The new logo of McDonald's - I'm lovin' it?

The influence of high vs. low context communication style on the effect of verbal anchoring in a new logo on brand attitude and purchase intention

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Abstract

This study examined to what extent the cultural dimension high vs. low context communication style had an influence on the effect of verbal anchoring in a new logo on Spanish and Dutch consumers' response (i.e. brand attitude and purchase intention). Since the effect of logo change is an ongoing discussion and verbal anchoring and high vs. low context communication style have never been combined in a study as far as the researcher of the current study knows, an experiment with a 3 (just the logo vs. logo with slogan vs. logo with explicit description) x 2 (Spanish vs. Dutch participants) between subject design was conducted. 108 Spanish and 128 Dutch participants filled out an online questionnaire to test four hypotheses based on three theories, namely 1) the theory of high vs. low context communication style, 2) the effect of verbal anchoring and 3) the complexity and comprehension in verbal anchoring (i.e. inverted u-turn). These hypotheses were as follows: H1 = Spanish participants are likely to use a high context communication style. H2 = Dutch participants are likely to use a low context communication style. H3 = Spanish participants (HC) are likely to have more positive brand evaluations when just the new logo is displayed whereas Dutch participants (LC) are likely to have more positive brand evaluations when a description is displayed underneath the new logo. H4 = Based on the inverted u-turn, both Spanish and Dutch participants are likely to have the most positive brand evaluations when a slogan (moderate completeness) is displayed underneath the new logo. Only H1 and H2 were supported. Indeed, Spanish participants performed a higher context communication style than their Dutch counterparts. Besides, Dutch participants had a higher purchase intention after seeing the new logo irrespective of the level of verbal anchoring that was used (just the logo, logo with slogan, logo with description). This study gave partial empirical evidence for the theory of Hall (1976) and Hall and Hall (1990) since it could label only two nationalities, namely the Dutch sample as LC and the Spanish sample as HC.

Keywords: high vs. low context communication style, verbal anchoring, logo change, brand attitude, purchase intention

Introduction

Nowadays dynamic strategies are required to manage organizations in a turbulent environment (Davis, Eisenhardt & Bingham, 2009; Stacey, 1992). Spaeth (2002) reports in his annual review of international companies that 1 out of 50 companies chooses to change its logo once a year even though this is an extensive and time consuming process (Banerjee, 2008). Kohli, Suri and Thakor (2002) describe motives for changing logos such as a changed company name or service emphasis. For example, Philips redesigned its logo in 2013 to enlighten the world that they adopted a new strategy of "being a diversified technology company, focused on improving people's lives through meaningful innovation" ("New logo and identity by and for Philips", 2013). This change was quite unnoticed, since only subtle features had changed, such as the flow of the wavy lines (see left Figure 1 retrieved from "Inside the Philips brand", 2013). On the contrary, BP chose in 2001 to drastically change its logo as a response to negative press regarding their safety standards ("BP parent company name change following AGM approval", 2001) (see right Figure 1 retrieved from "BP brand and logo", 2001). Thus, there are different types of logo change as is highlighted in the study of Van Grinsven and Das (2016). On the one hand, small logo changes are to reinforce an organization's position in the market and to reach new target groups (e.g. Philips). On the other hand, big logo changes appear in times of changing brand identity and as an intentional removal of negative brand associations (e.g. BP). Also McDonalds experienced a big logo change in the past and has been used in this study (see Figure 2 retrieved from "International restaurants", 2010).

Figure 1. Logo change Philips and BP, before (left) and after (right).

Various studies have been done on the influence of logo change on consumers regarding brand recognition, brand associations, brand attitudes and brand evaluation (Das & Van Hooft, 2015; Van Grinsven & Das, 2016; Van Riel & Van den Ban, 2001; Walsh, Page Winterich & Mittal, 2010). Since a well-known brand has been used in this study, brand recognition and brand associations could resemble less importance compared to brand attitude and brand

evaluation and are therefore beyond the scope of this study. The current study takes into account brand evaluation (i.e. the total assessment of the brand) and sees brand attitude as a part of brand evaluation based on previous research (Anand & Sternthal, 1990; Spears & Singh, 2004). According to Anand and Sternthal (1990) brand evaluation consists of brand attitude and purchase intention. Spears and Singh (2004) use those two constructs of Anand and Sternthal (1990) and provide definitions for both concepts. Spears and Singh (2004, p. 55) describe brand attitude as "a relatively enduring, unidimensional summary evaluation of the brand that presumably energizes behavior." In extension, purchase intention implies "an individual's conscious plan to make an effort to buy a brand (Spears & Singh, 2004, p. 56)." This study focuses on these concepts since there seems to be an indecisive debate regarding logo change and its outcomes in terms of brand evaluation. On the one hand, some researchers find that logo changes evoke more negative brand evaluations (Van Grinsven & Das, 2016; Walsh et al., 2010), whereas others find that a changed logo increases positive brand evaluations on part of brand conscious consumers (Das & Van Hooft, 2015; Van Riel & Van den Ban, 2001). Van Grinsven and Das (2016) found that big logo changes take more time to process the meaning of the logo and brand conscious consumers have a more negative brand attitude when they were confronted with a big logo change multiple times. As a new logo reveals a renewed message from the company, a slogan or description of the change could potentially clarify the meaning of the new logo, i.e. words could help consumers to understand an image (Barthes, 1977), a new logo in this case as will be discussed later.

The aim of the present study is to determine to what extent the cultural dimension of high vs. low context communication style has an influence on the effect of verbal anchoring in a new logo on brand attitude and purchase intention (i.e. brand evaluation) of participants originated from the Spain or the Netherlands. First of all, the concept of verbal anchoring will be explained. Second of all, the cultural influence in advertising will be clarified and why it is important to do cross-cultural research. Next the cultural dimension of high vs. low context communication style and its research importance will be made clear which will lead to the hypotheses of this study. Last of all, the case of McDonald's will be outlined and will eventually result in the research question of the study.

Verbal anchoring and logos

Since the seminal work of Barthes (1977) suggests that words can be helpful to understand images, more specifically in his study press photos, many studies have focused on this so-called verbal anchoring. Verbal anchoring can be described as verbal elements that clarify and assist

to find the meaning of a visual or image (e.g. trope, metaphor) (Barthes, 1977). Besides, verbal anchoring has been investigated in advertising as well. Philips (2000) conducted an experiment regarding printed advertising in which three brands were visualized as pictorial metaphors and three levels of verbal anchoring were presented, namely complete verbal anchoring (i.e. headline that explicates the ad message), moderate verbal anchoring (i.e. headline that gives a hint of the ad message) and no headline at all. Philips (2000) showed that when the amount of verbal anchoring increased, the amount of comprehension increased too. Also people liked the ad more when moderate verbal anchoring was used. The latter corresponds to the "inverted u-turn" of Philips and McQuarrie (2004) which implies that when people understand the metaphor, the more complex the visual metaphor, the more appreciation (i.e. evaluation, purchase intention) it will provoke. However, when people do not understand the metaphor (i.e. when the metaphor is too complex), appreciation and purchase intention will decline. A more recent experiment of Bergkvist, Eiderbäck and Palombo (2012) also used three levels of verbal anchoring in digital advertising, but showed that the complete headline (i.e. highest level of headline completeness in ads) caused more comprehension (cf. Philips, 2000) and was positively related to brand attitude. Besides visual metaphors, logos are also "images" (Walsh et al., 2010) which a company uses in its advertising. A logo is important to a company since it adds value to the reputation of the company and therefore the management of a company is willing to spend a high amount of money per year on the development of the logo (Van Riel & Van de Ban, 2001). As mentioned earlier, companies could choose to change their logo for several reasons and researchers appear to be in conflict about the question whether a logo change has positive or negative outcomes in terms of consumers' response. As a company wants positive reactions from its customers, it could consider several strategies before spreading the new logo. Therefore, the current study will use three different levels of verbal anchoring as potential strategic choices to facilitate the communication of the new logo to the outside world, namely an explicit description including the new message of the company and how the logo has changed, a slogan or no description at all underneath the new logo (i.e. "just the logo") which are comparable to the three levels used in Bergkvist et al. (2012) and Philips (2000). The present study explores whether the three levels of verbal anchoring will be appreciated differently by the consumers and therefore could give recommendations to companies with a changed logo and that are struggling with their marketing strategy to introduce their new logo to the outside world. The next section will describe the potential cultural influence on perception of consumers, which could be important for companies that operate globally and try to make a logo work within a certain culture.

