

Verbal anchoring in logos: a cross-national study on the influence on French and Dutch (potential) donators' response

Roxanne A. D. van Deursen

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Director: A. Van Hooft

Reviewer: L. Speed

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of the cultural dimension high- versus low-context communication style preferences on the effect of verbal anchoring in logos of non-profit organizations on the perception and response of French and Dutch potential donators. The effect of verbal anchoring on logo recognition, logo appreciation, perceived fit between the logo and the organization's core values and the intention to donate was measured for three non-profit organizations (Unicef, Red Cross and Doctors Without Borders) with the use of an experiment with a 3 (just the logo vs. logo with organization name vs. logo with name and slogan) x 2 (Dutch vs. French participants) between subjects design. 96 Dutch and 107 French participants filled out an online questionnaire during November 2019. Based on Barthes (1977) verbal anchoring theory, it was expected that a higher degree of verbal anchoring would lead to better donator's response. Secondly, the Dutch were expected to be relatively more influenced by the level of verbal anchoring when compared to the French, as they would belong to a low- and high-context communication style oriented culture respectively. These assumptions were met for logo recognition, although not for the respondents' attitude towards the logo, and only partially for the perceived fit between the logo and the presented core values; a higher degree of verbal anchoring indeed positively influenced the participant's perception of the fit of the organization's core values with the logo, although nationality had no effect on this. The effect of nationality/culture on the influence of verbal anchoring on the respondent's intention to donate was contradictory to the expectations; a complete level of verbal anchoring only positively influenced the French participants' intentions to donate, rather than the Dutch. Although the validity of these results might be limited (due to different logo designs), multinational organizations might benefit from this study's results in designing their communication strategies.

Keywords: verbal anchoring, non-profit organizations, logos, slogans, organizational core values, intention to donate, culture, high-low context communication style.

Introduction

Logos are invaluable to any kind of organization. As they are commonly presented on all types of communicative messages to stakeholders, they form the visual representation of the brand. According to Koller (2009), the metaphor of a brand's "personality" is encoded visually in the logo, which is 'intended to convey a highly condensed form of the brand image' (p.57). Stakeholders, such as potential customers of companies or donators of nonprofit organizations, might be able to derive - to some extent - the organization's core identity from seeing the logo: logos could give (potential) customers and donators a view of the organization's most important values. However, Koller (2009) argues that because of the consumer's typically superficial encounters with a brand, it is questionable that they find or appreciate the symbolic meaning in logos. Nonetheless, previous research on logo change (e.g. Das & Van Hooft (2015)), logo design (e.g. Bresciane & Del Ponte, 2015; Grohmann, 2008; Hynes, 2009; Torres et al. 2019) and on the link between logo appeal and customer involvement (see Pittard, Ewing, & Jevons, 2007) and consequent purchase intention (Jun, Cho, & Kwon, 2008), indicate that logos are one of the key elements on which the customer forms their attitude towards the brand. Hynes (2009) states that consumers form clear associations with the logo and possible organizational core values, and that they make judgements on what they believe to be the core identity of the brand. Consumers also have strong opinions on which colours suit different corporate images, Hynes (2009) states, indicating that logo designs might have a substantial influence on the consumer's perception and response. According to Das & Van Hooft (2015), further research should investigate the extent to which brand logos specifically communicate the intended brand values. The present study aims to cover a specific part related to this research gap, namely how a verbal element accompanying the logo (verbal anchoring) might help the communication of the intended values of the brand. Whether customers are able to form associations with the symbolic meaning of a logo (Hynes, 2009) or not (Koller, 2009), the communication of a brand's identity through its logo might be helped with the use of words alongside the visual element a theory that could be further investigated. Additionally, this study will take into account the influence of verbal anchoring for different cultures, since globalization has lead to an increase in the number of organizations that operate in multiple countries. Such brands need to account for possible cultural differences of potential customers and donators from different countries, such as France and The Netherlands. As they might score differently on cultural dimensions such as high- versus low-context communication style (Hall, 1976), it is possible that their

responses on logos with less or more verbal anchoring might vary. The present research will study the effect of the level of verbal anchoring on the response of (potential) donators from France and The Netherlands. First of all, it will explain the concept and verbal anchoring. Subsequently, the importance of the cross-cultural aspect of this study will be addressed, after which the cultural dimension of high- versus low-context communication style and its possible implications for the use of verbal anchoring in logos shall be explained. Last of all, the research question is presented and fractionalized in four sub-questions.

Logos and verbal anchoring

Barthes (1977) was the first to introduce the term 'verbal anchoring', with which he referred to verbal texts that fix in place and explain the implicit meaning of the visual element when accompanying an image. In other words, words can help to understand (metaphorical) images (Barthes, 1977). By way of explanation, as stated by Kohli, Leuthesser, & Suri (2007), logos stand not alone in the creation of brand associations. Although they require rich imagery and meaning through brand associations, according to Kohli et al. (2007), they are not able to convey a clear message about the core identity of the brand or the product itself as they 'lack the inherent ability to *say* much about the product' (p.416). Slogans (as verbal anchor) accompanying the logo can bridge this gap, and can thus strengthen the message according to Barthes (1977) verbal anchoring theory. Consequently, since texts can bring across a much more elaborate and detailed message than images, it might be concluded that visual and verbal signs in marketing messages might complement and determine one another, instead of standing side by side independently (Lick, 2015). In addition, using both the verbal and visual aspects combined, leads to the possibility to make use of the advantages of both – making the communication process more effective (Stöckl, 2004: 249, as cited in Lick, 2015).

