, SD = .72$) was shown to be higher than the frequency of expressing (deep) feelings in L2 ($M = 1.98, SD = .97$).

2.3 Design

The design of this research was a 2 (nationality of the participant: Hungary / Netherlands) x 2 (language of the message: L1 / L2) x 2 (crisis response strategy: diminish / rebuild) between-subjects design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions for their respective nationality. All participants only read one version of the materials of this research.

2.4 Instruments

2.4.1 Dependent variables

The dependent variables of this research were the perceived emotional intensity of the message, perceived crisis severity, perceived organizational responsibility (and blame), perceived organizational reputation, and the behavioural intentions of potential consumers.

Perceived emotional intensity of the message was measured using three seven-point Likert scales (1 = Completely disagree, 7 = Completely agree) developed by Puntoni, De Langhe & Van Osselaer (2008) and adapted to a multi-item scale by Speulman (2014). An example of the provided statements was “This text makes me emotional”. The reliability of perceived emotional intensity of the message comprising three items was good: $\alpha = .85$.

Perceived crisis severity was measured using three seven-point Likert scales (1 = Completely disagree, 7 = Completely agree) adapted from Arpan and Roskos-Ewoldsen (2005). An example of the provided statements was “This situation is severe”. The reliability of perceived crisis severity comprising three items was acceptable: $\alpha = .79$.

Perceived organizational responsibility was measured using two seven-point semantic differential scales based on statements about the organization. These statements were adapted from a study focusing on crisis communication by Lee (2004). The statements read: “How much responsibility should Aquilla bear for this situation?” (1 = None at all, 7 = Complete responsibility) and “To what extent should Aquilla receive the blame?” (1 = Not at all, 7 = Completely). The reliability of perceived organizational responsibility comprising two items was moderate: $\alpha = .52$. Because the reliability of the scale as a whole proved to be below $\alpha = .70$, perceived organizational responsibility and perceived organizational blame were treated as separate variables in the subsequent analyses of this study.

Perceived organizational reputation was measured using four seven-point semantic differential scales based on statements about the organization. These items were developed by Hoeken, Hornikx and Hustinx (2009, p. 43). An example of the provided statements was: “I find the organization...” (1 = Harmful, 7 = Beneficial). The reliability of perceived organizational reputation comprising four items was good: $\alpha = .81$.

The behavioural intentions of the participants were broken down into the measurable factors of intention to spread negative word-of-mouth (NWOM), loyalty to the organization

and intention to boycott. These factors were all measured using 7-point Likert scales, ranging from 1 (= Completely disagree) to 7 (= Completely agree).

For intention to spread NWOM, three items developed by Coombs and Holladay (2008) served as measures: “I would encourage friends or relative not to buy products from this company,” “I would say negative things about this company and its products to other people,” and “I would recommend this company’s products to someone who asked my advice”. The reliability of intention to spread NWOM comprising three items was good: $\alpha = .82$.

To measure loyalty to the organization, three items were used that were adapted from a scale developed by Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman (1996): “I would encourage friends and family to do business with this company”, “I would make more purchases at this company in the years to come” and “I would consider this company as my first choice for buying electronics”. The reliability of loyalty to the organization comprising three items was good: $\alpha = .89$.

To measure the intention to boycott the organization, a single item scale was used that was developed by Schultz, Utz and Göritz (2011), stating: “I would sign an online petition to boycott this organization”.

2.4.2 Potential moderators of the Foreign Language Effect

The current research contained two potential moderators on the relationship between the language of the message and the dependent variables, namely participants’ comprehension of the message and their proficiency in an L2.

Comprehension of the message was measured using three seven-point semantic differential scales developed by Maes, Ummelen and Hoeken (1996, p. 208). An example of the provided items was: “I found this text...” (1 = Simple, 7 = Complex). The reliability of comprehension of the message comprising three items was acceptable: $\alpha = .78$.

To measure proficiency in an L2, participants were asked to complete a LexTALE proficiency test in English developed by Lemhöfer and Boersma (2012), comprising 60 trials. Participants were asked to indicate whether they thought words existed in the English language or not by clicking on “yes” or “no” per trial. Based on their responses, a LexTALE score (ranging from 0% to 100%) was then calculated with Lemhöfer & Boersma’s (2012) % *correct_{av}* formula.

2.4.3 Background information

This research employed a number of instruments to acquire background information about the participant. To measure the participants' perceived emotional intensity of language (L1 and L2) in general (without the context of a message), eight five-point semantic differential scales were adapted from Dewaele & Pavlenko (2001). Examples of the provided items were "I find Dutch (/ English) emotional" (1 = Absolutely not, 5 = Absolutely) and "When you are angry, which language do you use in general to express your anger?" with options for both Dutch and English ranging from 1 (= Never) to 5 (= Always). The reliability of perceived emotional intensity of language for L1 comprising four items was moderate: $\alpha = .56$. The reliability of perceived emotional intensity of language for L2 comprising four items was also moderate: $\alpha = .49$. Because the reliability of the scales as a whole proved to be below $\alpha = .70$, the items for L1 and L2 were analyzed instead as four pairs of items using paired samples t-tests.

Lastly, demographic information questions were included in the questionnaire regarding the gender, age, educational level, native language and nationality of the participant. The full questionnaire including all items used to measure each variable can be found in Appendix B.

2.5 Procedure

This experiment was conducted by means of an online questionnaire created in the program Qualtrics. Participants were approached to fill out the questionnaire by means of digital communication through social media platforms and messaging services. In addition, participants in the Netherlands were approached on two occasions at a local neighbourhood center to fill out the questionnaire on a device provided by the researcher.

The participants could start the questionnaire by clicking on a link. The link contained embedded language data for the questionnaire; Dutch participants were automatically linked to the Dutch version of the questionnaire, while Hungarian participants were linked to the Hungarian version. The participant was then randomly assigned (though through equal distribution) to one of the four conditions for their nationality, namely; L1 text with diminish strategy, L1 text with rebuild strategy, L2 (English) text with diminish strategy or L2 (English) text with rebuild strategy.

After being assigned to a condition, the participants read an introductory text in their native language. In this text, the participants were asked to take part in a research for a master's thesis that required them to read a message from the international electronics manufacturer Aquilla. They were subsequently asked to read said message on the next page and fill out the questionnaire. It was made clear that there were no incorrect answers, that participation was completely voluntary, that the survey could be abandoned at any moment and that data collection would be anonymous. If participants acknowledged that they had read and agreed with this information in addition to being 18 years or older, they could go to the next page and read the text of the condition they were assigned to.

Having read the stimulus material for their condition, participants filled out the questionnaire and were asked for some of their demographic information. In an end-of-survey message, people were thanked for their participation, and contact information of the researcher was displayed in case they had any questions regarding the research. On average, completing the experiment took 14 minutes. The questionnaire collected individual responses and there was no compensation for participating in this experiment.

2.6 Statistical treatment

A data export issue from Qualtrics occurred while conducting this study, which required some values to be recoded before statistical analyses could be performed. All analyses were done with the new and correctly coded dataset in SPSS Statistics. For a detailed description of the issue and its solution, see Appendix C.

2.6.1 Method

In the method section of this paper, Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the reliability of multiple item scales. If the scale was proven to be adequately reliable ($\alpha \geq .70$), the multiple items comprising the scale were transformed into a single mean variable which could be used for further analyses.

Statistical analyses regarding subjects of this study were carried out using Chi-square tests for nominal variables (gender, educational level) and one-way analyses of variance for scale variables (age, proficiency in L2, comprehension of L2 message, familiarity with the product). Furthermore, paired samples t-tests were employed to measure the general attitudes of participants regarding the emotional intensity of language.

2.6.2 Results

The research questions of this study were answered using (multiple) regression analyses with language of the message, nationality of the participant, crisis response strategy, proficiency in L2 and comprehension of the L2 message as predictors of perceived emotional intensity of the message, perceived crisis severity, perceived organizational responsibility and blame, perceived organizational reputation and behavioural intentions of the participant (NWOM, loyalty, boycotting).

2.7 Analytical model

Figure 2 visualizes the analytical model, showing the three independent variables (or predictors) on the left side and their potential effects on the dependent variables on the right side. Proficiency in L2 and comprehension of the L2 message act as potential moderators of the relationship between nationality of the participant and language of the message as independent variables and perceived emotional intensity of the message, perceived crisis severity and behavioural intentions as dependent variables.