Cultural influence in advertising

Various studies have focused on differences between people originated from different countries and cultures in response to advertising. For example, Le Pair and Van Mulken (2008) compared three groups originated from three different countries, namely France, Spain and the Netherlands and found that the French and Spanish samples found ads with metaphors less complex and liked those more than their Dutch counterparts. In contrast, Van Mulken, Le Pair and Forceville (2010) used similar samples and revealed no differences between those nationalities in response to visual metaphors in ads. Furthermore, Van der Lans et al. (2009, p. 25) found that "a standardized core logo can work globally" to response of people from ten different countries. Since these studies made a comparison between different countries and found differences which they attributed to Hofstede's cultural dimensions (1980; 1983), namely *uncertainty avoidance, power distance, individualism-collectivism* and *masculinity-femininity* (Van der Lans et al., 2009) or anecdotes and observations of Hall's (1976) cultural variable high vs. low context communication style (Le Pair & Van Mulken, 2008; Van Mulken et al., 2010) without empirically testing a cultural dimension or assumption of cultural variance, these studies are cross-national and not cross-cultural as culture and nationality are not the same (Matsumoto & Yoo, 2006). Thus, the question remains whether culture provokes differences in perception and response towards advertising and therefore conducting adequate cross-cultural research is essential.

Cultural theories such as Hofstede (1980; 1983) have been criticized on validity and Hall's (1976) cultural variable high vs. low context communication style has been criticized on the lack of empirical evidence (e.g. Cardon, 2006; Hermeking, 2006; McSweeney, 2002; Patton, 2002; Schwartz, 1994; Smith, 2002; Smith & Bond, 1999). Matsumoto and Yoo (2006, p. 236) emphasize that present cross-cultural studies should be "linkage studies", in which the methods enable the researcher to empirically test the cultural variable and eventually link it to the observed differences of the other tested variables where it was hypothesized to be responsible for those differences. Otherwise, researchers are just replacing country names with cultural dimension labels (i.e. *cultural attribution fallacy*). This reveals the thin line between cross-national and cross-cultural research. Van der Lans et al. (2009) say that future research should indeed include cultural values, which are subjected to empirical tests.

Many researchers explicitly emphasize the importance of empirical studies that investigate the assumption of Hall (1976) for cultures being classified as high or low context communicators. For example, Kittler, Rygl and Mackinnon (2011, p. 78) state that all studies that used the traditional country classification of high vs. low context communication style of

Hall (1976) and Hall and Hall (1990) are based "on less than adequate evidence" (i.e. anecdotal-evidence based classification and no empirical evidence). In extension, Warner-Søderholm (2013) found empirical evidence for variation between individuals on high vs. low context communication style within the Norwegian business setting which does not correspond with Hall's (1976) assumption of (national) cultures being classified as either high or low context communicators. Therefore, the present study empirically tests the cultural dimension high vs. low context communication style as will be explained in the next section.

High vs. low context communication style

The theory of Hall (1976) embodies that cultures differ in communication styles as high context cultures (HC) are cultures that communicate through "communication or a message in which most of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message (p. 79)." Furthermore, people from HC cultures are accustomed to implicit messages (e.g. using metaphors) and consider receiving too much information as if someone is talking down to them (Cardon, 2008). In contrast, low context cultures (LC) are cultures that communicate with messages in which "the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code (Hall, 1976, p. 79)." In other words, communication between people from a LC is more explicit (e.g. using less figurative and indirect language such as metaphors). Also people from LC cultures consider receiving much information as being detailed and complete (Cardon, 2008). Consequently, people from a higher context culture perceive messages where the context in which something has been said is important and many things are left unspoken as less complex and like these messages more than people from a lower context culture.

Several studies have investigated HC vs. LC by comparing two or more countries which differ on context communication styles based on the anecdotal evidence of Hall (1976) and Hall and Hall (1990), but did not empirically test those countries on the cultural dimension (Kowner & Wiseman, 2003; Nishimura, Nevgi & Tella, 2008; Singelis & Brown, 1995; Würtz, 2005; Yang, 2016). A recent study of Warner-Søderholm (2013) gives an overview of quantitative studies of HC vs. LC in which Richardson and Smith (2007) have developed the most recent scale for empirically testing the cultural dimension high vs. low context communication style. The scale of Richardson and Smith (2007) is based on Ohashi (2000), but those two differ in level of posed questions, because in Ohashi's scale (2000) every item starts with "it is generally considered that…". Bresnahan et al. (2002, p. 140) commented that the scale of Ohashi (2000) measures "general societal norms about what is an acceptable style for communicating while

certain types of communication may be much dependent on contextual and relational factors."
As a result, instead of measuring how people from a certain culture in general prefer a communication style (HC or LC), Richardson and Smith (2007) developed a scale by adapting five items of Ohashi (2000) and adding twelve new ones to target the individual level of preference for high vs. low context communication style. An example of an item in Ohashi (2000) is "I believe that in *(a country name)* it is generally considered that a listener should be able to understand what a speaker is trying to say even if the speaker does not say everything he or she intends to communicate." Richardson and Smith (2007) modified this item as follows "Listeners should be able to understand what a speaker is trying to express, even when the speaker does not say everything they intend to communicate." The study of Ohashi (2000) has used the scale of Gudykunst et al. (1996) and changed it from two dimensional into unidimensional based on the theory of Hall (1976) in which high vs. low context communication style was imagined as a "continuous single dimension (Ohashi, 2000, p. 30)." Both Gudykunst et al. (1996) and Richardson and Smith (2007) confirmed by empirically testing that the Japanese sample performed a higher context communication style than their American counterparts. However, putting those two countries on two extremes would be an overstatement since Japanese scored in the midpoint of the continuum (Richardson & Smith, 2007). Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) have used nine items of the 17-items scale of Richardson and Smith (2007) and their scale turned out to be just below the level of acceptance of internal consistency ($\alpha = .68$). Therefore, the current study uses the entire scale of Richardson and Smith (2007) since the coefficient alpha has been questionable when partially using the scale. The study of Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) was the first one that empirically tested high vs. low context communication style and its effect in advertising in two countries which showed that Belgians (a medium context culture (based on anecdotal evidence of Claes & Gerritsen, 2011)) found the ads (all included visual metaphors) less complex and liked the ads more than their Dutch counterparts (a low context culture). Alongside Kittler et al. (2011) and Warner-Søderholm (2013), Hornikx and Le Pair (2017, p. 8) conclude their study with "it is hoped that more research attention will be paid to high vs. low context communication style in the area of culture and advertising".