Studies on the effect of verbal anchoring

The research on the relation between words, verbal anchoring, and visual elements has been supplemented by the research of Bergkvist, Eiderback, & Palombo (2012), who describe the visual element as a 'pictorial metaphor puzzle' (p.68) – indicating that it is something that would require solving, which might possibly be helped with the accompany of a text. Supporting their choice of words, Bergkvist et al. (2012) found that a complete headline in advertisements leads to more positive brand communication effects (such as the customer's beliefs about the key benefit conveyed by the pictorial metaphor in the advertisement) than a moderate headline or no headline at all. However, the experiment of Bergkvist et al. (2012)

and the research by Lick (2015) were both based on advertisements and not brand logos. Arguably, these might be very different in the way they communicate their message, as logos use a multiple point strategy to communicate the brands core values. Therefore, logos might have multiple messages to convey, whereas advertisements have only one (and perhaps more obvious) message to communicate (single point strategy). Kohli et al. (2007) and Bresciani & Del Ponte (2017) addressed the context of brand logos and slogans. Kohli et al. (2007) emphasized the importance of a slogan, for it helps conveying the detailed and elaborate message about the company or product that images alone fail to convey. Bresciani & Del Ponte (2017) found that even using a brand name alone in combination with the visual element had a significant effect on the perceived attractiveness of the logo, confirming the assumption that visual and textual codes combined give the best results. Nevertheless, with the exception of Kohli et al. (2007) and Bresciani & Del Ponte (2017), the effect of using verbal anchoring on the conveyance of the symbolic message of a logo has not yet been experimentally tested. The present study intends to fill this gap, by looking at the effect of the level of verbal anchoring on the perception and donation intention of the receiver of the (symbolic) message. This research will be based on non-profit organizations, since the marketing differences between increasing purchase intention (spending money and receiving a product or service in return) or intention to donate (spending money to help others) might reflect onto the way a logo is designed and whether or how slogans are used alongside the display of a logo, which in turn could affect the consumer/donators response. If slogans indeed support the implicit message of the visual, this could be of great use for non-profit organizations especially, since they arguably would feel the urge to show their organizational core values even more than profit-seeking companies. They perhaps require more in-depth relations with their stakeholders, for their goal is to create sympathy among potential donators and subsequently, receive donations. Therefore, they would want to try to strengthen the way they communicate their message with the use of more verbal elements with their logos.

The role of culture

Due to globalisation, there is an ongoing growth and spread of internationally based companies and non-profit organizations. With organizational internationalisation, new opportunities and pitfalls arise when it comes to communication. Not only language differences, but cultural differences as well need to be taken into account when operating in multiple countries, for language and culture do not necessarily coincide. On the contrary, many people speak two or more languages without having learned the cultural norms and values of the original country of that language. English, for example, is a global language that many people learn second to their native language. In fact, it is spoken by a larger number of non-natives than native speakers, and in addition, there are multiple countries that have English as a first, national language – without sharing the same cultural properties. These cultural differences might reflect on how people respond to (organizational) messages: the responses of potential donators that are exposed to different logo designs (with or without a certain degree of verbal anchoring) could vary for different cultures. According to Torres, César Machado, Vacas de Carvalho, Van de Velden, & Costa (2019) in their study on the effect of cultural dimensions on the perception of natural logo designs, cultural dimensions might indeed influence how consumers respond to different types of logo designs. Hall (1976) defined several cultural dimensions to measure cultural differences, some of which in relation with language use and communication preferences. This study assesses cultural differences with the dimension high-context versus low-context communication style, with which Hall (1976) refers to the preference of certain cultures for a more or less elaborated, explicit communication style. This dimension will be further explained in the next section.

High versus low context communication style

According to Hall (1976), one culture cannot be categorized as exclusively high or lowcontext, but cultures will differ with regards to where they would be placed on either sides of the continuum. He found that cultures that score high on the scale often use more implicit language, where the interpretation of the message relies not only on the spoken words, but mostly on the context of the conversation. According to Okabe (1983), high-context cultures find themselves often having "confidence in the unspoken" (p.39) and tend to avoid confrontation by not using explicit language. Conclusively, the dimension regards two ends of one scale that regards communicative messages: low-context, where direct and explicit information exchange is valued, versus high-context, where indirect, implicit verbal expressions are highly appreciated (Gudykunst & Nishida, 1986; Gudykunst & Nishida, 1993). For some cultures, their differences with regards to this dimension are somewhat evident. For example, Japan and the United States are often compared in academic research when it comes to high- versus low-context communication, and are regarded as having a highcontext and low-context culture respectively (Gudykunst & Nishida 1986; Gudykunst & Nishida 1993; Hall, 1976; Okabe, 1983, Richardson & Smith, 2007). For other cultures, such differences might not be so visible, but are nonetheless relevant. Companies and organizations operating in several European countries might encounter cultural differences that are perhaps

less calculated, as people often tend to think that these differences are minor. Countries for which this assumption might apply are France and The Netherlands: both western European countries with possibly quite some shared values that operate in similar markets, but they might be very different in their underlying cultural properties. On the scale of high- or low-context communication style preference, the French score relatively high, as opposed to the Dutch (Hall & Hall, 1990; Chua & Gudykunst, 1987; Van Everdingen & Waarts, 2003). Therefore, it might be expected that the Dutch would more appreciate a higher level of verbal anchoring, since they rely more on the explicitness of a message. In addition, the French might find relatively more meaning in the context of communication, and it could therefore be easier for them to uncover the intended core values with a lower degree of verbal anchoring. There are many non-profit organizations that are based and operate in both France and The Netherlands, and would thus have to deal with such cultural differences in the effect of the use of verbal anchoring with logos.

The present study

The present research aims to study the degree of verbal anchoring has on the response of French and Dutch customers. The main research question this study intends to answer is as follows:

To what extent does the level of verbal anchoring in logos of non-profit organizations influence the perception and response of (potential) donators, and how does this vary for Dutch and French language speakers?

To measure this effect, the main research question will be fractionalized in the following four sub-questions:

 \mathbf{RQ}_1 = To what extent does the level of verbal anchoring in logos of non-profit organizations influence logo recognition, and how does this vary for Dutch and French language speakers?

 \mathbf{RQ}_2 = To what extent does the level of verbal anchoring in logos of non-profit organizations influence logo appreciation, and how does this vary for Dutch and French language speakers?

 \mathbf{RQ}_3 = To what extent does the level of verbal anchoring in logos of non-profit organizations influence the perceived fit between the organization's core values and the logo, and how does this vary for Dutch and French language speakers?