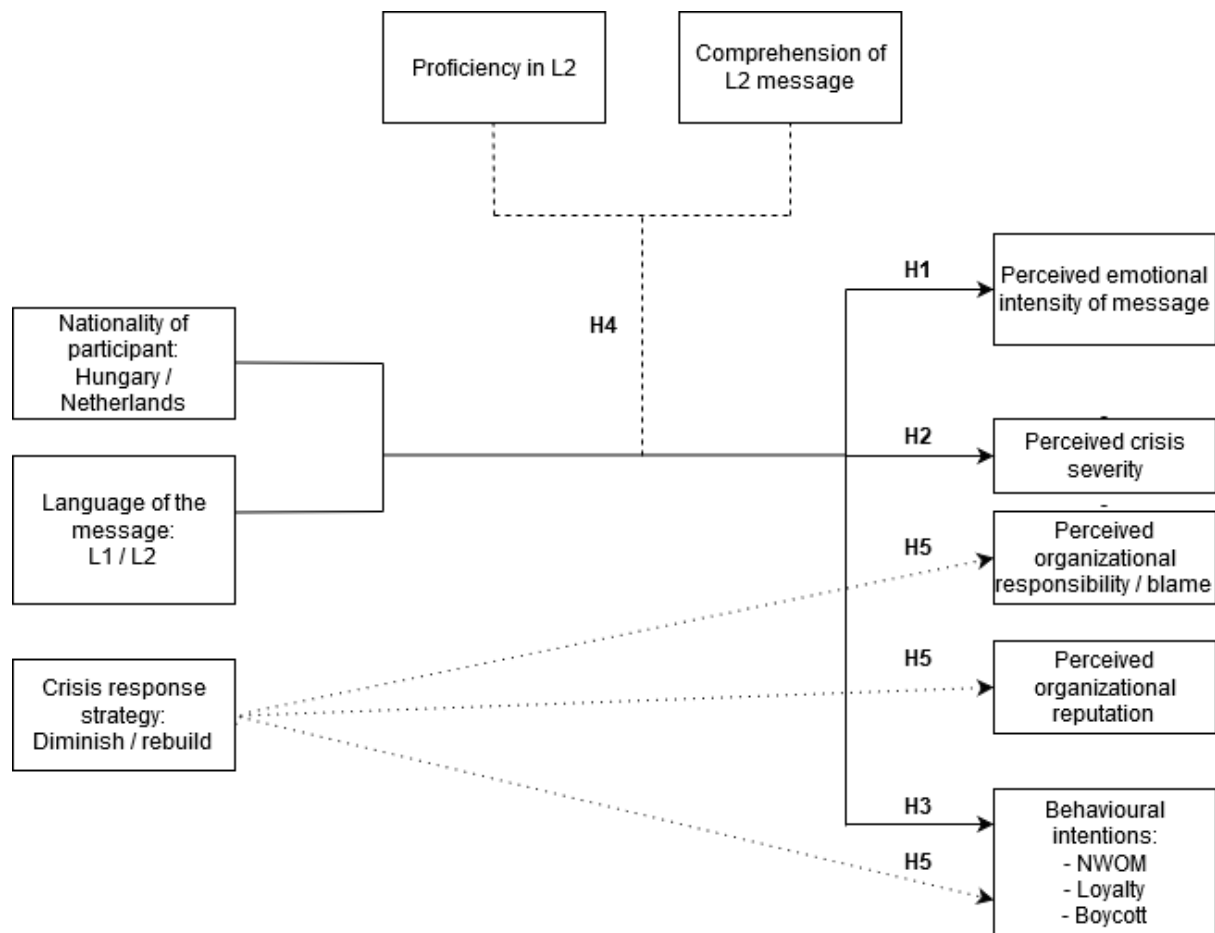


Figure 2: Analytical model of research

3. Results

This study examined to what extent the language of the message (L1 or L2) and the choice of the crisis response strategy (diminish or rebuild) influence the perceived emotional intensity of the message, the perceived crisis severity, perceived organizational responsibility / blame, the perceived organizational reputation and the behavioural intentions of potential consumers during an organizational crisis. The results of the tests of H1-H3 and H5-H6 are reported to aid in answering these research questions.

In addition, this study also sought to explore to what extent proficiency in an L2 and comprehension of L2 messages play a role in influencing the perceived emotional intensity of the message, the perceived crisis severity and the behavioural intentions of potential consumers during an organizational crisis. The results of testing H4 are reported to answer this research question. In the following results section, the hypotheses and their results appear in their numbered order.

3.1 Language of the message as a predictor of perceived emotional intensity of the message (H1), perceived crisis severity (H2) and behavioural intentions (H3) (intention to spread NWOM, loyalty to the organization, intention to boycott)

Table 2. Means and standard deviations for Perceived emotional intensity of the message, Perceived crisis severity, Intention to spread NWOM, Loyalty towards the organization and Intention to boycott in function of Language of the message (1 = Very low, 7 = Very high)

	L1 (Dutch or Hungarian)			L2 (English)		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Perceived emotional intensity of message	2.58	1.40	120	2.72	1.26	120
Perceived crisis severity	5.16	1.20	120	5.07	1.18	120
Intention to spread NWOM	3.59	1.52	120	3.60	1.24	120
Loyalty towards organization	3.01	1.40	120	3.28	1.14	120
Intention to boycott	1.73	1.20	120	2.11	1.33	120

A regression analysis showed that the variable entered, Language of the message, explained 0% of the variance in the perceived emotional intensity of the message ($F(1, 238) < 1$). Language of the message ($\beta = .06, p = .393$) was not a significant predictor of the participants' perceived emotional intensity of the message. H1 is therefore rejected. This hypothesis stated that conveying a message in the L2 of consumers leads to a lower perceived emotional intensity of the message than if it is conveyed in their L1.

A regression analysis showed that the variable entered, Language of the message, explained 0% of the variance in perceived crisis severity ($F(1, 238) < 1$). Language of the message ($\beta = -.04, p = .552$) was not shown to be a significant predictor of the participants' perceived crisis severity. H2 is therefore also rejected. This hypothesis stated that conveying a message in the L2 of consumers leads to a lower perceived crisis severity than if it is conveyed in their L1.

Regarding behavioural intentions, a regression analysis showed that the variable entered, Language of the message, explained 0% of the variance in intention to spread NWOM ($F(1, 238) < 1$). Language of the message ($\beta = .00, p = .951$) was not shown to be a significant predictor of the participants' intention to spread NWOM. Furthermore, a regression analysis showed that the variable entered, Language of the message, explained 1% of the variance in loyalty to the organization ($F(1, 238) = 2.72, p = .101$). Language of the message ($\beta = .11, p = .101$) was not found to be a significant predictor of the participants' loyalty to the organization. Lastly, a regression analysis showed that the variable entered, Language of the message, explained 2% of the variance in intention to boycott ($F(1, 238) = 5.24, p = .023$). Language of the message ($\beta = .15, p = .023$) was shown to be a significant predictor of the participants' intention to boycott the organization. The intention to boycott the organization increases with .15 *SD* for each 1 *SD* of language of the message. This indicates that participants had a significantly higher intention of boycotting the organization in the L2 condition. For this reason, H3 is also rejected. This hypothesis stated that conveying a message in the L2 of consumers leads to less negative behavioural intentions than if it is conveyed in their L1.

3.2.1 H4: Proficiency in L2 and nationality of the participant as predictors of perceived emotional intensity of the message, perceived crisis severity and behavioural intentions (intention to spread NWOM, loyalty to the organization, intention to boycott)

Table 3. Means and standard deviations for Perceived emotional intensity of the message, Perceived crisis severity, Intention to spread NWOM, Loyalty towards the organization and Intention to boycott in function of Nationality of the participant in the L2 condition (1 = Very low, 7 = Very high)

	Dutch			Hungarian		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Perceived emotional intensity of message	2.57	1.00	60	2.88	1.46	60
Perceived crisis severity	5.24	.96	60	4.89	1.35	60
Intention to spread NWOM	3.94	1.08	60	3.27	1.31	60
Loyalty towards organization	2.82	.93	60	3.74	1.15	60
Intention to boycott	1.78	1.20	60	2.43	1.40	60

Table 4. Means and standard deviations for Proficiency in L2 (LexTALE test score: 0 = Very low, 100 = Very high) and Comprehension of the L2 message (1 = Very low, 7 = Very high) in function of Nationality of the participant in the L2 condition

	Dutch			Hungarian		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Proficiency in L2 (English)	80.98	13.55	60	64.17	14.68	60
Comprehension of the L2 message	5.17	1.15	60	5.37	1.08	60

Table 5. Means and standard deviations for Proficiency in L2 (LexTALE test score: 0 = Very low, 100 = Very high) and Comprehension of the L2 message (1 = Very low, 7 = Very high) in function of crisis response strategy and nationality of the participant in the L2 condition

	Condition	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Proficiency in L2	Diminish Dutch	81.25	13.39	30
	Rebuild Dutch	80.71	13.93	30
	Diminish Hungarian	66.42	13.46	30
	Rebuild Hungarian	61.92	15.70	30
Comprehension of the L2 message	Diminish Dutch	5.19	1.22	30
	Rebuild Dutch	5.14	1.11	30
	Diminish Hungarian	5.42	.99	30
	Rebuild Hungarian	5.31	1.17	30

As detailed in the method section, a one-way analysis of variance for participants in the L2 condition showed a significant effect of condition on proficiency in an L2 ($F(3, 116) = 14.62, p < .001$). However, a one-way analysis of variance for showed no significant effect of condition on comprehension of the L2 message ($F(3, 116) < 1$). This difference can perhaps be explained by the fact that comprehension of the message L2 was a self-assessed measure, whereas proficiency in L2 was not.

To test the moderating effect of proficiency in L2 on the relationship between the nationality of the participant and the dependent variable, an interaction variable was created called *Hungarian*proficiency*. The variables of proficiency in L2 and nationality were centered before conducting the multiple regressions to avoid problems with collinearity.

A multiple regression analysis showed that the variables entered explained 13% of the variance in the perceived emotional intensity of the message ($F(3, 116) = 6.98, p < .001$). Proficiency in L2 ($\beta = -.43, p < .001$) was shown to be a significant predictor of perceived emotional intensity of the message. Perceived emotional intensity of the message decreases with .43 *SD* for each increase of 1 *SD* of proficiency in L2, given that all other variables are

kept constant. Nationality ($\beta = -.10, p = .341$) and Hungarian*proficiency ($\beta = -.03, p = .690$) were not shown to be significant predictors of perceived emotional intensity of the message.

A multiple regression analysis showed that the variables entered explained 2% of the variance in perceived crisis severity ($F(3, 116) = 1.59, p = .196$). Nationality ($\beta = -.07, p = .512$), proficiency in L2 ($\beta = .15, p = .152$) and Hungarian*proficiency ($\beta = -.02, p = .872$) were all no significant predictors of perceived crisis severity.

Behavioural intentions in this study were operationalized using three dependent variables, namely the intention to spread NWOM, loyalty to the organization and the intention to boycott.

A multiple regression analysis showed that the variables entered explained 6% of the variance in the intention to spread NWOM ($F(3, 116) = 3.59, p = .016$). Nationality ($\beta = -.34, p = .002$) was shown to be a significant predictor of intention to spread NWOM. Intention to spread NWOM decreases with .34 *SD* for each increase of 1 *SD* of nationality, given that all other variables are kept constant. This indicates that Hungarian participants had a lower intention to spread NWOM than Dutch participants. Proficiency in L2 ($\beta = -.12, p = .235$) and Hungarian*proficiency ($\beta = .00, p = .997$) were not shown to be significant predictors of intention to spread NWOM.

A multiple regression analysis showed that the variables entered explained 15% of the variance in loyalty to the organization ($F(3, 116) = 7.94, p < .001$). Nationality ($\beta = .36, p < .001$) was shown to be a significant predictor of loyalty to the organization. Loyalty to the organization increases with .36 *SD* for each increase of 1 *SD* of nationality, given that all other variables are kept constant. This indicates that Hungarian participants had a higher loyalty to the organization than Dutch participants. Proficiency in L2 ($\beta = -.12, p = .235$) and Hungarian*proficiency ($\beta = .00, p = .997$) were not shown to be significant predictors of loyalty to the organization.

A multiple regression analysis showed that the variables entered explained 14% of the variance in the intention to boycott ($F(3, 116) = 7.24, p < .001$). Proficiency in L2 ($\beta = -.34, p = .001$) was shown to be a significant predictor of the intention to boycott. The intention to boycott decreases with .34 *SD* for each increase of 1 *SD* of proficiency in L2, given that all other variables are kept constant. Nationality ($\beta = .07, p = .476$) and Hungarian*proficiency ($\beta = .14, p = .096$) were not shown to be significant predictors of the intention to boycott.

3.2.2 H4: Comprehension of the L2 message and nationality of the participant in the L2 condition as predictors of perceived emotional intensity of the message, perceived crisis severity and behavioural intentions (intention to spread NWOM, loyalty to the organization, intention to boycott)

To test the moderating effect of comprehension of the L2 message on the relationship between the nationality of the participant and the dependent variable, an interaction variable was created called *Hungarian*comprehension*. The variables of comprehension of the L2 message and nationality were centered before conducting the multiple regressions to avoid problems with collinearity.