Therefore, the current study investigates, as mentioned earlier, the influence of high vs. low context communication style on the effect of verbal anchoring in a new logo on brand attitude and purchase intention (i.e. brand evaluation). Consequently, this study differs from previous studies since the current study investigates the influence of high vs. low context

communication style in the case of a new logo instead of advertisements (Hornikx & Le Pair, 2017) and incorporates a behavioral intention, namely purchase intention.

Furthermore, according to Hall and Hall (1990), Spanish people tend to be high context communicators (p. 6) whereas Dutch people tend to be low context communicators (p. 7). Thus, those two countries differ on the continuum of high vs. low context communication style and it could be interesting to study samples of those two countries since there seems to be a gap between researchers who state that countries in Western Europe are quite homogeneous and form one cultural cluster (Fiske, Kitayama, Markus & Nisbett, 1998; Smith & Schwartz, 1997) and those who believe there are cultural differences between countries in Western Europe (De Mooij, 2001; Hofstede, 2001;). Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) have already empirically tested a Dutch sample on high vs. low context communication style whereas a Spanish sample has never been used to empirically test whether they belong to a HC or not, as far as the researcher of the current study knows. Nonetheless, including Spanish people in the sample is interesting since Aaker, Benet-Martínez and Garolera (2001) have found that Spanish participants (assumed to be from a HC) perceive logos differently and associate logos with other values (e.g. *passion*) compared to participants from the United States which is also a LC just like the Netherlands according to Hall and Hall (1990, p. 7). These findings could suggest that culture has a potential influence on the perception and communication (in this case logos), therefore this study includes Dutch participants and Spanish participants to determine whether cultural differences (on high vs. low context communication style) between those countries exist and whether or not the cultural deviance could provoke differences in perception of a new logo (i.e. brand attitude and purchase intention). Lastly, this study follows the three levels of verbal anchoring of Bergkvist et al. (2012) and Philips (2000) (i.e. different degrees of completeness; complete headline, moderate headline, no headline), but will do this in the context of a new logo (i.e. explicit description, a slogan, "just a logo") instead of headlines above pictorial metaphors in ads. In the next section all previous parts will be combined and summed up and eventually lead to the hypotheses.

The current study

As far as the researcher of the current study is aware of, studies have never combined high vs. low context communication style with the effect of different levels of verbal anchoring in a new logo on brand attitude and purchase intention (i.e. brand evaluation). However, following the anecdotal evidence and corresponding classification of high vs. low context communication style of Hall (1976), people from HC cultures could appreciate a new, changed logo more

without any description (i.e. "just the logo"), because something is left to the imagination and does not explicitly describe everything that is happening and therefore does not frame people's interpretation of the message. In contrast, people from LC cultures might respond more positively towards a new logo when the transformation is explicitly described. Alongside those two levels of verbal anchoring (i.e. just the logo and logo with an explicit description), a slogan appears to be the midpoint and could potentially be appreciated by both cultures based on the inverted u-turn of Philips and McQuarrie (2004), because a slogan is a form of moderate completeness (Bergkvist et al., 2012) and could therefore be perceived as more complex than a complete headline (i.e. an explicit description), but less complex than no headline at all (i.e. just the logo). In this case it is important to note that people only like the logo with the slogan (i.e. moderate verbal anchoring) the most when they understand it. The inverted u-turn was also largely confirmed by Van Hooft, Van Mulken and Nederstigt (2012) since they found that people who did not recognize and did not understand the metaphor, did not appreciate the *replacements* which were the most complex metaphors in the experiment. Furthermore, people understood the *juxtapositions* (simple metaphors) best and juxtapositions and *fusions* (moderate complex metaphors) provoked a higher purchase intention.

Alongside the cross-cultural level, the current study takes into consideration both the national and the individual level of high vs. low context communication style. When the expected division of Hall and Hall (1990) classifying the Spanish sample as HC and Dutch sample as LC turns out to be true (see H1 and H2), nationality and culture will be seen as equivalent constructs in further analyses and be used to determine whether there are differences between Spanish and Dutch participants on both national and cultural level (H3 and H4) regarding brand attitude and purchase intention (i.e. brand evaluation) (see Design). When the expected classification of Hall and Hall (1990) does not appear, the individual level (cf. Hornikx & Le Pair, 2017; Richardson & Smith, 2007) of high vs. low context communication style could still be used as a moderator and its influence could still be tested on the relationship between verbal anchoring and brand evaluation. As a result, four hypotheses are proposed in which H1 and H2 test the classification of Hall and Hall (1990) and H3 tests the interaction between high vs. low context communication style and verbal anchoring on brand evaluation. Lastly, H4 tests whether the inverted u-turn of Philips and McQuarrie (2004) is applicable in this study.

H1: Spanish participants (HC) are likely to use a high context communication style.

H2: Dutch participants (LC) are likely to use a low context communication style.

H3: Spanish participants (HC) are likely to have more positive brand evaluations when just the new logo is displayed whereas Dutch participants (LC) are likely to have more positive brand evaluations when a description is displayed underneath the new logo.

H4: Based on the inverted u-turn, both Spanish and Dutch participants are likely to have the most positive brand evaluations when a slogan (moderate completeness) is displayed underneath the new logo.

The present study follows the claim of Matsumoto and Yoo (2006) to empirically test whether the assumptions of Hall and Hall (1990) on high vs. low context communication style are valid (in this study on Spanish and Dutch participants) as not many studies have done this (except Hornikx & Le Pair, 2017). Furthermore, researchers have mainly used different degrees of verbal anchoring in the context of visual metaphors in ads (e.g. Bergkvist et al., 2012), therefore this study will use different degrees of verbal anchoring (i.e. completeness) in a context of a new logo. Since the outcomes of a changed logo are still an ongoing discussion (e.g. Das & Van Hooft, 2015; Van Grinsven & Das, 2016) and logo changes might fail (Andrivet, 2015), multinational companies could use some advice regarding what kind of strategy could be applicable when they are changing their logos and at the same time want their customers from different cultures to evaluate their brand positively. In short, the present study examines whether and to what extent the cultural variable high vs. low context communication style has an influence on the effect of verbal anchoring in a new logo on brand attitude and purchase intention of participants from Spain and the Netherlands. The next and last part of the Introduction describes the case of McDonald's that has been used in this study to simulate a changed logo.

The case of McDonald's

As mentioned earlier, many international companies have changed their logo for several reasons. Such is the case of McDonald's which substituted green for the traditional red color behind the golden arches in Europe (see Figure 2). Several studies show that companies that use the color green are often associated with the environment and environmentally friendly actions (Labrecque, Patrick & Milne, 2013; Pancer, McShane & Noseworthy, 2015). Macpherson-Lane (2009) states that the purpose of the logo change of McDonald's Europe is indeed to show the world the company's concern about natural resources and position itself as an organization which operates environmentally friendly (e.g. recycling used oil and transforming it into biodiesel fuel). Hoger Beek, vice chairman of McDonald's Germany adds: "With this new appearance we want to clarify our responsibility for the preservation of natural resources. In the future we will put an even larger focus on that (Macpherson-Lane, 2009)." Based on the research of Van Grinsven and Das (2016) this change could be categorized as a big logo change (cf. Logo change of BP) since McDonald's is "tired of being held up as an example of corporate evil and greed" according to Barriaux (2007) and strikes back with environmental and social initiatives to prove that the company cares. The green logo and the green color in the restaurant visually help to set up this new identity (Barriaux, 2007). The current study uses the brand McDonald's because it is a multinational that is operating globally and is well-known in both the Spanish and Dutch market. The products of the brand can be categorized as low involvement products based on the Rossiter-Percy Grid (Rossiter, Percy & Donovan, 1991). Similarly, Das and Van Hooft (2015) used Coca-Cola and Ben & Jerry's (i.e. brands of low involvement products) and found that a logo change increases positive brand evaluation. Therefore, it is expected that the new logo of McDonald's increases more positive brand evaluation as well and potentially even more with the different strategies to promote the new logo (levels of verbal anchoring) and the moderating influence of the cultural dimension high vs. low context communication style. The new logo of McDonald's will be displayed in three different ways, "just the logo", the logo with a slogan or the logo with an explicit description about the logo change, which literally includes the transformation of the background of the logo from red into green and promotes a new image as being a company that concerns about environmental issues (see Materials). By using the new logo of McDonald's, the following research question is proposed:

Research question: To what extent perceive Dutch and Spanish participants the new logo of McDonald's differently?