 \mathbf{RQ}_4 = To what extent does the level of verbal anchoring in logos of non-profit organizations influence the intention to donate, and how does this vary for Dutch and French language speakers?

This study will focus primarily on non-profit organizations, as they might feel an exceptional urge to communicate their organizational core values, even more so than profit seeking companies. Therefore, the effect verbal anchoring has on the potential donator would be of great importance for such organizations, since the use of a verbal text would support the implicit meaning of the visual element (Barthes, 1977). Because of that, it might be expected that the perceived fit of the organizational core values and the logo will be better, and intention to donate will be higher with a higher degree of verbal anchoring. The second aim of this study is to take a cultural aspect into account, the high-low context communication style preference, since interpretations of texts could vary among different language speakers with different cultural norms and values. This would indicate that the effect that verbal anchoring has on the manner in which a symbolic message is conveyed through a logo could differ among cultures and languages as well. Based on the findings of previous research (Hall & Hall, 1990; Chua & Gudykunst, 1987; Van Everdingen & Waarts, 2003) it might be expected that the effect of verbal anchoring on logo recognition, logo appreciation, perception and intention to donate of Dutch donators will be larger in comparison to the French, since France scores higher on high-low context communication scale than the Netherlands. However, if this classification appears not to be true for this study, nationality and culture cannot be seen as equivalent constructs in further analysis, thus solely nationality will then be used to compare the samples on the effects of verbal anchoring.

Method

Materials

The first independent variable (IV1), 'level of verbal anchoring', consisted of three levels: 1. no verbal anchoring (visual only); 2. incomplete (visual in combination with company name); 3. complete (visual in combination with company name and slogan). The slogans were in French and Dutch, the native languages of the participants, in order to rule out any effects that communicating in a second language could have on the perception of the message. For example, Luna and Perracchio (2001) found that the use of a native or second language in

advertisements had a substantial effect on the memory effects and product evaluations for bilingual consumers. According to De Langhe et al. (2011), bilinguals report stronger emotions in the second language L2, but in contrast experience emotions the strongest in their native language L1, which they call the Anchor Contradiction Effect. This may indicate that reading a text might have an influence in the perception of the reader and consequently in the type or intensity of the emotions a text evokes. In addition to this effect, the possibility of varying language competencies for English as a second language for both nationalities should be taken into account. In The Netherlands, children start to learn English sometime around their sixth year of education, and the English language takes a large part in society (English is a priority throughout the rest of the child's education, but also in everyday life: English movies, TV-shows, radio-songs, etc.), whereas French children will start learning the English language much later and less thoroughly in their school career. Also, English-spoken television is often synchronized to French and French songs are more common on the radio than English. These possible language competencies differences might influence how the Dutch and French participants would interpret an English slogan. To account for these possibilities, we aimed to solely include the logos and slogans from non-profit organizations that operate in The Netherlands as well as in France and translate their messages in the countries' official languages. In their study, Bergkvist, Eiderback, & Palombo (2012) chose unknown and made-up companies to test for verbal anchoring effects in advertising. The main reason for this choice was that the recognition of the brand name may influence the participants' responses. However, we suspected that this external effect is not likely to occur for non-profit organizations, firstly because people often do not have further experience with the brand after donating (which would influence them in any way), and secondly because both unknown and well-known organizations have the similar charitable goals as well as (inter)national verifications for reliability. To rule out any possible effects with regards to the recognition of the brand, we have chosen three organizations that operate in non-provocative, general sectors (no religion-focused organizations, for example). This categorical independent variable has not been tested for its influences on the dependent variables, as the focus of this study lies with the effects of verbal anchoring and culture on the perception and intention to donate of (potential) donators, and therefore a grand mean for the three organizations has been used. Ultimately, the logos of three non-profit organizations were selected: Unicef (www.unicef.org; www.unicef.fr), Red Cross (www.rodekruis.nl/en; www.croix-rouge.fr) and Doctors without Borders (www.artsenzondergrenzen.nl; www.msf.fr). These non-profit organizations were chosen based on the sectors they operate in and their international focus.

However, as we tried to account for the external validity of the experiment, it is noticeable that the French and Dutch logos for the Red Cross and Doctors Without Borders slightly differ from one another, as these are the ones that were found on the organizations' original websites (see Table 1 and Table 2). Furthermore, although they are equivalent, the French Red Cross slogan (*"Partout où vous avez besoin de nous"*) differs in translation from the Dutch slogan (*"Helpt direct"*). In spite of the fact that these slogans differ in meaning, we have chosen to include them as they are both the organization's official slogan in the concerned country. In the case of Doctors Without Borders, an official slogan could not be found for the French organization, therefore a direct translation of the official Dutch slogan (*"Voor mensen in crisissituaties. Medisch, menselijk en kritisch."*) was used for this study.

Table 1. The Dutch logos of the three chosen organizations for different levels of verbal	
anchoring.	

Organization	No verbal	Incomplete verbal	Complete verbal
	anchoring	anchoring	anchoring
Unicef		unicef	voor ieder kind
Red Cross	+	Rode Kruis	Rode Kruis Helpt direct
Doctors Without		ARTSEN	voor mensen in crisissituaties.
Borders		ZONDER GRENZEN	Medisch, menselijk en kritisch.

Organization	No verbal anchoring	Incomplete verbal anchoring	Complete verbal anchoring
Unicef		unicef	unissons-nous pour les enfants
Red Cross		CROIX-ROUGE	Croix-rouge française Partout où vous avez besoin de nous
Doctors Without Borders		MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES	MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES POUR TOUT LE MONDE EN STUATIONS DE CRISE Médical, Humain, Critique.

Table 2. The French logos of the three chosen organizations for different levels of verbal anchoring.