A multiple regression analysis showed that the variables entered explained 5% of the variance in the perceived emotional intensity of the message ($F(3, 116) = 3.18, p = .027$). Comprehension of the L2 message ($\beta = -.24, p = .008$) was shown to be a significant predictor of perceived emotional intensity of the message. Perceived emotional intensity of the message decreases with .24 *SD* for each increase of 1 *SD* of comprehension of the L2 message, given that all other variables are kept constant. Nationality ($\beta = .15, p = .105$) and Hungarian*comprehension ($\beta = -.07, p = .452$) were not shown to be significant predictors of perceived emotional intensity of the message.

A multiple regression analysis showed that the variables entered explained 16% of the variance in perceived crisis severity ($F(3, 116) = 7.45, p < .001$). Nationality ($\beta = -.18, p = .037$), comprehension of the L2 message ($\beta = .35, p < .001$) and Hungarian*proficiency ($\beta = .17, p = .046$) were all significant predictors of perceived crisis severity. Perceived crisis severity decreases with .18 *SD* for each increase of 1 *SD* of nationality, given that all other variables are kept constant. In addition, perceived crisis severity increases with .35 *SD* for each increase of 1 *SD* of comprehension of the L2 message, given that all other variables are kept constant. Lastly, perceived crisis severity increases with .17 *SD* for each increase of 1 *SD* of Hungarian*comprehension. In short, the first two significant predictors indicate that Hungarians perceived the crisis as significantly less severe than the Dutch and that the higher the participants' level of comprehension was, the higher their perceived severity of the crisis was. The significant interaction variable indicates that comprehending more of the message led to a higher perceived crisis severity for Hungarian participants than for Dutch participants.

Behavioural intentions in this study were operationalized using three dependent variables, namely the intention to spread NWOM, loyalty to the organization and the intention to boycott.

A multiple regression analysis showed that the variables entered explained 9% of the variance in the intention to spread NWOM ($F(3, 116) = 4.67, p = .004$). Nationality ($\beta = -.25, p = .005$) and comprehension of the message in L2 ($\beta = -.19, p = .037$) were both shown to be significant predictors of intention to spread NWOM. Intention to spread NWOM decreases with .25 *SD* for each increase of 1 *SD* of nationality, given that all other variables are kept constant. This indicates that Hungarian participants had a lower intention to spread NWOM than Dutch participants. In addition, intention to spread NWOM decreases with .19 *SD* for each increase of 1 *SD* of comprehension of the L2 message, given that all other variables are kept constant. This indicates a higher comprehension of the message leads to a lower intention of spreading NWOM. Hungarian*comprehension ($\beta = -.22, p = .828$) was not shown to be a significant predictor of intention to spread NWOM.

A multiple regression analysis showed that the variables entered explained 15% of the variance in loyalty to the organization ($F(3, 116) = 8.13, p < .001$). Nationality ($\beta = .40, p < .001$) was shown to be a significant predictor of loyalty to the organization. Loyalty to the organization increases with .40 *SD* for each increase of 1 *SD* of nationality, given that all other variables are kept constant. This indicates that Hungarian participants had a higher loyalty to the organization than Dutch participants. Comprehension of the L2 message ($\beta = .09, p = .291$) and Hungarian*comprehension ($\beta = .04, p = .629$) were not shown to be significant predictors of loyalty to the organization.

A multiple regression analysis showed that the variables entered explained 25% of the variance in the intention to boycott ($F(3, 116) = 14.13, p < .001$). Nationality ($\beta = .29, p < .001$) and comprehension of the L2 message ($\beta = -.46, p < .001$) were shown to be significant predictors of the intention to boycott. The intention to boycott increases with .29 *SD* for each increase of 1 *SD* of nationality, given that all other variables are kept constant. The intention to boycott decreases with .46 *SD* for each increase of 1 *SD* of comprehension of the L2 message, given that all other variables are kept constant. These findings indicate that Hungarians had a significantly higher intention to boycott than Dutch participants and that the more participants comprehended the message in general, the less they were inclined to

boycott the organization. Hungarian*comprehension ($\beta = -.06, p = .466$) was not shown to be a significant predictor of the intention to boycott.

From the analyses conducted with proficiency in L2 and comprehension of the L2 message as moderators, it can be concluded that H4 is partially supported. The following paragraphs will detail to what extent this is the case for both proficiency in L2 and comprehension of the L2 message. The hypothesis stated that messages conveyed in L2 to Hungarian bilinguals lead to a lower perceived emotional intensity of the message, a lower perceived crisis severity and more positive behavioural intentions than messages conveyed in L2 to Dutch bilinguals due to the moderating roles of proficiency and comprehension.

Regarding proficiency in L2 as a moderator in the L2 condition, no significant differences were found between Hungarian and Dutch participants for perceived emotional intensity of the message, perceived crisis severity and the intention to boycott. However, Hungarians in the L2 condition were shown to have a significantly lower intention to spread NWOM and significantly higher loyalty to the organization than Dutch participants in the L2 condition. These findings support H4, since Hungarians exhibited more positive behavioural intentions than Dutch participants for these two variables.

Regarding comprehension of the L2 message as a moderator in the L2 condition, no significant differences were found between Hungarian and Dutch participants for perceived emotional intensity of the message. However, Hungarians in the L2 condition were shown to perceive the crisis as significantly less severe, have a significantly lower intention to spread NWOM and significantly higher loyalty to the organization than Dutch participants in the L2 condition. These findings support H4, because Hungarians were shown to have a lower perceived crisis severity and more positive behavioural intentions than Dutch participants (except for intention to boycott). Conversely to findings regarding the other behavioural intentions, Hungarians in the L2 condition were shown to have a significantly higher intention to boycott the organization than Dutch participants in the L2 condition. Possible explanations for this are provided in the conclusion of this study.

3.3 H5a/b: Crisis response strategy as a predictor of perceived organizational responsibility, perceived organizational blame, perceived organizational reputation and behavioural intentions (intention to spread NWOM, loyalty to the organization, intention to boycott)

Table 6. Means and standard deviations for Perceived organizational responsibility, Perceived organizational blame, Perceived organizational reputation, Intention to spread NWOM, Loyalty towards the organization and Intention to boycott in function of Crisis response strategy (1 = Very low, 7 = Very high)

	Diminish			Rebuild		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Perceived org. responsibility	6.20	1.07	120	6.24	1.01	120
Perceived org. Blame	4.89	1.57	120	4.99	1.40	120
Perceived org. reputation	4.75	1.00	120	4.83	.92	120
Intention to spread NWOM	3.49	1.36	120	3.71	1.41	120
Loyalty towards organization	3.16	1.24	120	3.12	1.33	120
Intention to boycott	1.93	1.33	120	1.91	1.23	120

A regression analysis showed that the variable entered, crisis response strategy, explained 0% of the variance in the perceived organizational responsibility ($F(1, 238) < 1$). Crisis response strategy ($\beta = -.02, p = .757$) was not a significant predictor of perceived organizational responsibility.

A regression analysis showed that the variable entered, crisis response strategy, explained 0% of the variance in the perceived organizational blame ($F(1, 238) < 1$). Crisis response strategy ($\beta = -.03, p = .602$) was not a significant predictor of perceived organizational blame.

A regression analysis showed that the variable entered, crisis response strategy, explained 0% of the variance in the perceived organizational reputation ($F(1, 238) < 1$). Crisis response strategy ($\beta = -.04, p = .501$) was not a significant predictor of perceived organizational reputation.

Behavioural intentions in this study were operationalized using three dependent variables, namely the intention to spread NWOM, loyalty to the organization and the intention to boycott.

A regression analysis showed that the variable entered, crisis response strategy, explained 0% of the variance in the intention to spread NWOM ($F(1, 238) = 1.47, p = .227$). Crisis response strategy ($\beta = -.08, p = .227$) was not a significant predictor of intention to spread NWOM. Furthermore, a regression analysis showed that the variable entered, crisis response strategy, explained 0% of the variance in loyalty to the organization ($F(1, 238) < 1$). Crisis response strategy ($\beta = .02, p = .789$) was not a significant predictor of loyalty to the organization. Lastly, a regression analysis showed that the variable entered, crisis response strategy, explained 0% of the variance in the intention to boycott ($F(1, 238) < 1$). Crisis response strategy ($\beta = .01, p = .880$) was not a significant predictor of intention to boycott.

Based on these findings without significant differences between the crisis response strategies, both H5a and H5b are rejected. These hypotheses stated that a rebuild crisis response strategy leads to a higher perceived organizational responsibility, a more negative (H5a) / positive (H5b) perceived organizational reputation and more negative (H5a) / positive (H5b) behavioural intentions (NWOM, loyalty and boycotting) than a diminish crisis response strategy.

4. Conclusion

Very few studies to date have investigated what constitutes effective crisis communication in an international context. The aim of this study was therefore to examine to what extent the language of the message influences the perceived emotional intensity of the message, the perceived crisis severity and the behavioural intentions of consumers (RQ1). The roles of proficiency in an L2 and comprehension of the message in this process were also explored (RQ1a). Furthermore, the study aimed to shed light on the influence of crisis response strategy on the perceived organizational responsibility (and blame), the perceived organizational reputation and behavioural intentions of consumers (RQ2).

Firstly, possible explanations for the findings of this study are discussed per hypothesis and comparisons with prior research are made. Secondly, the study's contribution to the theory and its practical implications are highlighted. Lastly, limitations of the current research are outlined and recommendations for future research are provided.

4.1 The perceived emotional intensity of the message

H1 stated that conveying messages in the L2 of participants would lead to a lower perceived emotional intensity of the message than conveying messages in their L1. H1 was rejected, as the language of the message was not shown to be a significant predictor of perceived emotional intensity of the message. This finding was rather unexpected for two reasons.

Firstly, general attitudes regarding the emotional intensity of language were measured in the current study. Without the context of a message present, L1 was shown to be perceived as more emotional and less cold by the participants than L2. In addition, participants indicated that they expressed anger and deep emotions more frequently in their L1 than in their L2. Secondly, the findings of H1 are not in line with those of prior research on the subject of perceived emotional intensity of language. Various studies have shown (messages in) L1 to have a higher perceived emotional intensity than (messages in) L2 (Dewaele, 2004; Gawinkowska, Paradowski & Bilewicz, 2013; Puntoni, De Langhe & Van Osselaer, 2008).