Figure 2. Logo change of McDonald's, before (left) and after (right).

Method

Materials

The first independent variable in this research was verbal anchoring which consisted of three levels: just the logo, the logo with a slogan and the logo with an explicit description. All subjects only got to see the new green logo of McDonald's (right one in Figure 2) since this study did not focus on the logo change itself, but tried to find potential strategies that could affect the launch of a new, changed logo positively in terms of consumer's response. Except for participants who confronted the "just the logo"-condition, participants got more information underneath the new logo by means of a slogan or an explicit description. The slogan was as follows: "Think green. Do green. Be green." (Note: this is a translation in English. The subjects received a description which was in Dutch or Spanish). Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, an explicit description (see Figure 3) consisted of a literal reference to the transformation (i.e. "swapping its traditional red backdrop for a deep hunter green") and promoting a new image (i.e. "to promote a more eco-friendly image in Europe.") with examples (i.e. "In recent years the company has warmed to "greener" practices, including environmentally friendly refrigeration and converting used oil into biodiesel fuel.") (also translated in Dutch or Spanish). The three conditions were interconnected mainly because of the color green since the color green is related to the environment (Labrecque et al., 2013; Pancer et al., 2015) and McDonald's aspired for "a more eco-friendly image" (Macpherson-Lane, 2009). Just the logo only inherited the green logo, whereas the logo with slogan consisted of the green logo and mentioning green as a state of mind or being. Lastly, the logo with an explicit description literally related the color green with being eco-friendly. In other words, through these three levels of verbal anchoring the relationship between the color green and eco-friendly operating has been made explicitly with just the logo as most implicit form and logo with description as most explicit form. The translations of the slogans and the explicit descriptions were done by a native Dutch and a native Spanish speaker. The three conditions are displayed in Appendix I.

The second independent variable was nationality which consisted of two levels, namely Dutch or Spanish. Consequently, all participants received the questionnaire in a language corresponding to their mother tongue (i.e. Dutch or Spanish).

"McDonald's is going green - swapping its traditional red backdrop for a deep hunter green - to promote a more eco-friendly image in Europe. […] In recent years the company has warmed to "greener" practices, including environmentally friendly refrigeration and converting used oil into biodiesel fuel." (Macpherson-Lane, 2009)

Figure 3. An explicit description of the logo change of McDonald's.

Covariates

According to Geuens and De Pelsmacker (2017) it is advisable to take other factors that could potentially have an influence into consideration when an existing brand is used. Therefore, two covariates were incorporated to discover whether those factors had an influence on the effect of verbal anchoring on brand evaluation or not. Firstly, a 7-point Likert scale (1 = "Totally disagree", 7 = "Totally agree") was used with two items measuring perceived complexity of the logo ("The message of the logo is easy to understand" and "The message of the logo is simple") based on the study of Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) who found that people who perceived an ad as less complex, also liked it more. A relatively short scale for perceived complexity was used because of the minimal demand on participants (Rossiter, 2002) and the fact that the entire scale of Richardson and Smith (2007) was included in the current research and is considerably long. The reliability of perceived complexity of the logo comprising two items was good: α = .80.

Secondly, satisfaction with purchase experience was measured by asking first if the participants had ever bought something from the brand. In case of an affirmative answer, questions regarding satisfaction with purchase experience were asked by using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = "Totally disagree", 7 = "Totally agree") with four items ("I am satisfied with my decision to purchase from this brand", "My choice to purchase from this brand was a wise one", "I think I did the right thing by buying from this brand" and "I am happy that I purchased from this brand") based on Oliver (1980) which was validated by Anderson and Srinivasan (2003). This covariate was incorporated because when people are not satisfied with the product they bought from a particular brand, their overall evaluation (brand attitude and purchase intention) could be more negative as well. The reliability of satisfaction with purchase experience comprising four items was good: α = .90. Both scales were translated in Spanish and Dutch by a native Dutch speaker and a native Spanish speaker (see Appendix II).

Subjects

184 Dutch subjects and 150 Spanish subjects entered the questionnaire, but only 128 Dutch subjects and 108 Spanish subjects completed the survey which resulted in a non-response of 30% within the Dutch sample and 28% within the Spanish sample. Only the subjects who completed the entire questionnaire were used for further analyses and the ones who did not complete the survey were excluded.

The Dutch sample consisted of 22 male respondents and 106 female respondents between the age of 17 and 55 ($M = 24.83$, $SD = 7.89$). 75% of the Dutch respondents was higher educated (*HBO* or *WO*). A one-way analysis of variance showed no significant effect of verbal

anchoring (condition) on age ($F(2,124) = 1.13$, $p = .327$). In other words, the three conditions did not differ significantly regarding age within the Dutch sample. A Chi-square showed that the three conditions did not differ significantly regarding educational level within the Dutch sample (χ^2 (4) = 3.88, $p = .422$). Another Chi-square test showed that the three conditions did not differ significantly regarding gender within the Dutch sample (χ^2 (2) = 2.55, $p = .280$). As a result, the Dutch respondents were evenly divided over the three conditions.

The Spanish sample consisted of 33 male respondents and 75 female respondents between the age of 18 and 49 ($M = 22.28$, $SD = 5.18$). 94% of the Spanish respondents was higher educated (*Escuela universitaria* or *Enseñanza universitaria*). A one-way analysis of variance showed no significant effect of verbal anchoring (condition) on age ($F(2,105) < 1$). In other words, the three conditions did not differ significantly regarding age within the Spanish sample. A Chi-square showed that the three conditions did not differ significantly regarding educational level within the Spanish sample (χ^2 (2) = 2.76, $p = .251$). Another Chi-square test showed that the three conditions did not differ significantly regarding gender within the Spanish sample (χ^2 (2) = .87, $p = .648$). As a result, the Spanish respondents were evenly divided over the three conditions.

A one-way analysis of variance showed a significant effect of nationality on age ($F(1,233) = 8.24$, $p = .004$). In other words, the Dutch and Spanish sample differed significantly regarding age. Furthermore, a Chi-square test showed that the Dutch and Spanish subjects differed significantly regarding educational level (χ^2 (2) = 16.50, $p < .001$). Another Chi-square test showed that the two samples differed significantly regarding gender (χ^2 (1) = 5.86, $p = .016$). In sum, the two samples differed since the Spanish sample was on average younger in age, consisted of more people who were higher educated and more male participants than the Dutch sample.