Subjects

In total, two hundred fifty participants entered the questionnaire, of which a total of 203 participants completed it. Only the subjects who completed the survey in its entirety, or all who at least filled in all questions regarding verbal anchoring and culture, were used for further analyses. 82.56% of the participants were highly educated (*HBO* or university). The Dutch sample consisted of 35 male respondents (37.63%) and 58 female respondents (62.37%), with a total of 96 participants between the age of eighteen and thirty (M = 21.83, SD = 2.79) of which three respondents did not complete the demographic section. The French questionnaire had a total of 107 participants between the age of eighteen and 34 (M = 21.05, SD = 2.75), of which 34 were male (33.33%) and 68 were female (66.67%) and five participants who did not fill in the demographic questions. A Chi-square test showed no significant effect of nationality on gender (χ^2 (2) = .39, p = .530). In other words, gender is equally distributed across the Dutch and French sample. However, another Chi-square test showed a significant effect of nationality on education level (χ^2 (2) = 49.53, p < .001), which shows that the two samples differed significantly from one another regarding education level. Still, 59.8% of the French participants indicated their current highest level of education to be

at university-level, against 61.3% of the Dutch participants. Subsequently, a one-way analysis of variance showed a significant effect of nationality on age (F(2,188) = 4.84, p = .029), which would indicate that the Dutch and French samples differed significantly with regards to the respondents' ages. However, as this difference is minor and most participants in both samples are students, the comparability of the samples with regards to age is assumed. A one-way analysis of variance showed no significant effect of verbal anchoring (condition) on age in the sample (F(2,187) < 1), indicating that the ages were equally distributed across all three conditions (p = 1.000, Bonferroni-correction). In addition, a Chi-square test was conducted to show that the three conditions did not significantly differ with regards to gender (χ^2 (2) = 1.04, p = .596) and education level (χ^2 (2) = 8.07, p = .427). Finally, a Chi-square test showed no significant relation between nationality and verbal anchoring (condition) (χ^2 (2) = 1.56, p = .458). In other words, the respondents were evenly divided over the three conditions with regards to age, gender, education level and nationality.

Design

The present study had a 3 (level of verbal anchoring: just the logo vs. logo with organization name vs. logo with slogan) x 2 (culture/nationality: Dutch vs. French participants) between subject design, as presented in Figure 1.

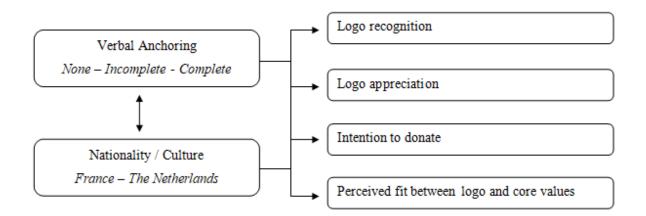


Figure 1. The Analytical Model: a conceptualization of the potential relationship between the independent and dependent variables and their possible interaction.

Instruments

The contextual independent nominal variable 'culture/nationality' (IV2) contained two levels (French and Dutch), to check whether Dutch respondents, as opposed to the French, really do prefer a low-context communication style. The scale developed by Richardson and Smith (2007) was used to measure whether there are any differences between the French and Dutch groups on the cultural dimension high-low context communication. In their study, they used a five-point Likert-scale ('agree – disagree') to measure the scale. A selection of nine items of this scale was used for the present study, following the methodology of Hornikx & le Pair (2017), which appeared to be just below the level of acceptance of internal consistency of the scale. After removing item 1, 3 and 4, the reliability of the scale, ultimately comprising six items, was still inadequate ($\alpha = .68$). However, the average inter-item correlation of all nine original items, with an exception of the first, is between the accepted range of Briggs and Cheek (1986) of .2 and .4, which would then indicate that the scale is reliable. Therefore, the mean of all items was used to calculate the compound variable that was used for further analysis.

The assumption that marked the Dutch and the French as people who preferred a lowand high-context communication style respectively (Hall & Hall, 1990; Chua & Gudykunst, 1987; Van Everdingen & Waarts, 2003) appeared not to be true for this study, as an independent samples *t*-test however showed no significant difference between culture and nationality (t (190.67) = .45, p = .65). As a consequence, nationality and culture (high versus low communication style) could not be seen as equivalent constructs, making it not possible to measure the influence of this cultural dimension on the effect of verbal anchoring. Therefore, the present study has measured any effects of verbal anchoring with regards to nationality, and not culture.

The questionnaire measured the following dependent variables: 'logo recognition', 'logo appreciation', 'intention to donate', 'perceived fit of logo and organizational core values'. The 'logo recognition' was tested to check whether positive or negative experiences with the organization could be influencing the participants' responses, and was measured with a 'yes – no' question. Both 'logo appreciation' and 'brand appreciation' was measured using a seven-point semantic differential scale, as was done before by Phillips (2000). The participants were asked to complete the sentence "I find this logo..." by means of multiple answer options, which were 'nice – not nice', 'good – bad', 'high quality – low quality', 'distinctive – indistinctive' and 'interesting – uninteresting'. The reliability of attitude towards

the logos comprising five items was on average good ($\alpha = .87$). The variable 'perceived fit' was measured following the methodology of Van Hooft et al. (2007). The participants first named the associations they had with the logos by filling in an open question, checking whether they made any assumptions about the core values of the brand by attaching ideas to the logo. Subsequently, they were presented several core values (collected from the organization's website), after which they indicated how they rate the fit with the logo with the use of seven-point Likert scales, following the procedure of Das & Van Hooft (2015). The reliability of Unicef's core values, as well as those of Red Cross and Doctors Without Borders, consisting of respectively five, seven and three items, was on average good ($\alpha = .86$). The 'intention to donate' was tested with one item consisting of a 7-point Likert scale, as was done by the questionnaire of Van der Linden (2011). The participants were presented a statement to which they rated their agreement, which was "I am prepared to donate money to this non-profit organization."