Dewaele (2004) found that the use of swear words most frequently occurred in a bilingual's L1 and that the language choice for swearing had a positive correlation with the perceived emotional intensity of swearwords in that language. Gawinkowska et al. (2013) found that L2 was an easier medium than L1 for bilinguals to convey swear words, but only

for ethnic slurs. Gawinkowska et al. (2013) nuanced their conclusions by indicating that sociocultural norms could also have contributed to their findings in addition to the possible different emotional powers of a first and second language. Furthermore, swear words inherently attract more attention and evoke stronger feelings than general, non-expletive phrases (Gawinkowska et al., 2013). Given that the materials of the current study contained no expletives and that no differences were found between the perceived emotional intensity of the message for L1 and L2, one could argue that not only the language of the message itself, but the potentially emotionally laden contents of the message are also an important factor to consider when comparing the perceived emotional intensity of a first and second language.

Puntoni et al. (2008) found that slogans were perceived by bilinguals as more emotional in L1 than L2 and that the frequency of language use rather than comprehension was a defining factor for this finding. However, the participants of said study were fluent trilinguals (in Dutch, French and English) from the Brussels capital region of Belgium. This region is known for political and linguistic tensions within its community and research has shown that native French speakers in Brussels do not perceive the Dutch language positively and vice versa (Mettewie & Janssens, 2007). As language attitudes were not measured by Puntoni et al. (2008), it is possible that this factor contributed to L1 slogans being rated as more emotional than L2 in their study. A possible explanation for the absence of such an effect in this research is that no linguistic tensions similar to those in the Brussels Capital Region are known to exist between Dutch and English or Hungarian and English.

In conclusion, it seems that the language of the message alone is not always a significant determinant of the perceived emotional intensity of the message for multilinguals. The contents of the message in this research may not have been sufficiently emotionally laden to elicit different perceptions of the emotional intensity of the message for L1 and L2, unlike in studies regarding swearwords (Dewaele, 2004; Gawinkowska et al., 2013). Future research regarding the topic should therefore compare messages in L1 and L2 with varying degrees of emotional intensity in the contents of the message (e.g. with or without swearwords) (Dewaele, 2004; Gawinkowska et al., 2013). In addition, the groups of bilinguals selected to participate could be varied to examine whether negative (or positive) attitudes towards the L2 play a role in the way the message is perceived (Puntoni et al., 2008). Furthermore, the findings of H4 of this research (discussed under section 4.4.1 of this

paper) suggest that comprehension of the message and proficiency in an L2 can also affect the perceived emotional intensity of the message.

4.2 The perceived crisis severity

H2 stated that conveying messages in the L2 of consumers would lead to a lower perceived crisis severity than conveying those messages in an L1. H2 was rejected, as the language of the message was not shown to be a significant predictor of perceived crisis severity. Considering the fact that the language of the message did not influence the perceived emotional intensity of the message in this study (H1), it can be assumed that it also did not affect any emotional response to the crisis that the participants may have experienced (Jin & Pang, 2010). In that case, it would be logical that their perceived crisis severity also remained unaffected by the language of the message in itself.

Contrary to the current findings, Hayakawa & Keysar (2018) did find that presenting stimuli in a second language led to less vivid mental imagery than presenting the same stimuli in a first language, which consequently lead to reduced decision bias in moral choices. Perhaps the discrepancy between Hayakawa & Keysar's (2018) findings and findings of the current research can be explained by the different methods used in the two studies. Hayakawa & Keysar (2018) actively asked participants to visualize concepts in their materials, while participants in the current research read the stimulus material and formed their perceptions of the crisis situation organically. Since the concreteness of language use can affect the vividness of mental imagery (Paivio, Yuille & Madigan, 1968), it is possible that the purposefully descriptive stimuli of Hayakawa and Keysar (2018) lead to increased vividness in the L1 condition as opposed to the informative the crisis communication text of this study.

As no prior research has been conducted regarding the influence of language of the message on consumer perceptions of a crisis (Coombs & Laufer, 2018), future research could focus on comparing the effects of messages with concrete, detailed crisis descriptions (Keysar & Hayakawa, 2018) and messages with less detailed crisis descriptions in L1 and L2 on the perceived crisis severity.

4.3 The influence of language of the message on behavioural intentions

H3 stated that conveying a message in the L2 of consumers would lead to less negative behavioural intentions than conveying a message in their L1. H3 was rejected, as language of the message was not shown to be a significant predictor of intention to spread

Negative Word-of-Mouth (NWOM) or loyalty to the organization. However, language of the message was a significant predictor of the intention to boycott the organization. In contrast to the hypothesis, participants showed a higher intention of boycotting when presented with a message in their L2. While this was a surprising finding, it can perhaps be explained to an extent by the findings of H4 regarding the influence of proficiency in an L2 and comprehension of the message on the intention to boycott (discussed under section 4.4.3 of this paper).

It was believed that participants would show less negative behavioural intentions in the L1 condition due to the Foreign Language Effect (FLE) (Keysar, Hayakawa & An, 2012). FLE states that the use of a foreign language in messages can affect the decision-making process of individuals, allowing for a more distant cognitive approach with less emotive and more logical thinking involved. Although this effect was not present in the current research, its existence has been previously confirmed by various studies (Cipolletti, McFarlane & Weissglass, 2016; Costa, Foucart, Arnon, Aparici & Apesteguia, 2014; Keysar, et al., 2012).

Although not always explicitly stated as of important to the FLE, the materials of all of these studies contained moral dilemmas that mostly revolved around life-or-death decisions. Experiments 2 and 3 of Keysar et al. (2012) were the only exceptions; these were centered around personal financial gain or loss for the participant based on their decision making. The current research focused on an organizational crisis involving a product recall for a fictitious technology manufacturer. Compared to previous studies, participants had no significantly high-stakes choices to make or moral dilemmas to solve when forming their behavioural intentions. The absence of the FLE here in contrast to prior research raises the question whether a severe moral dilemma or difficult personal choice could be a prerequisite for the FLE to occur.

According to Coombs (2007), a product recall crisis type can be categorized in the accidental crisis cluster, which forms a moderate reputational threat to the organization. To provide comparisons for the findings of this study, further research on FLE and behavioural intentions of consumers could focus on crises from the preventable cluster (e.g. organizational misdeed with injuries where stakeholders were put at risk) to explore whether the FLE is indeed only present in grave situations (Costa et al., 2014) when participants are faced with difficult decisions regarding the organization.

4.4 Proficiency in L2 and comprehension of the message as moderators of the Foreign Language Effect (FLE)

H4 stated that messages conveyed in L2 to Hungarian bilinguals would lead to a lower perceived emotional intensity of the message, a lower perceived crisis severity and more positive behavioural intentions than messages conveyed in L2 to Dutch bilinguals, due to the moderating roles of L2 proficiency and comprehension. This hypothesis was partially supported and the findings per dependent variable are detailed below.

4.4.1 Perceived emotional intensity of the message.

Although nationality of the participant had no effect on perceived emotional intensity of the message, proficiency and comprehension in general were both shown to be significant predictors of this variable. This concerns a negative relationship in both cases, which indicates that the more one is proficient in their L2 and the better they understand the message, the less emotional they will perceive it to be.

While findings of H1 demonstrated that language of the message alone is not a significant predictor of perceived emotional intensity of the message, these findings show that better proficiency in and comprehension of an L2 decrease the perceived emotional intensity of the message. In short, this could indicate that not the foreign language itself, but one's level of understanding thereof is the key determinant of how emotional a message is perceived to be.

The negative relationship between proficiency and perceived emotional intensity of the message contrasts with the finding in Degner, Doycheva and Ventura (2012) that German and French bilinguals could record emotional connotations in their L2, if their proficiency in that language was comparably high to that of their L1. However, these participants also reported to have a high level of immersion in their L2 and to frequently use it. It is possible that high immersion in an L2 could shape the perception of that language to become similar to L1 in terms of emotional connotations. As level of immersion in L2 was not measured in detail in the current research, future studies should aim to compare groups of bilinguals with similar L2 proficiency levels, but with a low and high level of immersion in their L2. This could shed light on the potential influence of language immersion on the way proficiency in an L2 affects the perceived emotional intensity of the message.

4.4.2 Perceived crisis severity

In the analysis with proficiency as a potential moderator, none of the predictors (nationality of the participant, proficiency in L2, nationality*proficiency) proved to have a significant effect on perceived crisis severity. Conversely, comprehension, nationality and the interaction of comprehension and nationality were all significant predictors of perceived crisis severity. Higher comprehension of the message logically led to a higher perceived crisis severity, because a good understanding of a crisis communication message makes it easier for people to recognize the severity of the situation. Hungarians found the crisis to be less severe than Dutch participants and the interaction effect indicates that Hungarians also found the crisis significantly more severe than the Dutch if their comprehension of the message increased.

The findings described above suggest that comprehension of the message is a stronger moderator for perceived crisis severity than proficiency in an L2. Proficiency in an L2 cannot influence one's perception of crisis severity; the level of understanding of the crisis communication text determines consumer perceptions of crisis severity instead. With no studies examining this relationship to date (Coombs & Laufer, 2018), this could be a focal point for future research in international crisis communication.

4.4.3 Behavioural intentions

Intention to spread NWOM: Nationality was a significant predictor of intention to spread NWOM in both analyses. Hungarians were significantly less likely to spread NWOM about the organization at hand than Dutch participants, which is in line with the expectations of H4. The LexTALE scores in this research confirmed the assumption that Hungarians have a lower average proficiency in English than Dutch people; this may have contributed to this finding regarding intention to spread NWOM. It is possible that Hungarians were less inclined to spread NWOM because they could not fully recognize the severity of situation explained in the message due to a lower proficiency in L2 than Dutch participants.

In addition, comprehension of the message was shown to be a significant predictor of intention to spread NWOM. A higher comprehension of the message in general led to a lower intention to spread NWOM. This is a particularly interesting finding, as it suggests that while a higher comprehension of the message can lead to a higher perceived crisis severity (see 4.4.2), it does not necessarily lead to more negative behavioural intentions (with regard to NWOM) among potential consumers. As the SCCT-model (Coombs, 2007; Coombs &

Holladay, 2008) suggests, other factors in addition to crisis type / severity are also responsible for shaping a stakeholder's behavioural intentions during a crisis, such as the perceived organizational responsibility, perceived organizational reputation and the crisis response strategy. It would be useful for future research in the field of international crisis communication to examine which of these factors are potentially influenced by comprehension of the message. This could lead to a better theoretical understanding of the way in which the comprehension of the message influences the stepwise shaping of behavioural intentions in crisis situations.

Loyalty to the organization: For both the analyses including proficiency and comprehension, the nationality of the participant was shown to be the sole significant predictor of loyalty to the organization. Hungarians were shown to be significantly more loyal to the organization than Dutch participants. This is in line with H4, which stated that Hungarians would exhibit more positive behavioural intentions than Dutch participants in the L2 condition. It is possible that Hungarians were more inclined to stay loyal to the organization because they could not fully recognize the severity of situation explained in the message due to a lower proficiency in L2 than the Dutch participants.