Design

A 3 (just the logo vs. logo with slogan vs. logo with explicit description) x 2 (Spanish vs. Dutch participants) between subject design was conducted. Subjects were confronted with only the new logo of McDonald's (just the logo) or accompanied by a slogan or an explicit description. The assumption of Hall and Hall (1990) labelling Spanish people as HC interlocutors and Dutch people as LC interlocutors was proved to be true for both the Spanish and Dutch sample of this study (see Results, p. 19). Consequently, nationality and culture (high vs. low context communication style) were seen as equivalent constructs instead of two variables (an independent variable and a moderator) in the rest of the study (see Figure 4).
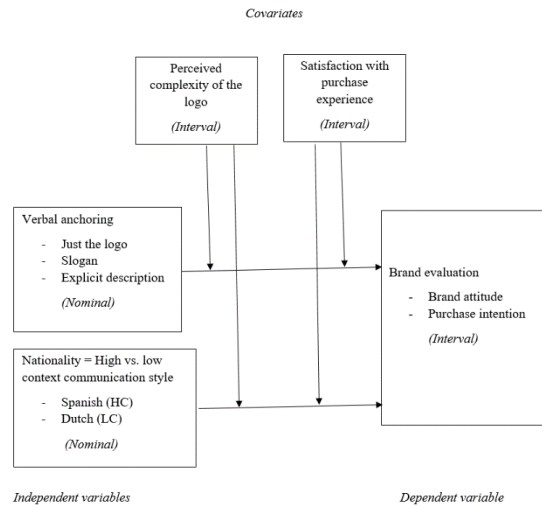
Figure 4. The Analytical Model: schematic overview of the potential relationship between the independent and dependent variables and the interaction with potential covariates.

Instruments

The dependent variable was operationalized by using two scales in the questionnaire. A 7-point Likert scale (1 = "Totally disagree", 7 = "Totally agree") was used with five items measuring brand attitude, namely *I find this brand* "appealing", "good", "pleasant", "favorable" and "likable" based on the study of Spears and Singh (2004). The reliability of brand attitude comprising five items was good: α = .85. Furthermore, purchase intention was measured with a 7-point Likert scale (1 = "Totally disagree", 7 = "Totally agree") (also based on Spears & Singh, 2004) consisting of five items ("In the future I will definitely buy products from this brand", "I definitely intend to buy products from this brand", "My intention to buy products from this brand is high", "I definitely buy products from this brand", "I will probably buy products from this brand"). The reliability of purchase intention comprising five items was good: α = .93. Both scales were translated in Spanish and Dutch by a native Spanish speaker and a native Dutch speaker (see Appendix III).

Level of context communication style (high vs. low) was measured by using the 17-item scale of Richardson and Smith (2007). Instead of using a 5-point scale as Richardson and Smith (2007) have done, a 7-point Likert scale (1 = "Totally disagree", 7 = "Totally agree") was used in this study to perform a coherent study with only 7-point Likert scales. The reliability of high vs. low context communication style comprising seventeen items was acceptable: α = .73. A Spanish translation of the scale was retrieved from Van Hooft (2011) and a Dutch translation of the scale was based on Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) which are both visualized in Appendix IV.

Procedure

Although both samples were retrieved by snowball sampling, the selection of the subjects differed across samples. The Dutch sample was retrieved from the direct and indirect network of the researcher. However, the Spanish sample was retrieved by contacting Spanish professors of different universities in Spain through email and asking them if they would randomly pass on the questionnaire to their Spanish students. Subjects received the link to the questionnaire made in Qualtrics via digital media (i.e. E-mail, WhatsApp or Facebook). The respondents did not receive any reward for participating in this study. When they opened the link, they first were thanked for their participation and introduced to the aim of the research and the content of the questionnaire. Besides, information regarding the sequence of the questions, what was expected of them and guaranteed anonymity was given. After the introduction the new logo was directly displayed randomly with an explicit description, a slogan or just the logo. Subjects were asked whether they recognized the brand or not. Consequently, the subjects answered questions regarding perceived complexity of the logo, satisfaction with purchase experience, brand attitudes and purchase intentions (i.e. their overall opinion: brand evaluation). Next, the subjects responded to questions regarding the cultural dimension high vs. low context communication style. Lastly, general questions about their age, gender, education and nationality were asked. The procedure was the same for every subject who filled out the questionnaire individually. The questionnaire took approximately five minutes to complete and was available online between 2 and 16 May 2017.

Statistical treatment

In this study a one-way analysis of variance was conducted to test whether the Spanish sample could be labelled as HC interlocutors and the Dutch sample as LC interlocutors based on Hall and Hall (1990) (H1 and H2). Furthermore, two two-way analyses (H3 and H4) of variance were used to measure whether the level of verbal anchoring in a new logo and nationality (and thus the cultural variable high vs. low context communication style) had an influence on brand attitude and purchase intention (i.e. brand evaluation). In the two-way analyses two covariates (perceived complexity of the logo and satisfaction with purchase experience) were included to determine whether or not those would influence the effect of verbal anchoring in a new logo and nationality (i.e. high vs. low context communication style) on brand evaluation.

Results

A one-way analysis of variance showed a significant effect of nationality (Dutch or Spanish) on context culture (low or high) ($F(1,234) = 14.43$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .154$). The effect size was calculated with the statistical program G*Power 3.192 (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner & Lang, 2009). Spanish subjects scored higher ($M = 4.44$, $SD = .60$) on the high vs. low context communication style scale of Richardson and Smith (2007) than the Dutch subjects ($M = 4.13$, $SD = .62$). In Table 1 the mean minimum and maximum scores for high vs. low context communication style are displayed. Based on the total minimum and maximum score a threshold value of 4.15 was composed by adding up the total minimum and maximum score, and dividing it by two. All scores below this threshold value indicated a LC whereas scores higher than 4.15 indicated a HC. Therefore, H1 and H2 were supported and nationality and the cultural dimension high vs. low context communication style could be seen as equivalent constructs. Consequently, in further analysis the construct nationality covers also the cultural dimension high vs. low context communication style to determine whether there are differences on both national and cultural level.

Table 1.   Mean minimum and maximum scores for context culture (1 = low, 7 = high) of Spanish and Dutch subjects.

| | Context culture | |
	Minimum	Maximum
Spanish (n = 108)	3.18	5.82
Dutch (n = 128)	2.47	5.71
Total	2.47	5.82

A two-way analysis of variance with nationality (i.e. high vs. low context communication style) and verbal anchoring (just the logo, logo with slogan or logo with description) as factors on purchase intention was conducted after controlling for perceived complexity of the logo and satisfaction with purchase experience. There was a significant main effect of nationality (i.e. high vs. low context communication style) on purchase intention ($F(1,224) = 26.33$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .105$). The Dutch subjects had a higher purchase intention ($M = 5.00$, $SD = 1.46$) than the Spanish subjects ($M = 4.43$, $SD = 1.72$) (see Table 2). Note that in Table 2 both samples are smaller, because subjects who indicated that they never bought something from the brand were excluded since they could not answer the questions regarding satisfaction with purchase experience which was incorporated as a covariate in this analysis.

Table 2. Means and standard deviations for purchase intention (1 = totally disagree, 7 = totally agree) of Spanish and Dutch subjects.

| | Purchase intention | |
	M	SD
Spanish (n = 107)	4.43	1.72
Dutch (n = 125)	5.00	1.46
Total	4.74	1.61

Verbal anchoring was not found to have a significant main effect on purchase intention ($F(2,224) < 1$). The interaction effect between nationality (i.e. high vs. low context communication style) and verbal anchoring was not statistically significant ($F(2,224) < 1$). The covariate, satisfaction with purchase experience, was significantly related to purchase intention ($F(1,224) = 192.89$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .463$). The covariate, perceived complexity of the logo, was not significantly related to purchase intention ($F(1,224) < 1$).