Procedure

For this study, a convenience network-sampling method was used. However, the selection of the subjects differed across the two samples (French and Dutch). The Dutch sample was retrieved from the direct and indirect networks of the researchers, whereas the French subjects were contacted through a network of professors of French universities. They were asked to pass on the survey to their French students. All participants received the link to the survey on online platforms (e.g. WhatsApp, Facebook or through E-mail) that was made in Qualtrics. When opening the questionnaire, participants first were presented a short introduction, in which the aim and content of the research was explained, as well as what they could expect from the questionnaire and their rights towards anonymity. Subsequently, the participants were presented with the first logo, either without verbal anchoring, an incomplete level of verbal anchoring or a complete level of verbal anchoring. Subjects were asked whether they recognized the logo or not. After that, the subjects were asked questions regarding their opinion towards the logo and their associations with it. Consequently, they answered questions with regards to the fit of certain core values with the presented logo and then they indicated their intention to donate. These questions were repeated per logo. Having completed the questions concerning verbal anchoring, the participants went on with the culturallyfocused questions, were they indicated their agreement on several statements regarding highlow context communication. Finally, the subjects were asked to fill out certain general questions about their age, gender, native language and education. There was no reward to completing the questionnaire, which was conducted in November 2019. The average time taken to fill out the questionnaire was 11 minutes and 38 seconds.

Statistical treatment

The present study made use of a Chi-square test to measure the effect of verbal anchoring on logo recognition. Subsequently, a two-way analysis of variance was used to measure the intention to donate, attitude and perceived fit of the core values with the logo. The respondents' associations with the logos were manually analysed by the researchers, but no further tests were conducted as the reported results did not differ amongst the respondents. In addition, an independent samples T-test was used in order to check whether the French sample of the study could indeed be labelled as part of a high-context culture and the Dutch sample as part of a low-context culture.

Results

Logo recognition

Two Chi-square tests have been conducted in order to measure logo recognition amongst the Dutch and French sample, as presented in Table 1. A Chi-square test showed a significant effect for the level of verbal anchoring on logo recognition within the Dutch sample ($\chi^2(4) = 10.22$, p = .037). The Dutch respondents who were shown a logo with complete verbal anchoring recognized the logos more often (75.8%) than those who saw no verbal anchoring (43.8%). For the Dutch sample, an incomplete level of verbal anchoring showed to make no significant difference with regards to logo recognition when compared to no verbal anchoring or a complete level of verbal anchoring.

A Chi-square test showed a significant effect of verbal anchoring on logo recognition in the French sample (χ^2 (4) = 20.87, p < .001). No verbal anchoring resulted in significantly less logo recognition (41.4%) than incomplete verbal anchoring (88.4%) and complete verbal anchoring (74.3%). An incomplete level of verbal anchoring did not significantly differ from complete verbal anchoring with regards to logo recognition.

Level of verbal anchoring	Dutch			Fren	French		
	N	М	SD	Ν	М	SD	
No verbal anchoring	32	1.19	.17	29	1.26	.26	
Incomplete	31	1.12	.18	43	1.05	.16	
Complete	33	1.08	.15	35	1.10	.17	

Table 1. Means and standard deviations for logo recognition of Dutch and French subjects.

Logo appreciation

A two-way analysis of variance with the level of verbal anchoring and nationality as factors showed no significant main effect of the level of verbal anchoring on the attitude towards the logo (F(2,197) < 1), neither did it show a significant main effect of nationality on the subject's attitude towards the logo (F(1,197) = 1.24, p = .268). The interaction effect between the level of verbal anchoring and nationality on the attitude towards the logo was not significant (F(2,197) = 1.17, p = .391).

Perceived fit of the organization's core values with the logo

An assessment of a randomly selected ten percent of the respondents' answers to the open question regarding the associations with the presented logos (for all levels of verbal anchoring) showed that the respondents were not able to associate the organizations' core values with the logos themselves. A two-way analysis of variance with verbal anchoring and nationality as factors showed a significant main effect of the level of verbal anchoring on the perceived fit of the presented organizational core values with the logo (F(2,197) = 5.57, p = .004). A complete level of verbal anchoring resulted in a higher agreement with the fit of the presented core values with the logo (M = 5.42, SD = .69) than an incomplete level of verbal anchoring neither showed a significant difference with regards to the effect on the perceived fit of core values (M = 5.24, SD = .91) in comparison with an incomplete level of verbal anchoring, nor in comparison with a complete level of verbal anchoring. However, nationality did not have a significant main effect on the perceived fit of the organizational core values with the logos (F(1,197) < .527, SD = .91) in comparison with an incomplete level of verbal anchoring, nor in comparison with a complete level of verbal anchoring. However, nationality did not have a significant main effect on the perceived fit of the organizational core values with the logos (F(1,197) < .527).

1). Additionally, the interaction effect between the level of verbal anchoring and nationality was not significant (F(2,197) = .456, p = .635). In other words, the level of verbal anchoring did have an effect on the perceived fit of the organizational core values with the logo, although nationality had no effect on this variable, neither had it a significant effect on the influence of verbal anchoring on it.

Level of verbal anchoring	Dutc	h		French				Total			
	Ν	М	SD		Ν	М	SD	Ν	М	SD	
No verbal anchoring	32	5.32	.62		29	5.14	1.15	61	5.24	.91	
Incomplete	31	4.93	.76		43	4.93	1.15	74	4.93	1	
Complete	33	5.36	.67		35	5.48	.72	68	5.42	.69	

Table 2. Means and standard deviations for the effect of the level of verbal anchoring of logos on the perceived fit of the organization's core values for Dutch and French subjects.

A low mean (M = 1) indicates a low perceived fit with the core values, M = 7 would indicate complete agreement.

Intention to donate

A two-way analysis of variance with level of verbal anchoring and nationality as factors showed no significant main effect of level of verbal anchoring on intention to donate (F(2,197) = 1.54, p = .218), neither did it show a significant main effect of nationality on intention to donate (F(1,197) = 2.13, p = .146). However, the interaction effect between level of verbal anchoring and nationality on de intention to donate was statistically significant (F(2,197) = 4.35, p = .014), indicating that the effect of verbal anchoring on the intention to donate differed for Dutch and French participants. A follow-up one-way analysis of variance showed no significant effect of verbal anchoring on the intention to donate in the Dutch sample (F(2,93) < 1). However, using a one-way ANOVA, a significant effect of the level of verbal anchoring on the intention to donate within the French sample was found (F(2,104) =4.87, p = .010). French respondents expressed a significantly higher intention to donate when

presented a complete level of verbal anchoring (M = 4.65, SD = 1.37) than when exposed to no verbal anchoring (M = 3.57, SD = 1.41). Being exposed to an incomplete level of verbal anchoring (M = 4.22, SD = 1.35) resulted in no significant difference regarding intention to donate in comparison with no verbal anchoring or complete verbal anchoring for the French sample (see Table 3).