These findings regarding decision making and proficiency align with conclusions drawn by Čavar and Tytus (2018). Their research with Croatian-German bilinguals yielded similar results between the L1 condition and the L2 condition regarding utilitarian decision making, which indicated the absence of the FLE. The researchers cited high L2 proficiency among their fluently bilingual subjects as a possible reason for this, which is a trait that certainly fits the Dutch participants of this study more than the Hungarian participants. It is therefore plausible that Hungarians displayed less negative behavioural intentions (lower intention to spread NWOM, higher loyalty to the organization) than Dutch participants due to their lower proficiency in L2 and a less thorough grasp of the crisis severity in consequence.

Intention to boycott: Both proficiency and comprehension of the message were shown to be significant predictors of the intention to boycott the organization. Interestingly, these were both negative relationships, meaning that the higher the proficiency and comprehension of a participant was, the less likely they were to boycott. In addition, nationality was also a significant predictor of the intention to boycott the organization, as Hungarians were more likely to do so than Dutch participants.

These findings can perhaps be explained due to the possibly ambiguous nature of the intention to boycott for participants. H4 expected more positive behavioural intentions (thus a lower intention to boycott) in the L2 condition for Hungarians than for Dutch participants, as the proficiency-moderated FLE (i.e.: a reduced perceived emotional intensity of L2 due to a lower level of proficiency) suggests that Hungarians could make logical, rational decisions more easily. Schultz, Utz and Göritz (2011) define boycotting as a means of protesting the organization and what it stands for. From this point of view, rationality would be to put those feelings aside and objectively evaluate the crisis situation, which would probably lead to a lower intention to boycott. However, in a product harm crisis including faulty electronics and potential fire hazards such as described in the current research, a rational decision could also mean boycotting the organization to keep oneself and other stakeholders safe. For this reason, Hungarians' significantly higher intention to boycott the organization could still be viewed as a rationally motivated behavioural intention and as such, a finding which supports H4.

More similar research is needed, preferably with more extensive measures than a single-item scale (Schultz et al., 2011), to gain a clearer overview of consumer motives for boycotting. That way it would become easier to determine whether participants are making a rational or an emotional decision in the context of FLE and international crisis communication.

4.5 The influence of crisis response strategy on consumer perceptions and behavioural intentions

H5a (/H5b) stated that in the case of a product recall crisis, a rebuild crisis response strategy leads to a higher perceived organizational responsibility, a more negative (positive) perceived organizational reputation and more negative (positive) behavioural intentions (NWOM, loyalty and boycotting) than a diminish crisis response strategy. In the current research, crisis response strategy was not shown to be a significant predictor of any of the variables above. This indicates that no significant differences were observed between a diminish strategy and a rebuild strategy. Two possible reasons can be noted for this outcome of the analyses.

Firstly, different crisis response strategies are not guaranteed to elicit significantly different results on the respective dependent variables of their research. In their study regarding the effects of crisis types and crisis response strategies on perceived organizational reputation, Claey's, Cauberghe and Vyncke (2010) found that a rebuild strategy had the most

positive effect on the perception of their participants. However, the difference between a deny strategy and a rebuild strategy was only “marginally significant” ($p = .087$) according to Claeys et al. (2010), which indicates that denying any involvement in the crisis had practically the same outcome for organizational reputation as taking responsibility. It is then not farfetched to assume that similar results could be found with minimal or no significant differences between strategies when downplaying the crisis with a diminish strategy and apologizing with a rebuild strategy.

Secondly, the research design could also have been of influence on this outcome. In the current research, crisis response strategy was a between-subjects factor. While Claeys et al. (2010) did find a difference between two of their crisis response strategies using a similar research design, they noted that a within-subjects design is perhaps a more suitable way of comparing crisis response strategies, as suggested and evidenced by prior research (Coombs & Holladay, 1996). Van der Meer and Verhoeven (2014) also employed a within-subjects design when managing to find a significant difference between the effect of a diminish strategy and a rebuild strategy on organizational reputation. Other possible implications of using a within-subjects design in this context are discussed in section 4.8 of this paper.

The findings of this study contribute to the academic field of crisis communication by posing that a crisis response strategy does not necessarily need to match the crisis type at hand. Both the diminish strategy as recommended by Coombs (2007) for accidental product harm crises and the incongruent rebuild strategy proved to be equally effective. These findings concur with those of Claeys et al. (2010) and Van der Meer and Verhoeven (2014), who also concluded that crisis response strategy does not necessarily need to match the crisis type as recommended by Situational Crisis Communication Theory.

4.5.1 The difference in attributing crisis responsibility and attributing blame

An additional, unexpected finding of this study is the fact that participants seemed to view perceived organizational responsibility and perceived organizational blame as two entirely different concepts. The core of Coombs’ SCCT (2007) stems from Weiner’s Attribution Theory (1985), which states that individuals will automatically search for causes of events and attribute responsibility, especially in negative situations such as an organizational crisis. So far, research had identified that crisis types generate fairly predictable levels of organizational responsibility as attributed by the public (Coombs & Holladay, 1996; Coombs, 2007). However, the results of this study show that participants did

not consider perceived organizational responsibility and perceived blame to be a part of the same scale. The mean score of responsibility was significantly higher than that of blame, which may imply that consumers are inclined to be more forgiving in their perceptions of an organization in the accidental crisis cluster. Future studies involving Coombs' SCCT model should therefore opt to operationalize these two concepts as different variables and test their effects accordingly depending on crisis type on the rest of the SCCT model.

4.6 Contribution to theory

This study contributes to academic research on the topics of the perceived emotional intensity of messages in L1/L2, the Foreign Language Effect (RQ1) and the roles of language proficiency and comprehension of the message therein (RQ1a). In addition, it provides insights on the influence of crisis response strategy on consumer perceptions and behavioural intentions in a thus far largely unexplored international context (Coombs & Laufer, 2018).

RQ1 The perceived emotional intensity of language and the FLE

No significant differences were found between L1 and L2 for the perceived emotional intensity of the message and the perceived crisis severity. These findings were not in line with Dewaele (2004), Puntoni et al. (2008) and Gawinkowska et al. (2013), as these studies showed L1 to have a higher emotional intensity than L2. This discrepancy could be explained by the fact that emotionally laden contents of the message itself (Dewaele, 2004; Gawinkowska et al., 2013) or participants' existing attitudes towards their L2 (Puntoni et al., 2008) could play a role in determining the perceived emotional intensity of the message. These concepts should be examined in further research to find out to what extent this is actually the case.

Language of the message in itself had no significant effect on behavioural intentions, except for the intention to boycott, which was (surprisingly) significantly higher in the L2 condition. In light of the FLE (Keysar et al., 2012), the expectation was that participants in the L2 condition would display less negative behavioural intentions due to an increased cognitive distance from the crisis situation (Costa et al., 2014; Cipoletti et al., 2016). The absence of the FLE in the current research with a product recall as crisis type raises the question whether the occurrence of FLE could be determined by the severity of the situation or the gravity of the decisions at hand, rather than differences in the perceived emotional intensity of L1 and L2 alone. Future research involving the FLE in the field of international

crisis communication should therefore compare crises with various degrees of severity and impact on the stakeholders.

RQ1a Proficiency in L2 and comprehension of the message as moderators of the FLE

Proficiency in L2 and comprehension of the message were both significant predictors of perceived emotional intensity of the message; a higher level of proficiency or comprehension lead to a lower perceived emotional intensity. This relationship contrasts with earlier findings by Degner et al. (2012), who found that an L2 could in fact yield emotional connotations for speakers with a high level of proficiency. Contrary to the participants of the current study, participants in Degner et al. (2012) considered themselves to be highly immersed in their L2. It is possible that a high degree of immersion allows for an L2 to be perceived similarly to an L1 in terms of emotional intensity. To test this theory, future studies on the perceived emotional intensity of language and FLE could aim to compare groups of bilinguals with similar L2 proficiency levels, but with different degrees of L2 immersion.

Comprehension was found to be a moderator of perceived crisis severity in this study. A higher comprehension of the message lead to a higher perceived crisis severity. Hungarian participants generally perceived the crisis as less severe than Dutch participants. The absence of a moderating effect of proficiency here indicates that not language skill, but rather the understanding of the crisis communication message is the key determinant that influences perceived crisis severity.

Regarding behavioural intentions, Hungarians were less likely to spread NWOM and remained more loyal to the organization than Dutch participants. Perhaps the absence of the FLE for Dutch participants can be explained by their significantly higher proficiency in L2. Čavar & Tytus (2018) reported similar findings regarding the FLE and participants with a high L2 proficiency.

Proficiency and comprehension were both shown to be significant predictors of boycotting. Contrary to expectations, higher proficiency in L2 and comprehension of the message lead to a decreased intention to boycott. To examine this relationship further, boycotting as a behavioural intention needs to be operationalized more extensively as it is currently difficult to determine whether the motives of the participant to boycott the organization are emotional or rational in the context of FLE (Keysar et al., 2012).

In conclusion to RQ1a, the FLE is moderated to an extent by proficiency and comprehension, but it is a complex relationship that requires further research for a better understanding. It is also possible that factors such as the language attitudes of bilinguals and the crisis cluster at hand could also influence the workings of FLE.

RQ2 Crisis response strategy

Crisis response strategy was not shown to be a significant predictor of any of the dependent variables in this research, namely perceived organizational responsibility, perceived organizational reputation and behavioural intentions. No significant differences were observed between the effects of a diminish strategy and a rebuild strategy. This contradicts the findings of Claeys et al. (2010) and Van der Meer and Verhoeven (2014), as these studies did find that certain crisis response strategies had a more positive effect on perceived organizational reputation than others.

Both the diminish and the rebuild strategy proved equally effective in this study involving a product harm crisis. Despite Coombs' (2007) suggestion that a diminish strategy would be better suited to this crisis type, this study concludes that the choice of crisis response strategy does not necessarily need to match the crisis type as recommended by SCCT. This conclusion is in line with previous insights of Claeys et al. (2010) and Van der Meer & Verhoeven (2014) regarding the matching of crisis response strategies to crisis types.

In addition, the finding that participants made a distinction between the concepts of perceived organizational responsibility and perceived organizational blame may show that attributing responsibility and blame are not always a unilateral process as suggested by Coombs (2007). This finding could be explained by participants being more lenient due to the current study's use of a crisis from the accidental cluster. Future research is needed to examine these concepts separately in various crisis clusters for a better understanding of the process of attributing responsibility and blame in the context of the SCCT model.

4.7 Practical implications

Based on the findings of the current study, organizations engaging in international crisis communication can choose either L1 or L2 as the language of the message to communicate effectively with bilinguals, as the language of the message alone did not affect the perceived emotional intensity of the message or the perceived crisis severity.