A two-way analysis of variance with nationality (i.e. high vs. low context communication style) and verbal anchoring as factors on brand attitude was conducted after controlling for perceived complexity of the logo and satisfaction with purchase experience. There was no significant main effect of nationality (i.e. high vs. low context communication style) on brand attitude ($F(1,224) = 2.60$, $p = .108$, $\eta^2 = .011$) (see Table 3). In Table 3 the samples are smaller for the same reason as in Table 2. Verbal anchoring was not found to have a significant main effect on brand attitude ($F(2,224) = 2.10$, $p = .124$, $\eta^2 = .018$). The interaction effect between nationality (i.e. high vs. low context communication style) and verbal anchoring was not statistically significant ($F(2,224) < 1$). Thus, both H3 and H4 were not supported. The covariate, satisfaction with purchase experience, was significantly related to brand attitude ($F(1,224) = 175.66$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .44$). The covariate, perceived complexity of the logo turned out to be significantly related to brand attitude ($F(1,224) = 13.82$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .058$).

Table 3. Means and standard deviations for brand attitude (1 = totally disagree, 7 = totally agree) of Spanish and Dutch subjects.

| | Brand attitude | |
	M	SD
Spanish (n = 107)	4.58	1.27
Dutch (n = 125)	4.55	1.26
Total	4.57	1.26

<h1 style="text-align:center">Conclusion and Discussion</h1>

Conclusion

The aim of the current study was to explore to what extent high vs. low context communication style would have had an influence on the effect of verbal anchoring in a new logo on brand attitude and purchase intention (i.e. brand evaluation) of participants originated from Spain and the Netherlands. First of all, it appeared that the Spanish sample had higher scores on high vs. low context communication style scale of Richardson and Smith (2007) whereas the Dutch sample had lower scores which met the expectations of the researcher based on the classification of Hall and Hall (1990) labelling the Spanish participants as high context interlocutors and the Dutch participants as low context interlocutors (H1 and H2).

Following this classification, hypotheses were proposed combining the cultural variable high vs. low context communication style with the level of verbal anchoring. It was expected that participants from a high context culture (i.e. Spain) would have had more positive brand attitudes and higher intentions to buy from a brand with a new logo when just the new logo was displayed (first part of H3). In contrast, participants from a low context culture (i.e. the Netherlands) were expected to have more positive brand attitudes and higher purchase intentions towards a brand with a new logo when an explicit description about the transformation of the logo was displayed underneath the new logo (second part of H3). Furthermore, it was expected that the new logo with a slogan could be most appreciated by both Spanish and Dutch participants (H4) based on the inverted u-turn of Philips and McQuarrie (2004), because a slogan equals moderate completeness (Bergkvist et al., 2012) and could therefore be more complex than an explicit description about the transformation of the logo and the attempt to promote a new image and less complex compared to the case when only the new logo was displayed. The inverted u-turn can only be performed as long as people understand the logo and its message. However, this study did not give enough statistical evidence to prove these hypotheses (H3 and H4). This study found that the Dutch sample had a higher intention to buy products from the brand compared to the Spanish sample, irrespective of the level of verbal anchoring that was used (just the logo, logo with slogan, logo with description). Since neither an effect of verbal anchoring on brand evaluation nor an interaction with nationality (i.e. high vs. low context communication style) was found, there cannot be inferred that Spanish participants had a higher purchase intention and a more positive attitude towards the new logo of McDonald's when just the logo was displayed or that Dutch participants had a higher purchase intention and a more positive attitude towards the new logo with an explicit description concerning its transformation and including an attempt to promote their new image

<div style="text-align:center">21</div>

(H3). Similarly, there cannot be concluded that both Spanish and Dutch participants had the highest purchase intentions and most positive attitudes towards the new logo accompanied with the slogan (H4).

In short, to answer the research question "To what extent perceive Dutch and Spanish participants the new logo of McDonald's differently?", not much can be concluded due to the lack of statistical evidence. There only can be concluded that people from the Dutch sample are more likely to buy products from McDonald's than people from the Spanish sample regardless of the version of the new logo they saw (just the logo, logo with slogan, logo with description). Even the found difference in high vs. low context communication style between the Spanish sample (HC interlocutors) and the Dutch sample (LC interlocutors) could not provoke differences in the perception towards the brand of McDonald's as will be outlined in the Discussion.

Discussion

The present study corresponded to the previous literature in case of the traditional classification of Hall and Hall (1990) since Spanish participants are more likely to use high context communication whereas Dutch participants are more likely to use low context communication. Despite the fact that this study found a confirmation that enabled the researcher to see nationality (Spanish vs. Dutch) and culture (high vs. low context communication style) as equivalent constructs, there cannot be inferred that culture has an influence on perception since both the Spanish and Dutch samples resembled a rather high context communication style and the difference between the Spanish and Dutch samples on high vs. low context communication style was not major neither was the influence of the cultural dimension on consumers' response (i.e. brand attitude and purchase intention) to lead to any other differences between the different levels of verbal anchoring (just the logo, logo with slogan, logo with description) and its effect on brand attitude and purchase intention. In short, in this study samples from two different countries differed on a cultural variable, but this cultural difference appeared not to be strong enough to lead to different perceptions between the Spanish and the Dutch sample towards the new logo of McDonald's. It only appeared that Dutch participants had a higher intention to buy products from the brand after seeing the new logo regardless of the fact that they saw only the logo or accompanied by a slogan or an explicit description.

As the current study found that the Spanish sample consisted of high context interlocutors and the Dutch sample of low context interlocutors based on a set threshold, partial empirical evidence was found for the classification of nationalities on the cultural variable high

vs. low context communication style by Hall & Hall (1990) since only two nationalities have been investigated in this study. Similarly, Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) found empirical evidence for Dutch participants as low context interlocutors and Belgian participants as medium context interlocutors which also corresponded to Hall & Hall (1990). However, Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) found that their Dutch sample seemed to perform a lower context communication style ($M = 2.92$, $SD = .52$) as opposed to the current study in which the Dutch participants resembled a rather high context communication style ($M = 4.13$, $SD = .62$), but still not as high as their Spanish counterparts ($M = 4.44$, $SD = .60$). This difference in level of context communication style of Dutch participants could be explained by the fact that Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) used a 5-point scale whereas the current study used a 7-point scale to measure high vs. low context communication style. Colman, Norris and Preston (1997) investigated the comparison of scores originated from a 5-point and a 7-point scale. By using the simple proportional transformation (Colman et al., 1997) which includes multiplying a 5-point score by 7/5 to find an equivalent 7-point score or multiplying a 7-point score by 5/7 to find an equivalent 5-point score, the high vs. low context communication style scores of the Dutch sample of Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) and the Dutch sample of the current study did not differ that much anymore. Since the current study used a 7-point scale, this has been taken as the norm and the 5-point score of Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) has been converted to a 7-point score. When 2.92 (5-point score of Hornikx & Le Pair, 2017) is multiplied by 7/5 a new high vs. low context communication style score of 4.08 on a 7-point scale arises which is comparable to the high vs. low context communication style score of the current study (4.13 on a 7-point scale). Even though the high vs. low context communication style scores of the Dutch samples turned out to be almost equal, Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) did find that differences in perceived complexity of ads with metaphors between nationalities could be explained by high vs. low context communication style, i.e. culture has an influence on perception. However, Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) used the individual high vs. low context communication style scores instead of the national scores in the current study. Future research should test both levels on the cultural dimension, regardless of the fact that the national scores correspond to the country classification of high vs. low context communication style of Hall and Hall (1990) and could be seen as equivalent constructs (as has been done in the current study). National scores are expected to represent the culture of all individuals in one particular nation, but people from the same nation could score differently on a cultural dimension (McCoy, Galletta & King, 2005). Therefore, to really understand individual behavior in a cross-cultural setting, an analysis on individual level is needed instead of only the national level. Other recommendations for future research will be given later in the Discussion.