Level of verbal anchoring	Dutc	h		Fre	nch		Total			
	N	М	SD	Ν	М	SD	Ν	М	SD	
No verbal anchoring	32	4.57	1.10	29	3.57	1.41	61	4.10	1.34	
Incomplete	31	4.38	1.23	43	4.22	1.35	74	4.29	1.29	
Complete	33	4.30	1.29	35	4.65	1.37	68	4.48	1.34	

Table 3. Means and standard deviations for the intention to donate for Dutch and French subjects.

A low mean (M = 1) indicates a very low intention to donate, M = 7 would indicate a very high intention to donate.

Conclusion

The present research was aimed to explore the extent of the effect of the level of verbal anchoring in logos of non-profit organizations on Dutch and French (potiential) donators' response, taking into account the donator's cultural background on the dimension of high-low context communication, incorporated in the following research question:

To what extent does the level of verbal anchoring in logos of non-profit organizations influence the perception and response of (potential) donators, and how does this vary for Dutch and French language speakers?

This main research question was divided into four sub questions in order to measure the effect of high versus low-context communication style on the influence of verbal anchoring on four main pillars of donator's response and perception: logo recognition, logo appreciation, the perceived fit with the logo and the organization's core values and the intention to donate.

Based on the classifications of Hall & Hall (1990), Chua & Gudykunst (1987) and Van Everdingen & Waarts (2003), the Dutch were expected to score relatively low on the scale of high- versus low-context, whereas the French would be more high-context oriented. Following this theory, the Dutch were expected to be more influenced by verbal anchoring than the French, as verbal anchoring would reduce the implicitness of a visual (e.g. an organization's logo) by clarifying their meaning, according to Barthes (1977). However, no differences were found between the scores on the high- versus low-context communication style preference scale of Richardson and Smith (2007) of the Dutch and French sample, thus culture and nationality could not be regarded as equivalent constructs in this study. Therefore, culture as potential factor was excluded from the analyses and consequently replaced by nationality.

As was expected, the level of verbal anchoring showed to have an influence on the logo recognition by the participants of both nationalities. A complete level of verbal anchoring lead to higher recognition rates in both samples than no verbal anchoring at all. There was a small difference with regards to the effect of the level of verbal anchoring on logo recognition between the Dutch and French participants: in the Dutch sample, only a complete level of verbal anchoring (logo + brand name + slogan) resulted in higher recognition than no verbal anchoring, whereas for the French sample, both a complete and an incomplete level (logo + brand name) of verbal anchoring resulted in higher recognition when compared to no verbal anchoring with the logo at all. This confirms the assumption that a high level of verbal anchoring has a larger effect on the recognition of the logo for the Dutch sample than the French sample.

With regards to the respondent's attitude towards the logo, it was assumed that the attitude would be higher with a certain degree of verbal anchoring (and that this effect might be relatively larger for the Dutch participants). However, on the respondent's attitude towards the logo, neither verbal anchoring nor nationality had a noteworthy effect. In other words, the level of verbal anchoring in the logo did not affect the attitude towards the logo for French and Dutch respondents.

The level of verbal anchoring did however have an effect on the respondent's perceived fit of the organizational core values with the presented logo - although the respondent's nationality did not affect this perceived fit between the values and the logo, neither had it an influence on the effect of verbal anchoring on this variable. The participants were not able to independently deduct the organization's core values from the logo (no matter

the level of verbal anchoring), but when presented a complete level of verbal anchoring, the participants did report a higher fit between the logo and the given core values, as was expected.

Lastly, the intention to donate did not show to be influenced by the level of verbal anchoring, nor by nationality. However, nationality did appear to have an effect on the influence verbal anchoring has on the participant's intention to donate, confirming an interaction effect between nationality and verbal anchoring on this variable. French participants were more likely to donate when exposed to a complete level of verbal anchoring than to a logo without any verbal anchoring. In the Dutch sample, this effect was not visible, as their intention to donate was not influenced by the level of verbal anchoring in any way. This was actually in contrast with the assumptions: the effect of verbal anchoring was expected to be larger for the Dutch in comparison with the French. However, in this particular study the effect of verbal anchoring appeared to only influence the intention to donate of the French participants rather than the Dutch.

Discussion

Although the theoretical framework of this study lead to the assumption that the French would score relatively high on the high-low context communication preference scale when compared to the Dutch (Hall & Hall, 1990; Chua & Gudykunst, 1987; Van Everdingen & Waarts, 2003), this expectation was not met in this study. One possible explanation for this is given by Hall (1976), who states that one culture cannot be categorized as exclusively high- or low-context, although they will differ with regards to where they would be placed on either sides of the continuum. Perhaps, in contexts such as the one of non-profit organizations and their logos, the cultural differences with regards to contextual style preferences are too minor to affect the donator's responses. It might therefore be useful for further research on verbal anchoring and culture to compare the effect of verbal anchoring for nationalities that are more in contrast with respect to the high-low communication style scale such as Japan and the United States (based on Gudykunst & Nishida, 1993). Additionally, according to Van Hooft (2011) communicative processes do not happen between cultures, but between individuals, which might affect the way certain individuals (although belonging to a certain culture) respond to different communication styles. Therefore, it might be helpful to test the individual level of the participants on this cultural scale (see Hornikx & Le Pair, 2017) in order to find larger and noteworthy cultural differences concerning donator perception and response.

The respondents that participated in this study were all around the same age and mostly students, possibly sharing a certain lifestyle and international orientation, which might result in more overlapping scores on cultural dimensions such as high- versus low-context communication style. According to Van Hooft (2011), cultural differences between people could be overruled by certain similarities caused by a continuously globalizing society. As a student, one might often encounter different cultures through travels, international exchanges or professional collaborations, possibly changing one's own cultural properties. Further research might account for this possible limitation with the use of a much larger sample. In that way, the results could be more representative for the French and Dutch cultures as a whole.