However, communicating in an L2 could prove advantageous when dealing with a preventable cluster crisis (Coombs, 2007), because the FLE seems more likely to occur when people face a severe situation involving difficult moral choices. This could imply that consumers would have less negative post-crisis behavioural intentions after reading a text in their L2. This study has shown that proficiency in L2 and comprehension of the message also play a role in this process. Participants with lower proficiency in L2 and lower comprehension of the message saw the crisis as less severe and had more positive behavioural intentions than participants with high proficiency. Organizations are obligated to communicate clearly during crises to keep their stakeholders safe and well-informed (McDonald et al., 2010). However, perhaps international organizations could use these insights to their advantage by conducting their crisis communications (partially) in L2, so long as stakeholders indicate that they have a clear understanding of the message.

In light of the findings regarding crisis response strategies, organizations can choose between using a diminish strategy or a rebuild strategy freely in the accidental crisis cluster. In this cluster, taking more responsibility (Coombs, 2007) for a crisis by using a rebuild strategy did not necessarily lead to more negative consumer perceptions or behavioural intentions, as bearing responsibility for the crisis did not equal bearing blame in the eyes of the stakeholder.

4.8 Limitations and recommendations for future research

In terms of research design, literature suggests that a replication of the current study with both the language of the message (Puntoni, De Langhe & Van Osselaer, 2008, Study 1) and the crisis response strategy (Claeys, Cauberghe & Vyncke, 2010) as within-subjects factors could yield different results. However, a within-subjects design was beyond the scope of the current research due to the prolonged concentration required from the participants and the time constraint of a Master's thesis.

Perhaps a stronger perceived emotional intensity of the message could be expected for L1, as well as more significant differences between the effects of crisis response strategies on the dependent variables due to the fact that contrasts among the languages and crisis response strategies used are easier to observe for participants in a within-subjects design (Coombs & Holladay, 1996). When opting for such a design in a future study, researchers should still be mindful of its potential drawbacks as well. Participants are more likely to base their later responses in the research on those given in the previous condition(s) (carry-over effect) and

are also more likely to provide what they perceive to be socially desirable answers (Bickart, 1993).

Furthermore, this study omitted various variables from Coombs' (2007) SCCT model. The organization's crisis history and prior relationship reputation with its stakeholders were not taken into account, as the materials involved a fictitious company. Future research of SCCT in an international context could attempt to incorporate these factors by selecting a case study with an existing company and using their crisis communications as materials.

In addition, the emotions of stakeholders were also beyond the scope of this research, although they are a variable in the SCCT model with a direct influence on behavioural intentions (Coombs, 2007). Research has shown that both the emotions felt by stakeholders (Jin & Pang, 2010) and the emotions communicated by organizations (Van der Meer & Verhoeven, 2014) can affect the outcome of a crisis situation for an organization. Based on its conclusions on perceived emotional intensity of the message in comparison with prior research (Dewaele, 2004; Gawinkowska et al., 2013), the current study argues that the emotionally laden contents of the message are also a factor that can help facilitate the FLE. Using emotions in international crisis communication texts is therefore expected to trigger the FLE and lead to more favourable consumer perceptions and behavioural intentions in the L2 condition. Studying these factors in a multilingual context could therefore greatly enrich the academic knowledge pool of international crisis communication.

5. References

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6. Appendices

Appendix A: Materials

Dutch text with diminish strategy

TERUGROEPACTIE VAN AQUILLA R400

17 juni 2019

Recentelijk zijn er gevallen gemeld van technische mankementen met betrekking tot de Aquilla R400. Uit veiligheidsredenen roept Aquilla een reeks laptops van het type R400 terug. Deze kwestie is in de afgelopen weken aan de orde gesteld door onze klanten, maar werd ook besproken in de media.

Een uitgebreid intern onderzoek heeft onthuld dat accu's van Aquilla R400 laptops die geproduceerd zijn tussen januari 2019 en mei 2019 onderhevig kunnen zijn aan oververhitting. Dit kan leiden tot brandgevaar. Het probleem heeft voornamelijk betrekking op modellen die verkocht zijn op de Europese markt.

Bij Aquilla hechten we veel waarde aan de veiligheid van onze klanten. Daarom hebben wij besloten om de verkoop van de R400 voorlopig te stoppen. Klanten die reeds in het bezit zijn van een R400, die zij aangeschaft hebben in de bovengenoemde periode, kunnen contact met ons opnemen voor een vervangend apparaat.

We werken nauw samen met onze leveranciers en andere partners om de oorzaak van dit probleem te bepalen. Aquilla's doel is om dit ongelukkige incident zo spoedig mogelijk achter zich te laten en in de toekomst weer kwaliteit te leveren.

Jack Sowerby,
CEO Aquilla Technology Group

Dutch text with rebuild strategy

TERUGROEPACTIE VAN AQUILLA R400

17 juni 2019

Recentelijk zijn er gevallen gemeld van technische mankementen met betrekking tot de Aquilla R400. Uit veiligheidsredenen roept Aquilla een reeks laptops van het type R400 terug. Deze kwestie is in de afgelopen weken aan de orde gesteld door onze klanten, maar werd ook besproken in de media.

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oververhitting. Dit kan leiden tot brandgevaar. Het probleem heeft voornamelijk betrekking op modellen die verkocht zijn op de Europese markt.

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We werken nauw samen met onze leveranciers en andere partners om de oorzaak van dit probleem te bepalen. Aquilla neemt volledige verantwoordelijkheid op zich voor de huidige situatie en we bieden onze klanten onze oprechte excuses aan voor het veroorzaakte ongemak.

Jack Sowerby,
CEO Aquilla Technology Group

Hungarian text with diminish strategy

AZ AQUILLA R400-AS TERMÉK VISSZAHÍVÁSA

2019, június 17.

A napokban technikai hibákat jelentettek az Aquilla R400-as termékkel kapcsolatban. Biztonsági okokból kifolyólag, az Aquilla visszahívja az R400-as típusú laptopok meghatározott gyártási sorozatát. Az elmúlt hetekben ügyfeleink jelezték az említett problémát, és a médiában is foglalkoztak a hírrel.

Egy kiterjedt belső vizsgálat feltárta, hogy az Aquilla R 400-as laptopok akkumulátorai, melyek 2019 január és május között lettek legyártva, túlzottan felhevülhetnek. Ez tűzveszélyt okozhat. A probléma elsősorban az Európában értékesített típusokat érinti.

Az Aquilla-nál nagy súlyt fektetünk ügyfeleink biztonságára. Ezért elhatároztuk, hogy az R400-as értékesítését átmenetileg beszüntetjük. Azon ügyfeleink, akik az említett periódusban legyártott R400-as tulajdonában vannak, kapcsolatba léphetnek velünk egy helyettesítő termékért.

Szoros együttműködésben szállítóinkkal és egyéb partnereinkkel azon dolgozunk, hogy a probléma pontos okát felderítsük. Az Aquilla célja, hogy ezt a szerencsétlen incidenst mielőbb magunk mögött hagyassuk, és a jövőben ismét jó minőséget szállítsunk.

Jack Sowerby
CEO Aquilla Technology Csoport

AZ AQUILLA R400-AS TERMÉK VISSZAHÍVÁSA

2019, június 17.

A napokban technikai hibákat jelentettek az Aquilla R400-as termékkel kapcsolatban. Biztonsági okokból kifolyólag, az Aquilla visszahívja az R400-as típusú laptopok meghatározott gyártási sorozatát. Az elmúlt hetekben ügyfeleink jelezték az említett problémát, és a médiában is foglalkoztak a hírrel.

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Szoros együttműködésben szállítóinkkal és egyéb partnereinkkel azon dolgozunk, hogy a probléma pontos okát felderítsük. Az Aquilla teljes felelősséget vállal a kialakult helyzetért, és őszinte sajnálatunkat fejezzük ki vevőink irányában, az okozott kellemetlenségekért.

Jack Sowerby
CEO Aquilla Technology Csoport

PRODUCT RECALL OF AQUILLA R400

June 17th, 2019

Recently, cases of technical defects have been reported regarding the Aquilla R400. For safety reasons, Aquilla recalls a batch of laptops of the R400 type. This issue was raised by our customers during the past weeks, but it was also discussed in the media.

An extensive internal investigation has revealed that the batteries of Aquilla R400 laptops produced between January and May of 2019 can be subject to overheating. This could lead to a fire hazard. The problem mainly concerns models that were sold on the European market.

At Aquilla we place great value on the safety of our customers. Therefore we have decided to stop sales of the R400 for the time being. Customers who already possess an R400, which they purchased in the aforementioned period, can contact us for a replacement device.

We are working closely with our suppliers and other partners to determine the cause of this problem. Aquilla's goal is to put this unfortunate incident behind us as soon as possible and to deliver quality again in the future.

Jack Sowerby,
CEO Aquilla Technology Group

English text with rebuild strategy

PRODUCT RECALL OF AQUILLA R400

June 17th, 2019

Recently, cases of technical defects have been reported regarding the Aquilla R400. For safety reasons, Aquilla recalls a batch of laptops of the R400 type. This issue was raised by our customers during the past weeks, but it was also discussed in the media.

An extensive internal investigation has revealed that the batteries of Aquilla R400 laptops produced between January and May of 2019 can be subject to overheating. This could lead to a fire hazard. The problem mainly concerns models that were sold on the European market.

At Aquilla we place great value on the safety of our customers. Therefore we have decided to stop sales of the R400 for the time being. Customers who already possess an R400, which they purchased in the aforementioned period, can contact us for a replacement device.

We are working closely with our suppliers and other partners to determine the cause of this problem. Aquilla takes full responsibility for the current situation and we offer our sincere apologies to our customers for the inconvenience caused.

Jack Sowerby,
CEO Aquilla Technology Group

Appendix B: Full questionnaire (Dutch followed by Hungarian)

Dutch

Instructional text

U bent uitgenodigd om deel te nemen aan een onderzoek dat wordt uitgevoerd door een student van de Radboud Universiteit in het kader van een masterscriptie. Het gaat hier om een vragenlijst, waarbij u een bericht van een bedrijf krijgt te lezen. Dit betreft een bericht van de internationale elektronica producent Aquilla.

Het invullen van deze vragenlijst zal ongeveer 10 minuten zal duren. Er zijn geen onjuiste antwoorden. Uw deelname is volledig vrijwillig en u kunt op ieder moment stoppen. De gegevensverwerking zal anoniem zijn.

Indien u meer informatie over dit onderzoek wilt, kunt u contact opnemen met de student via dani.nagy@student.ru.nl.

Belangrijk:

- U bent minimaal 18 jaar oud
- U stemt vrijwillig in met deelname aan dit onderzoek
- U hebt de bovenstaande informatie gelezen

Als u akkoord gaat en deel wilt nemen aan dit onderzoek, ga dan verder. Indien u niet mee wenst te doen, kunt u deze pagina sluiten.