Another result of the current study, as mentioned earlier, was the fact that people from the Dutch sample had a higher purchase intention after seeing the new logo (just the logo, logo with slogan, logo with description) compared to their Spanish counterparts. On the contrary, Van Hooft et al. (2012) found a higher purchase intention for Spanish participants in comparison to Dutch participants which suggests that purchase intention is not national nor culture-dependent. In the current study both Spanish and Dutch participants seemed to be rather positive than negative towards buying products from McDonald's. This result might have something to do with the fact that both countries were labelled as "high growth markets" in the company's 2016 annual report which are markets that have high potential in restaurant expansion and franchising and more restaurants are yet to come in both countries (McDonalds, 2017). Besides, both in the Dutch and Spanish sample the majority of the people were highly educated which might suggest they have more money to spend (Carnevale, Rose & Cheah, 2013) and therefore a higher purchase intention. Moreover, one study shows an increase in the consumption of fast food due to stress, costs and time-related barriers in the lives of full-time or part-time working adolescents (Escoto, Laska, Larson, Neumark-Sztainer & Hannan, 2012) which could suggest that the high purchase intention of both samples relates to a certain life style among youngsters.

Despite the previous results of the current study, several effects failed to appear. For instance, verbal anchoring had no influence on brand attitude nor purchase intention which means that people from both the Spanish and the Dutch samples were not more positive towards the brand after seeing one particular version of the new logo (just the logo or logo with slogan or logo with explicit description) compared to the other versions. Besides, the inverted u-turn of Philips and McQuarrie (2004) did not appear either which was also the case in Bergkvist et al. (2012). A possible explanation for the lack of influence of verbal anchoring and the inverted u-turn could be that both samples were already familiar with the brand. Everyone indicated that they recognized the logo and corresponding brand and 98% of the people that participated in the study consumed something from McDonald's in the past. Moreover, the influence of satisfaction with purchase experience on brand evaluation turned out to be major for both brand attitude and purchase intention. It could be that participants who ever bought products from McDonald's and were satisfied with it, were more positive towards the brand and were more likely to buy products from the brand in the future. In sum, the fact that a real, well-known brand was used and participants were in general positive about their consumption of the brand had the most influence on the brand evaluation of a Spanish and a Dutch sample. Furthermore, the logo change of McDonald's was not a recent one since the company changed its logo in

Europe eight years ago (Macpherson, 2009) and it could be that participants were already accustomed to the new green logo and it would not matter whether or not participants were provided with more information (slogan or explicit description) besides the new logo. Therefore, future researchers could use an unknown brand or fictitious brand to manipulate a logo change and investigate whether different strategies of promoting the new logo provokes differences in brand evaluation which is also advised by Schneider and Cornwell (2005) to avoid the fact that previous experience with an existing brand has a confounding effect.

Besides the use of only one real brand with its existing (new) logo might be a limitation, some other caveats in this study have to be taken into consideration as well. First of all, as was outlined in the Method, the Spanish sample and the Dutch sample were quite incomparable based on age, gender and educational level differences across the three conditions (just the logo, logo with slogan, logo with description) and therefore results might have been influenced based on those differences beforehand. Thus, all found results should be interpreted cautiously. Second of all, in this study the scale of Richardson and Smith (2007) was used to measure high vs. low context communication style. However, besides the fact that the scale is a decade old and not used many times, both Cardon (2008) and Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) stated that this scale should be adapted and rigorous measures should be employed to eventually develop a scale that enables researchers to classify more effectively people from different cultures or nationalities on the high vs. low context communication style continuum. For instance, it might be advisable to pay attention to different areas of context communication style besides only directness (explicit vs. implicit). It seems that the scale of Richardson and Smith (2007) might be merely based on directness (explicit vs. implicit) as is hinted by several items within the scale ("Intentions not explicitly stated can often be inferred from the context", "People should be able to understand the meaning of a statement by reading between the lines"). An example of an additional area to the high vs. low context communication style scale is the preference for communication channels, since HC interlocutors tend to prefer oral communication whereas LC interlocutors tend to prefer written communication (Cardon, 2008). By implementing other areas of context communication style in a scale, the cultural variable as a whole could be more represented within the scale and its results could be more refined.

In brief, for future researchers it could be beneficial to use an adapted version of the scale of Richardson and Smith (2007) to compare (and empirically test) different nationalities on high vs. low context communication style with samples that are more comparable on the basis of age, gender and educational level. Furthermore, it might be helpful to contrast nationalities that are two extremes, e.g. Morocco (Arabic country) and Germany (based on Hall

and Hall, 1990, p. 6-7) and/or to test the individual level of the participants on the cultural dimension (cf. Hornikx & Le Pair, 2017), to find an even bigger cultural difference that might lead to different results in perception which failed to appear in this study.

This study gave partial empirical evidence for the theory of Hall and Hall (1990) since only two nationalities were involved in this study. The people from the Spanish sample could be labelled as HC interlocutors whereas people from the Dutch sample could be labelled as LC interlocutors. Consequently, more research is needed regarding high vs. low context communication style (Hall, 1976; Hall & Hall, 1990) to cover the whole cultural dimension including all nationalities on the continuum that was merely based on observations. Furthermore, for companies it seems like it does not matter which strategy they should use to communicate their new logo (just the new logo, logo with slogan or logo with description) to people originated from different nationalities. However, since recent studies like Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) found that differences in perceptions between nationalities could be explained by the cultural variable (i.e. high vs. low context communication style), the question remains whether culture has an influence on people's perception and, as a consequence, multinationals should still take cultural differences into consideration when developing a communication strategy.

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Appendix I. The three conditions of verbal anchoring

Condition 1: Just the logo

Condition 2: Slogan

Spanish: Piensa verde. Haz verde. Sé verde.
Dutch: Denk groen. Doe groen. Wees groen.

Condition 3: Explicit description

Spanish: Esta organización va verde y cambia su fondo rojo tradicional por un verde oscuro para promocionar una imagen más respetuosa del medio ambiente en Europa. En los últimos años la compañía se ha esforzado en "prácticas más verdes", por ejemplo refrigeración ecológica y la conversión del aceite usado en biodiesel.

Dutch: Deze organisatie gaat groen en wisselt de traditionele rode achtergrond in voor een donkergroene kleur om een meer milieuvriendelijk imago te promoten in Europa. In de afgelopen jaren heeft dit bedrijf zich ingezet voor "groenere praktijken", zoals milieuvriendelijke koeling en het omzetten van gebruikte olie naar biodiesel.

Appendix II. Scales of covariates both translated in Spanish and Dutch

Covariate	English version	Translation in Spanish	Translation in Dutch
Perceived complexity of the logo	The message of the logo is easy to understand.	El mensaje del logotipo es fácil de entender.	De boodschap van het logo is makkelijk te begrijpen.
	The message of the logo is simple.	El mensaje del logotipo es simple.	De boodschap van het logo is eenvoudig.