Since texts are said to clarify and assist visuals (e.g. logos) in conveying a metaphorical meaning (Barthes, 1977), it was assumed that a higher degree of verbal anchoring would lead to an increase in donators' logo recognition, logo appreciation, their perceived fit between the organization's logo and its core values and their intention to donate. Moreover, as the Dutch would prefer a low-context communication style (stated differently, they would value more explicit communication) as opposed to the French, according to Hall & Hall (1990), the effect of verbal anchoring on the aforementioned variables was assumed to be larger in the Dutch sample. However, some expected effects failed to occur in this experiment.

Firstly, verbal anchoring did not appear to influence the attitude towards the logo, neither for the Dutch sample, nor for the French. Possibly, the attitude towards a logo is not culturally (or nationally) influenced, but solely by individual preferences for design and appeal, as previous research suggests (for example, see Hynes, 2009; Bresciane & Del Ponte, 2015). Secondly, although a complete level of verbal anchoring indeed lead to a better perceived fit between the organizations' core values and their logos (which aligns the results of Bergkvist et al. (2012) and Kohli et al. (2007) based on Barthes (1977) verbal anchoring theory), there was no difference in the extent of this effect between the Dutch and French samples of this study. Correspondingly, with regards to the participant's intention to donate, the expected difference between the Dutch and French samples did not occur – in fact, the assumption that a high degree of verbal anchoring would result in a higher intention to donate for the Dutch subject than for the French subject was actually contradicted in this study's results. Perhaps, these results are due to the substantial differences in the design of the used logos of Red Cross (as well as the slight difference in the logos of Doctors Without Borders)

for the Dutch and French samples in this experiment. Taking into account the research of Pittard et al. (2007) on the link between logo appeal and customer involvement and Jun et al. (2008) on logo appeal and purchase intention, the apparent differences in logo design might have affected the Dutch and French donators response with regards to their perception of the fit of the logo with the organization's core values and their intention to donate. However, as this study has combined the scores on the variables for the three organizations, this possible effect cannot be accounted for. Future research would be advised, first of all, to assure that all logo designs are identical in order to exclude external influences (i.e. differences in logo appeal) of the results, and secondly, to separate the three organizations in the analyses to be able to assess whether different logo designs influence participants' responses. Subsequently, the French questionnaire has been checked on its translation (done by a non-native French speaker) just by one Frenchman, whereas it might be preferred to check the translated version more thoroughly. The possibility that there were slight differences in the Dutch and French questionnaires due to translation errors and the effects on the results thereof cannot be excluded. Future research might benefit from checking the translations more thoroughly (i.e. translating the French questionnaire back into the Dutch). Also, the validation of the results might be limited due to the fact that all chosen organizations differ (slightly) in the kind of charity they promote. Future studies could choose to solely include logos of organizations that operate in the same sector, to exclude the possibility that participants respond differently on attitude, perception of the fit between the logo and the core values and their intention to donate due to an organization's operating sector.

In conclusion, this study has partly confirmed the findings of existing literature on the topic of the effects of verbal anchoring. In its contradictions and limitations, it might have given opportunity for new research to investigate the topic of the effect of verbal anchoring on donator's response further, although it is suggested to do so with identical logos for different levels of verbal anchoring and a larger and more elaborate sample of the population in order account for the high or low-context communication style preferences of different cultures. Although the cultural dimension of high- versus low-context communication could not be analysed on its effect on the influence of verbal anchoring in this study, it must be emphasized that multinationals should still take cultural differences into consideration when developing their communication strategy – since they might indeed affect consumer's response on organizational messages. This study has shown that verbal anchoring indeed positively influences donator's response; however the question remains how international organizations might adapt their strategy with regards to verbal anchoring to different cultures.

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Appendix I

Questionnaire in Dutch

Beste deelnemer,

Hartelijk bedankt voor je interesse om deel te nemen aan deze online vragenlijst. Je helpt hiermee zes studenten hun bachelorscriptie met succes af te ronden.

Zometeen zal je drie verschillende logo's te zien krijgen van internationale non-profit organisaties en zal je gevraagd worden hierover wat vragen te beantwoorden. Hierna volgen wat culturele en demografische vragen.

De vragenlijst zal ongeveer acht minuten duren, al mag je alle tijd nemen die je nodig hebt. Je kan alles invullen; er zijn geen goede of foute antwoorden.

Als je aan het einde van de vragenlijst nog vragen hebt, kan je altijd contact met ons opnemen via c.koers@student.ru.nl / m.avilez@student.ru.nl of door te mailen naar de supervisor via a.vanhooft@let.ru.nl.

Marco Avilez, Roxanne van Deursen, Rhodée Koers, Max Ploemen, Carmen Poels & Sören Steinkühler



Het invullen van deze vragenlijst zal geheel anoniem worden gedaan en de gegevens zullen uitsluitend worden gebruikt voor de afdeling Communicatie- en Informatiewetenschappen van Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen. Je mag je, indien gewenst, op elk willekeurig moment terugtrekken uit dit experiment.

Ga je akkoord met de bovenstaande voorwaarden?

🔘 Ja

Nee

Herken je dit logo?



NietleukOOOOOIeukSlechtOOOOOOGoedLage kwaliteitOOOOOOOProge kwaliteitNiet onderscheidendOOOOOOOOOONiet interessantOOOOOOOOInteressant

Wat vind je van dit logo?

Welke associaties heb je bij het zien van dit logo?