Bij voorbaat dank voor uw deelname!

One version of the materials was then displayed to the participant

L1 text with diminish strategy / L1 text with rebuild strategy / L2 text with diminish strategy / L2 text with rebuild strategy

Perceived emotional intensity of the message (Puntoni et al., 2008; Speulman, 2014).

Ik vind deze tekst

Niet emotioneel O O O O O O O Emotioneel

Deze tekst maakt mij emotioneel

Helemaal mee oneens O O O O O O O Helemaal mee eens

Deze tekst raakt mij

Helemaal mee oneens O O O O O O O Helemaal mee eens

Comprehension of the message (Maes et al., 1996).

Ik vond deze tekst:

Makkelijk O O O O O O O Moeilijk

Onbegrijpelijk O O O O O O O Begrijpelijk

Ingewikkeld O O O O O O O Simpel

Perceived crisis severity (Arpan & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 2005).

Deze situatie is serieus

Helemaal mee oneens O O O O O O O Helemaal mee eens

Deze situatie is erg

Helemaal mee oneens O O O O O O O Helemaal mee eens

Deze situatie is ernstig

Helemaal mee oneens O O O O O O O Helemaal mee eens

Perceived organizational responsibility / blame (Lee, 2004).

Hoeveel verantwoordelijkheid moet Aquilla dragen voor deze situatie?

Helemaal geen verantwoordelijkheid O O O O O O O Volledige verantwoordelijkheid

In welke mate moet Aquilla de schuld krijgen?

Helemaal niet O O O O O O O Helemaal

Perceived organizational reputation (Hoeken et al., 2009)

Ik vind de organisatie...

Goed O O O O O O O Slecht

Plezierig O O O O O O O Onplezierig

Schadelijk O O O O O O O Voordelig

Verstandig O O O O O O O Onverstandig

Behavioural intentions

Intention to spread NWOM (Coombs & Holladay, 2008).

Ik zou vrienden of familie niet aanmoedigen om van Aquilla producten te kopen

Helemaal mee oneens O O O O O O O Helemaal mee eens

Ik zou tegen anderen negatieve dingen zeggen over Aquilla en de producten van Aquilla

Helemaal mee oneens O O O O O O O Helemaal mee eens

Ik zou producten van Aquilla niet aanbevelen aan iemand die mij om advies vraagt

Helemaal mee oneens O O O O O O O Helemaal mee eens

Loyalty to the organization (Zeithaml et al., 1996).

Ik zou vrienden en familie aanmoedigen om zaken te doen met Aquilla

Helemaal mee oneens O O O O O O O Helemaal mee eens

Ik zou meer aankopen doen bij Aquilla in de komende paar jaar

Helemaal mee oneens O O O O O O O Helemaal mee eens

Ik zou Aquilla als mijn eerste keus beschouwen voor het kopen van elektronica

Helemaal mee oneens O O O O O O O Helemaal mee eens

Intention to boycott (Schultz et al., 2011).

In hoeverre bent u het eens met de volgende stelling?

Ik zou een online petitie tekenen om Aquilla te boycotten

Helemaal mee oneens O O O O O O O Helemaal mee eens

Perceived emotional intensity of language: abstract background measures for FLE (Dewaele & Pavlenko 2001).

Hier zijn enkele subjectieve uitingen over de talen die u spreekt. Vul alstublieft in tot in welke mate ze overeenkomen met uw kijk op deze talen.

Ik vind Nederlands

Helemaal niet - Enigszins – Min of meer – Grotendeels - Absoluut

Emotioneel

Koud

Ik vind Engels

Helemaal niet - Enigszins – Min of meer – Grotendeels - Absoluut

Emotioneel

Koud

Als u boos bent, welke taal gebruikt u dan doorgaans om uw boosheid uit te drukken?

Nooit - Zelden – Soms – Vaak - Altijd

Nederlands

Engels

In welke taal uit u meestal uw diepste gevoelens?

Nooit - Misschien – Waarschijnlijk – Zeker - Ongetwijfeld

Nederlands

Engels

LexTALE test for proficiency (Lemhöfer & Boersma, 2012).

U wordt nu vriendelijk verzocht om een korte test te maken over uw Engelse taalvaardigheid. De volgende test bestaat uit ongeveer 60 trials. U krijgt steeds een letterreeks te zien.

Uw taak is om telkens te beslissen of dit een bestaand Engels woord is of niet. Als u denkt dat het een bestaand Engels woord is, klikt u op "ja", als u denkt dat het geen bestaand Engels woord is, klikt u op "nee".

Als u er zeker van bent dat het woord bestaat, ook als u niet precies weet wat het betekent, mag u toch met "ja" antwoorden. Maar als u twijfelt of het wel een bestaand woord is, kies dan "nee".

In dit experiment wordt Britse Engelse spelling aangehouden; dus geen Amerikaans Engelse spelling. Bijvoorbeeld: “realise” in plaats van “realize”, “colour” in plaats van “color”, enzovoorts. Laat dit uw antwoorden niet beïnvloeden. Deze test is immers niet gericht op subtiele verschillen op het vlak van spelling.

U heeft zoveel tijd als u wilt voor elke beslissing. Dit deel van het experiment duurt ongeveer 5 minuten.

Als alles duidelijk is, kunt u de test nu starten.

Demographic information

Wat is uw geslacht?

Man / vrouw / anders

Wat is uw leeftijd?

Wat is uw hoogst afgeronde opleiding?

- Basisschool
- Middelbare school
- HBO
- WO
- Anders, namelijk:

Wat is uw moedertaal?

Wat is uw nationaliteit?

Closing slide

Bedankt voor het invullen van deze vragenlijst! Uw antwoorden zijn opgenomen.

Indien u vragen hebt over het onderzoek, kunt u contact opnemen via
dani.nagy@student.ru.nl

Hungarian

Instructional text

Meghívjuk Önt, hogy vegyen részt egy kutatásban, melyet a Randboud Egyetem egyik hallgatója, “mester” szakdolgozata témájaként dolgoz fel. Ön kap egy kérdőívet, melyben egy cég üzenetét olvashatja. Ez, egy nemzetközi elektronikai termékeket gyártó cég, az Aquilla üzenete.

A kérdőív kitöltése körülbelül 10 percet vesz igénybe. Hibás válaszok nem léteznek. Az Ön részvétele teljesen önkéntes, és bármelyik pillanatban felhagyhat a kitöltéssel. Az adatok feldolgozása névtelenül történik.

Amennyiben több információt szeretne kapni erről a kutatásról, kapcsolatba léphet a hallgatóval az alábbi e-mail címen: dani.nagy@student.ru.nl

Fontos:

- Ön betöltötte 18-ik életévét
- Ön önkéntesen vesz részt a kutatásban
- Ön a fenti információkat elolvasta

Amennyiben fentiekkel egyetért és részt kíván venni a kutatásban, folytassa a kitöltést.

Amennyiben nem kíván részt venni, bezárhatja ezt az oldalt.

Résztvételét előre is köszönöm!

One version of the materials was then displayed to the participant

L1 text with diminish strategy / L1 text with rebuild strategy / L2 text with diminish strategy /
L2 text with rebuild strategy

Perceived emotional intensity of the message (Puntoni et al., 2008; Speulman, 2014).

Úgy gondolom, hogy ez a szöveg

Nem érzelmes O O O O O O O Érzelmes

Ez a szöveg érzelmessé tesz engem

Nem értek egyet O O O O O O O Egyetértek

Ez a szöveg megérint (meghat) engem

Nem értek egyet O O O O O O O Egyetértek

Comprehension of the message (Maes et al., 1996).

Szerintem ez a szöveg:

Könnyű O O O O O O O Nehéz

Érthetetlen O O O O O O O Érthető

Bonyolult O O O O O O O Egyszerű

Perceived crisis severity (Arpan & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 2005).

Ez egy komoly helyzet

Nem értek egyet O O O O O O O Egyetértek

Ez egy rossz helyzet

Nem értek egyet O O O O O O O Egyetértek

Ez egy súlyos helyzet

Nem értek egyet O O O O O O O Egyetértek

Perceived organizational responsibility / blame (Lee, 2004).

Milyen mértékű felelősséget kell vállalnia az Aquilla-nak ebben a helyzetben?

Semmilyen felelősséget O O O O O O O Teljes felelősséget

Milyen mértékben kell az Aquillát hibáztatni?

Egyáltalán nem O O O O O O O Teljes mértékben

Perceived organizational reputation (Hoeken et al., 2009)

Úgy gondolom, hogy a vállalat...

Jó O O O O O O O Rossz

Kellemes O O O O O O O Kellemetlen

Káros ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Hasznos

Ésszerű ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Ésszerűtlen

Behavioural intentions

Intention to spread NWOM (Coombs & Holladay, 2008).

Barátokat, vagy családtagokat nem bátorítanék fel arra, hogy egy Aquilla terméket vegyenek

Nem értek egyet ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Egyetértek

Negatív dolgokat mondanék másoknak az Aquilla-ról és az Aquilla termékeiről

Nem értek egyet ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Egyetértek

Ha valaki tanácsomat kérné, nem ajánlanam neki az Aquilla termékeit

Nem értek egyet ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Egyetértek

Loyalty to the organization (Zeithaml et al., 1996).

Barátokat és családtagokat bátorítanék arra, hogy az Aquilla-val üzleteljenek

Nem értek egyet ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Egyetértek

Többet vásárolnék az Aquilla-nál az elkövetkezendő években

Nem értek egyet ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Egyetértek

Elektronikai termék vásárlásakor az Aquilla lenne az első választásom

Nem értek egyet ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Egyetértek

Intention to boycott (Schultz et al., 2011).

Mennyire ért Ön egyet a következő állítással?

Aláírnék egy online (internetes) petíciót, hogy bojkottáljuk az Aquilla-t.

Nem értek egyet ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Egyetértek

**Perceived emotional intensity of language: abstract background measures for FLE
(Dewaele & Pavlenko 2001).**

Alább található néhány szubjektív kifejezés azon nyelvekről, melyeket Ön beszél. Töltse ki, hogy milyen mértékben ért egyet az alábbi megállapításokkal.

Úgy gondolom, hogy a magyar nyelv

Egyáltalán nem – Egy kicsit – Többé kevésbé – Nagymértékben – Teljes mértékben

Érzelmes

Rideg

Úgy gondolom, hogy az angol nyelv

Egyáltalán nem – Egy kicsit – Többé kevésbé – Nagymértékben – Teljes mértékben

Érzelmes

Rideg

Általában melyik nyelvet használja haragja kifejezésére, amikor mérges?

Soha- Ritkán - Néha- Gyakran - Mindig

Magyar

Angol

Melyik nyelvet használja többnyire a legmélyebb érzelmei kifejezésére?