English version is based on "The influence of high/low-context culture on perceived ad complexity and liking", by J. Hornikx & R. le Pair, 2017, *Journal of Global Marketing, 1-10.*

Covariate	English version	Translation in Spanish	Translation in Dutch
Satisfaction with purchase experience	I am satisfied with my decision to purchase from this brand.	Estoy satisfecho/a con mi compra de esta marca.	Ik ben tevreden met mijn aankoop van dit merk.
	My choice to purchase from this brand was a wise one.	La decisión para comprar algo de esta marca era una buena decisión.	Mijn keuze om iets te kopen van dit merk was een wijze keus.
	I think I did the right thing by buying from this brand.	He hecho bien para comprar algo de esta marca.	Ik heb er goed aan gedaan om wat te kopen van dit merk.
	I am happy that I purchased from this brand	Estoy contento/a de haber comprado algo de esta marca.	Ik ben blij dat ik wat heb gekocht van dit merk.

English version is based on "A cognitive model of the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction decisions", by R. L. Oliver, 1980, *Journal of Marketing Research,* 460-469.

Appendix III. Scales of brand attitude and purchase intention both translated in Spanish and Dutch

Dependent variable	English version	Translation in Spanish	Translation in Dutch
Brand attitude	I find this brand appealing.	Creo que esta marca es atractiva.	Ik vind dit merk aantrekkelijk.
	I find this a good brand.	Creo que esta marca es buena.	Ik vind dit een goed merk.
	I find this a pleasant brand.	Creo que esta marca es agradable.	Ik vind dit een aangenaam merk
	I find this a favorable brand.	Creo que esta marca es favorable.	Ik vind dit een voordelig merk.
	I find this brand likable.	Creo que esta marca es divertida.	Ik vind dit een leuk merk.

Dependent variable	English version	Translation in Spanish	Translation in Dutch
Purchase intention	In the future I will definitely buy products from this brand.	En el futuro compraré definitivamente productos de esta marca.	In de toekomst koop ik zeker producten van dit merk.
	I definitely intend to buy products from this brand.	Intento sin duda de comprar productos de esta marca.	Ik ben zeker van plan producten te kopen van dit merk.
	My intention to buy products from this brand is high.	La intención de comprar productos de esta marca es alta.	Mijn intentie om producten van dit merk te kopen is hoog.
	I definitely buy products from this brand.	Comparé ciertamente productos de esta marca.	Ik koop zeker producten van dit merk.
	I will probably buy products from this brand.	Probablemente compraré productos de esta marca algún día.	Ik koop waarschijnlijk nog ooit producten van dit merk.

Both English versions are based on "Measuring attitude toward the brand and purchase intentions", by N. Spears & S. N. Singh, 2004, *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising, 26*(2), 53-66.

Appendix IV. Original scale of high vs. low context culture translated in both Spanish and Dutch

Moderator	English version	Translation in Spanish	Translation in Dutch
High vs. Low context culture	Listeners should be able to understand what a speaker is trying to express, even when the speaker does not say everything they intend to communicate.	Los oyentes deben ser capaces de entender lo que un hablante está tratando de expresar, incluso cuando el hablante no dice todo lo que pretende comunicar.	Luisteraars moeten in staat zijn om te begrijpen wat een spreker probeert uit te drukken, zelfs als de spreker niet alles zegt wat hij wilde communiceren.
	Speakers should not expect listeners will figure out what they really mean unless the intended message is stated precisely.	Un hablante no debe asumir que los oyentes interpreten correctamente lo que él dice, a no ser que la intención del mensaje haya sido formulada de forma precisa.	Sprekers mogen niet verwachten dat mensen wel zullen uitvinden wat bedoeld wordt, dit mag alleen als de bedoelde boodschap precies wordt verklaard.
	A listener should understand the intent of the speaker from the way the person talks.	Un oyente debe entender la intención del interlocutor por la forma de hablar de esta persona.	Een luisteraar moet de intentie van de spreker begrijpen door middel van de manier waarop de spreker praat.
	It is better to risk saying too much than be misunderstood.	Es mejor arriesgarse a decir mucho que ser malinterpretado.	Het is beter om het risico te nemen en te veel te zeggen dan verkeerd begrepen te worden.
	It is more important to state a message efficiently than with great detail.	Es más importante que un mensaje sea efectivo a que tenga mucho detalle.	Het is belangrijker om een boodschap kort en bondig uit te drukken in plaats van zeer gedetailleerd.
	Even if not stated exactly, a speaker's intent will rarely be misunderstood.	Incluso si no se indica exactamente, la intención de un orador rara vez será mal entendida.	Zelfs als de intentie van een spreker niet exact wordt uitgesproken, zal deze maar zeer zelden verkeerd begrepen worden.
	The intended content of the message is more important than how a message is communicated.	El contenido de un mensaje es más importante que la forma en que un mensaje es comunicado.	De beoogde inhoud van een boodschap is belangrijker dan hoe een boodschap gecommuniceerd wordt.
	People should be able to understand the	La gente debería ser capaz de entender el significado	Mensen zouden in staat moeten zijn om de betekenis van een

meaning of a statement by reading between the lines.	de un mensaje leyendo entre líneas.	boodschap te begrijpen door tussen de regels door te lezen.
Intentions not explicitly stated can often be inferred from the context.	El contexto suele ayudar a interpretar las intenciones no manifestadas explícitamente.	Intenties die niet expliciet worden geuit kunnen vaak wel worden achterhaald door de context van een boodschap.
A speaker can assume that listeners will know what they really mean.	Un hablante puede asumir que los oyentes sabrán lo que él realmente quiere decir.	Een spreker mag aannemen dat toehoorders wel weten wat echt bedoeld wordt.
People understand many things that are left unsaid.	La gente entiende muchas cosas que no se dicen.	Mensen begrijpen veel dingen die niet uitgesproken worden.
Fewer words can often lead to better understanding.	Menos palabras suelen facilitar una mejor comprensión.	Minder woorden leiden vaak tot beter begrip.
The context in which a statement is made conveys as much or more information than the message itself.	El contexto en el que se dice algo transmite tanta o más información que el propio mensaje.	De context waarin iets gezegd wordt geeft evenveel of zelfs meer informatie dan de boodschap zelf.
Misunderstandings are more often caused by the listener's failure to draw reasonable inferences, rather than the speaker's failure to speak clearly.	Los malos entendidos se deben más una mala interpretación del contenido del mensaje por parte de los oyentes que a la incapacidad de los hablantes de hablar claro.	Misverstanden worden vaker veroorzaakt door verkeerde interpretaties van de luisteraars dan het onvermogen van de spreker om duidelijk te communiceren.
You can often convey more information with less words.	A menudo puedes decir más con menos palabras.	Je kunt vaak meer informatie overbrengen wanneer je minder woorden gebruikt.
Some ideas are better understood when left unsaid.	Algunas ideas se entienden mejor cuando no se dicen.	Sommige ideeën worden beter begrepen wanneer ze onuitgesproken blijven.
The meaning of a statement often turns more on the context than the actual words.	El significado de un mensaje depende más del contexto o situación que de las palabras utilizadas.	De betekenis van een boodschap hangt vaak meer af van de context of situatie dan de gebruikte woorden.

The English version is originated from "The influence of high/low-context culture and power distance on choice of communication media: Students' media choice to communicate with professors in Japan and America, by R. M. Richardson & S. W. Smith, 2007, *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 31,* 479-501.

The Spanish version is originated from "A comparison of Mexican and US American students' perceptions of high-low context business communication style", by A. P. J. V. van Hooft, 2011, *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 161,* 68-89.

The Dutch version is based on "The influence of high/low-context culture on perceived ad complexity and liking", by J. Hornikx & R. le Pair, 2017, *Journal of Global Marketing,* 1-10.