In hoeverre vind je onderstaande kernwaarden passen bij dit logo? (Unicef)

	1 Helemaal niet	2	3	4	5	6	7 Helemaal wel
Zorg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respect	0	0	0	0	0	\circ	0
Integriteit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vertrouwen	0	0	0	0	0	\circ	0
Verantwoordelijkheid	0	0	0	0	0	\circ	0

	1 Helemaal niet	2	3	4	5	6	7 Helemaal wel
Humaniteit	0	0	0	0	0	\circ	0
Onpartijdigheid	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neutraliteit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Onafhankelijkheid	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vrijwillige service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Eenheid	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Universaliteit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

In hoeverre vind je onderstaande kernwaarden passen bij dit logo? (Rode Kruis)

In hoeverre vind je onderstaande kernwaarden passen bij dit logo? (Artsen zonder Grenzen)

	1 Helemaal niet	2	3	4	5	6	7 Helemaal wel
Onafhankelijk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neutraal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Onpartijdig	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

	1 Helemaal niet mee eens	2	3	4	5	6	7 Helemaal mee eens
Ik ben bereid om geld te doneren aan deze non-profit organisatie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Maak gebruik van onderstaande schaal om aan te geven hoeveel (on)eens je bent met de negen stellingen. Er zijn geen goede of foute antwoorden, je kan gewoon je eerlijke mening aangeven.

		1 Helemaal niet mee eens	2	3	4	5	6	7 Helemaal mee eens
Een spreker mag niet verwachten dat een luisteraar begrijpt wat de spreker bedoelt met een boodschap, tenzij de boodschap heel precies is verwoord.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Men zou de betekenis van een boodschap moeten kunnen begrijpen door tussen de regels door te lezen.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

De betekenis van een boodschap draait meer om de context dan om woorden.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Het is belangrijker om een boodschap efficiënt te vermelden dan met veel details.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Een spreker kan ervan uitgaan dat een luisteraar zal begrijpen wat hij/zij echt bedoelt.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Men begrijpt veel dingen uit de context die niet hardop worden gezegd.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Minder woorden kunnen vaak leiden tot een beter begrip van een boodschap.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Je kan vaak meer informatie overbrengen met minder woorden	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

woorden.

Sommi ideeë worde beter begrep wannee niet hard gezeg worde	n n en r ze dop d	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ik ben ee	n								
0									
Wat is je	leeftijd?								
0 V	Vat is je n	ationalite	eit?						
o N	 Nederlands 								
0 A	nders, na	melijk							
Wat is je	hoogstge	noten op	leiding?						

- o Basisonderwijs
- Voortgezet onderwijs
- o MBO
- o HBO
- o Universiteit

Appendix II

Questionnaire in French

Cher participant, Chère participante,

Merci de votre intérêt à participer à ce questionnaire en ligne. Vous aidez six étudiants à mener à bien leur thèse de licence.

Vous verrez trois logos différents d'organisations internationales à but non lucratif et il vous sera demandé de répondre à quelques questions à ce sujet. Après, vous sera demandé de répondre quelques questions culturelles et démographiques.

Le questionnaire prendra environ huit minutes, bien que vous puissiez prendre tout le temps dont vous avez besoin. Il n'y a pas de bonnes ou de mauvaises réponses.

Si vous avez des questions à la fin du questionnaire, vous pouvez toujours nous contacter via c.koers@student.ru.nl.

Marco Avilez, Roxanne van Deursen, Rhodée Koers, Max Ploemen, Carmen Poels & Sören Steinkühler



Ce questionnaire sera rempli de manière totalement anonyme et les données ne seront utilisées que pour le département des sciences de l'information et de la communication de l'université Radboud de Nimègue. Vous pouvez, si vous le souhaitez, vous retirer de cette expérience à tout moment.

Est-ce que vous êtes d'accord avec ces conditions?

- Oui Oui
- Non

Est-ce que vous reconnaissez ce logo?



 Pas joli
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 Joli

 Mauvais
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 Bon

 Mauvais qualité
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 Bonne qualité

 Pas distinctif
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 Distinctif

 Pas intéressant
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 Distinctif

Qu'est-ce que vous en pensez de ce logo ?

Quelles associations avez-vous lorsque vous voyez ce logo ?

Jusqu'à quel point pensez-vous que ces valeurs fondamentales correspondent à ce logo? (Unicef)

	1 Pas du tout	2	3	4	5	6	7 Entièrement
Soin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respect	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Integrité	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Confiance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Responsabilité	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Jusqu'à quel point pensez-vous que ces valeurs fondamentales correspondent à ce logo? (Croix-Rouge)

	1 Pas du tout	2	3	4	5	6	7 Entièrement
Humanité	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Impartialité	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neutralité	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Indépendance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Service volontaire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unité	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Universalité	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Jusqu'à quel point pensez-vous que ces valeurs fondamentales correspondent à ce logo? (Medecins Sans Frontieres)

	1 Pas du tout	2	3	4	5	6	7 Entièrement
Indépendance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neutralité	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Impartialité	0	\circ	0	0	0	0	0

	1 Pas du tout d'accord	2	3	4	5	6	7 Entièrement d'accord
Je suis preparé(e) à donner de l'argent à cette organisation à but non lucratif.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Jusqu'à quel point êtes-vous d'accord avec les déclarations suivantes? Il n'y a pas de bonnes ou de mauvaises réponses.

	1 Pas du tout d'accord	2	3	4	5	6	7 Entièrement d'accord
Les locuteurs ne doivent pas supposer que leurs auditeurs comprennent ce qu'ils veulent dire sauf si le message prévu est précisé explicitement.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Même si le message n'est pas spécifié en détail, l'intention d'un locuteur sera rarement mal compris.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Des intentions non explicitement énoncées peuvent être déduites du contexte de la conversation.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Il est plus important d'énoncer efficacement un message que de l'énoncer avec beaucoup de détails.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Un locuteur peut supposer que les auditeurs sauront ce qu'il veut vraiment dire.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Les gens comprennent beaucoup de choses qui restent non exprimées.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Utiliser moins de mots peut conduire à une meilleure compréhension.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
On peut transmettre plus d'information avec peu de mots.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Il y a des choses qu'on comprend mieux si elles ne sont pas exprimées.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Je suis un(e)							

o Homme

o Femme

- - - - - -

Vous avez quel âge ?

Vous avez quelle nationalité ?

o Française
o Différente : ______

Quel est votre niveau maximal de scolarité ?

- École Primaire
- o Collège
- o Lycée
- Licence
- o Master