Soha - Talán – Valószínűleg – Biztosan – Kétségtelenül

Magyar

Angol

LexTALE test for proficiency (Lemhöfer & Boersma, 2012).

Most arra kérjük, hogy vegyen részt egy rövid kísérletben ami az Ön angol nyelvtudásáról szól. Ez a teszt 60 feladatot tartalmaz, és minden egyes feladat betűk sorából áll, vagyis egy - egy szót lát.

Az Ön feladata, hogy eldöntse, hogy az egy létező angol szó, vagy sem. Ha úgy gondolja, hogy az egy létező angol szó, kattintson az “igen”-re, de ha úgy gondolja, hogy az egy nem létező angol szó, akkor kattintson a “nem”-re.

Akkor is az “igen”-t választhatja, ha a szó pontos jelentését nem tudja, de biztos benne, hogy létező szó. Ha nem biztos benne, hogy egy valós szóról van szó, akkor a “nem” választ kell bejelölnie.

Ebben a kísérletben nem annyira az amerikai angol, hanem inkább a Brit angol helyesírását használjuk. Például: “realize” helyett “realise”, “color” helyett “colour”, és így tovább. Ez ne tévessze meg! Ez a kísérlet nem az ilyen finom helyesírási különbségekről szól.

Minden egyes döntésre annyi időt használhat, amennyit csak akar. A tesztnek ez a része körülbelül 5 percet vesz igénybe.

Ha minden világos, elkezdheti a tesztet.

Demographic information

Mi az Ön neve?

Férfi / nő / egyéb

Mi az Ön életkora?

Mi az ön legmagasabb iskolai végzettsége?

- Általános iskola
- Középiskola
- Főiskola
- Egyetem

- Egyéb:

-

Mi az Ön anyanyelve?

Mi az Ön nemzetisége?

Closing slide

Köszönjük, hogy kitöltötte ezt a kérdőívet! Válaszait elmentettük.

Amennyiben kérdése van a kutatásról, kapcsolatba léphet a hallgatóval az alábbi e-mail címen: dani.nagy@student.ru.nl

Appendix C: Data export issue and recoding of values

This survey was optimized for mobile compatibility to provide maximum convenience for participants. Part of this process involved entering custom JavaScript into Qualtrics to ensure that seven-point scales with labels would fit onto mobile screens without having to scroll horizontally. Unfortunately, Qualtrics made an update to their platform roughly 90% into data collection for this research, which made the program perceive JavaScript differently in the questions described above. As a result, Qualtrics perceived the text label on the left side of a seven-point scale (e.g. “Completely disagree”) as the first point on an eight point scale. This changed nothing for the way participants saw the question displayed, or the options they could select to complete the question. It purely meant that Qualtrics exported all seven-point scale data as eight-point scale data, with the responses entered for these questions skewed as 1 value higher than what the participant had actually entered.

This issue was noticed and thoroughly examined right after the export of the complete dataset. It was solved by recoding the data of seven-point scales by lowering them by 1 point. The value of 2 was first recoded to 1, 3 was subsequently recoded to 2, 4 to 3, etc. All analyses were done with the new and correctly coded dataset in SPSS Statistics.

Appendix D: Ethics questionnaire

Preliminaries

- A. This checklist should be used to determine whether your proposed thesis research needs to be tested for approval by the Ethics Committee (ETC-GW). If your thesis research does need to be tested for approval, your supervisor (under whose responsibility you will conduct the research) should apply to the Ethics Committee for the formal approval procedure. For further information, see <https://www.ru.nl/eac-humanities/>
- B. Thesis research conducted using the CLS labs (12th floor, Erasmus building) should ALWAYS be submitted for formal approval by the Ethics Committee, that is, regardless of the outcome of the checklist 'test'. For further information, see <https://www.ru.nl/eac-humanities/>
- C. Per 1 October 2018, all CLS research that plans to use SONA to recruit respondents or subjects needs formal approval from the ETC. For further information, see <https://www.ru.nl/eac-humanities/>
- D. Any thesis research conducted as part of an existing CLS project or a supervisor's individual research line that has already been tested and approved by the ETC does not have to be approved again.
- E. This checklist refers to criteria (e.g. discomfort, risks and misdirection) and methods (e.g. informing, asking for permission, data storage) that are of central importance to the testing conducted by the ETC. All criteria and behaviours are described in the ETC-GW protocol, see <http://www.etc-gw-protocol>. For further information, see <https://www.ru.nl/eac-humanities/>
- F. You should use this checklist to check for yourself whether your proposed thesis research needs approval from the ETC. You should store the results of your ethics check (completed checklist and outcome) so that you can show third parties at all times that you have gone through the proper procedure. Please make sure you submit your completed checklist with your research proposal.
- G. If the outcome of completing the checklist is that your proposed thesis research has characteristics that fall outside of the standard research methods and approaches recognized by the ETC-GW, you should formally have your research tested and approved by the ETC-GW – if this is indeed the case, you will be referred to the [review procedure](#) in the checklist. If this is the case, contact your supervisor (see also A.).

- H. Research that can be regarded as falling under the *Wet Medisch-Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek met mensen* (WMO) can NOT be tested for approval by the ETC-GW, but needs to be tested and approved by a recognized Medical Ethics Committee (METC). This is why a number of questions at the start of this checklist refer to the potential medical character of the proposed research. Research falls under the WMO if it is regarded as medical-scientific and if subjects are subjected to medical treatments or required to behave in a certain way. See [METC protocol or not?](#)

Checklist Ethical Review

Name:Dani Bosveld.....

Student number:s4363957.....

Title of the thesis: The influence of the Foreign language effect on perceived emotional intensity of messages, perceived crisis severity and behavioural intentions of consumers in international crisis communication

.....

Primary supervisor and responsible researcher:F. van Meurs.....

Date on which checklist was completed:15-11-2019.....

Answer the questions by clicking the box ☐ for the answer that applies to your proposed research
When you click on a box, a check will appear automatically ☒

Medical-ethical study

1. Is a healthcare facility involved in the research project in one of the following ways?

This is the case if one of the situations a / b / c below apply to the proposed research:

- a) one or more employees of a healthcare facility are involved in the study as a client or a provider/performer.
- b) the study is done within the walls of the healthcare facility and, due to the nature of the study, it should normally not be done outside of the healthcare facility.
- c) patients/clients of the healthcare facility participate in the study (in the framework of treatment).

- ☒ No, not in the manner of a / b / c → continue with checklist
- ☐ Yes, in the manner of a / b / c (circle the applicable answer)

→ Has a Medical-Ethical Review Committee (METC) already tested and approved the proposed research? [WMO = Social Support Act]

☐ Yes, and the research was approved by the METC → continue with checklist and submit your supervisor's statement to this effect together with your research proposal

☐ No → This request must be submitted to a recognised Medical-Ethical Review Committee (METC), for example the CMO Region Arnhem Nijmegen ([cmo-regio-arnhem-nijmegen](http://cmo-regio-arnhem-nijmegen.nl)) → end checklist → see ccmo.nl

2. Does this project involve a medical-scientific study that could involve possible health risks to the persons participating?

☒ No → continue with checklist

☐ Yes → This request must be submitted to a recognised Medical-Ethical Review Committee (METC), for example the CMO Region Arnhem Nijmegen ([cmo-regio-arnhem-nijmegen](http://cmo-regio-arnhem-nijmegen.nl)) → end checklist → see ccmo.nl

Standard research method

3. The Ethics Assessment Committee Humanities (ETC-GW) has determined and described a number of [standard research methods](#) (after opening link, see the right-hand column for a PDF) → Does the method / approach of the proposed research project fall under one of the ETC's standard research methods?

☒ Yes →1...Standard evaluation and attitude research

.....

(fill in name and number of standard) → continue with checklist

☐ No → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)

Participants

4. Will the proposed research involve a population that is in good health?

☒ Yes → continue with checklist

☐ No → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)

5. Will the proposed research involve minors (younger than 18) or people regarded as legally incompetent?

☒ No → continue with checklist

- ☐ Yes → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)

Nature of the research

6. Will a research method be used that can create a situation in which the researcher may inadvertently find out about the health of a participant, and about which that participant should then be informed in a manner *not* described in the applicable standard methods (as defined by ETC-GW)?
- ☒ No → continue with checklist
- ☐ Yes → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)
7. Will participants have to undertake or undergo actions or behaviours that could be uncomfortable in a manner that is *not* described in the applicable standard methods?
- ☒ No → continue with checklist
- ☐ Yes → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)
8. Are the estimated risks of the research for participants greater than described in the applicable standard methods?
- ☒ No → continue with checklist
- ☐ Yes → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)
9. Will participants be offered compensation other than the customary compensation described in the applicable standard methods?
- ☒ No → continue with checklist
- ☐ Yes → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)
10. If any **misleading** information is given, does the related procedure about misleading information comply with the requirements outlined in the ETC-GW protocol? (see Protocol, under [deception](#))
- ☒ Yes → continue with checklist
- ☐ No → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)

11. Will the standard regulations on anonymity and privacy as outlined in the ETC-GW protocol be observed in the proposed research? (see Protocol, under [anonymity](#))

☒ Yes → continue with checklist

☐ No → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)

Doing the research

12. Will the research be done at an external organisation (e.g. school, hospital)?

☒ No → continue with checklist

☐ Yes → Do you have written permission from this organisation?

☐ Yes → continue with checklist (**add document with permission**)

☐ No → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)

13. Have the following four requirements been complied with for the proposed research?:

1. Will there be a contact person for participants who have questions about the research, and will participants be informed of this?

☒ Yes → continue with checklist

☐ No → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)

2. Will participants be clearly informed about to whom they can voice complaints about their participation and how these complaints will be dealt with?

☒ Yes → continue with checklist

☐ No → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)

3. Will participants be completely free to participate in the study and to stop participating at any moment they want to and for whatever reason?

☒ Yes → continue with checklist

☐ No → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)

4. Prior to the study, will participants and/or their representatives be informed about the goal, nature, length, risks of and objections to the study? (see [explanation about information and permission](#) and [sample documents](#))

☒ Yes → continue with checklist

☐ No → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)

☒ If you have answered 'yes' to all four requirements, continue the checklist (submit: the **document of consent** you will be using, e.g. as part of your proposed survey or questionnaire)

☐ No → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)

14. This checklist is about research involving the participation of people as sources of data.

Nowadays, many studies are conducted using internet data. If the proposed research uses data that is available publicly on the internet, then in principle you do not need permission from the people who posted this data online to use it. But you must still consider whether or not making such data available or public through your research could disproportionately harm the interests of the people that posted the data online in the first place. Is this the case in the proposed research?

☐ Yes → review by ETC-GW is necessary, end checklist → [go to review procedure](#)

☒ No → **checklist completed**
