



FINAL THESIS

Effects of different COO markers in advertising

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Abstract

Everyday people are exposed to hundreds of advertisements from companies attempting to sell their products or services. These companies make use of different strategies to attempt to influence consumers' evaluations, attitude and or behaviours. The country of origin (COO) of a country is one of those strategies that advertisers may use. COO strategies can be further divided in implicit and explicit strategies. This research attempts to investigate to what extent there are differences in the effects of explicit and implicit COO strategies. For that purpose, 2 explicit strategies ("Made in" and "COO embedded in the company name") and two implicit strategies ("COO building" and "COO stereotypical people) were used. Countries analysed were France, Italy and Spain. The variables used to measure the effects were attitudes towards the ad, attitudes towards the products, perceived quality, purchase intention and link between product and COO. Results showed a relative difference in the effect of implicit and explicit COO strategies but only for specific strategies and on specific variables. "Made in" strategy (explicit strategy) evoked higher attitudes towards the ad and the product as well as higher perceived quality than implicit strategies did. Purchase intention did not seem to be affected by the COO strategies used.

Introduction

Every day, people are exposed to hundreds of advertisements from companies attempting to sell their products or services (Sheree Johnson, 2014). On the one hand, this may seem to be particularly beneficial for consumers who, thanks to the globalizing world, are offered a wide range of products and brands from which they get to choose those that best satisfy their taste and necessities.

However, for the enterprises, advertising these products or services may be challenging. In order to overcome such a challenge, many companies have decided to spend considerable amounts of money and time to create marketing strategies that can help them to stand out from among dozens or sometimes hundreds of other companies that offer the same product or service as that they do.

There are numerous marketing strategies that have been investigated. Stout and Moon (1990) for instance, focussed their research on the use of endorsers in magazine advertisements. They found that endorsements were present in more than half of the advertisements analysed, with celebrities being the most common type of endorsement used when little to nothing was known about the product advertised. Additionally, Baker and Churchill (1977) investigated the impact of physically attractive models in advertisements, finding that physically attractive models have a more positive impact on the product advertised than less physically attractive models.

Moreover, the use of rhetorical figures in advertisements and their impact on the consumer, has also been widely investigated. Tom and Eves (1999) investigated the effect of the use of different rhetorical devices and found that those advertisements that made use of rhetorical devices showed superior persuasion and superior recall compared to those ads showing no rhetorical figures at all.

The present study will focus particularly on a strategy that is particularly known and popular within the marketing field: the country of origin strategy (COO). Although COO strategies in general have been widely investigated, there has been little research focusing on the difference between implicit and explicit COO strategies (Aichner, 2014) and the possible effects that these strategies may have on consumers. Therefore, this paper will attempt to find out whether there is indeed any difference between these two types of strategies. Such an analysis might be result useful for marketing departments of organizations that struggle to find

the most efficient way to promote their products and may help them to decide the best strategy to be used in order to effectively persuade their consumers. More concrete definitions of concepts as well as previous research carried out in this field will be provided in the theoretical framework below.

Theoretical framework

The term country of origin (COO) is thought to have been originated and mentioned first in 1887 by the British government when, in an attempt to prevent the copycat of British products, it enacted a law forcing foreign companies to clearly display the country of origin of their products. This law aimed to stigmatize products produced in Germany, particularly, which back then were thought to be of low quality (Renuka, 2013).

Nowadays, this concept has taken different shapes. While some definitions take into consideration the physical location of an organisation (e.g. country where headquarters of the organization are located) (Ozsomer & Cavusgil, 1991), other definitions consider the country of manufacture or assembly in their COO definition (Bilkey & Nes, 1985). Numerous studies have found that a product's country of origin may have an effect on consumers' evaluations of that product. For instance, Schooler (1965) found that the evaluation of a certain product differed according to the country of origin. He asked 200 Guatemalan students to evaluate a juice. The drink displayed the COO marker 'Made in...' of four COOs (Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica and Mexico). Participants were found to evaluate more positively the product labelled with their own country (Made in Guatemala) than the drink labelled with El Salvador or Costa Rica. These results suggest that the attitude that people have towards the people of a certain country and previous experiences may influence the evaluation of a product that comes from that country.

COO can therefore, be used as an information cue by consumers who are exposed to a wide variety of products and advertisements and that have none to little knowledge of the product advertised. As a result, COO could be used as a powerful marketing tool by companies aiming to position their brand or product in a certain market.

However, it is worth mentioning that the use of COO marker "Made in..." together with COO quality and origin labels, may be legally regulated in some countries. For instance, while the use of these COO strategies is legally regulated by a number of laws in the US, in Germany there are no particular institutions or laws that regulate the use of these strategies (Aichner, 2014).

Therefore, organizations considering using “Made in” strategies or “COO quality and origin labels” may be limited in their use and should inform themselves on the regulations that apply in the country where the advertisements are planned to be displayed.

COO Markers

Apart from the COO marker “Made in”, Aichner (2014) identified another seven COO markers. These are:

Quality and origin labels such as Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) or Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG). The use of these labels allows consumers to easily verify the quality of a product before purchasing it and may lead to an increase to the intention to purchase it (Hobbs, 2004).

COO embedded in the company name which refers to the use of the name of a country, region, or city in the company name. For instance, the company name Deutsche Bank (bank, Germany) displays the name of the COO.

COO language which is defined as the use of the COO language in the company or brand name, in slogans or the advertisement. COO language can be displayed in both written and spoken format. As it will be explained below, this strategy has been widely used by organizations and its effects have been also widely investigated.

COO stereotypical or famous people uses stereotypes that are attributed to the characteristics of that person (Hinton, 2000)

COO flags and symbols refers to the use of a flag or flag colours and national symbols from a particular country. It is important to mention that for this strategy to be successful, it is necessary to know in advance whether the recipients really think there is a connection between the symbol used and the COO.

COO landscapes or famous buildings is related to the COO flags and symbols, in that for both strategies there must be a clear and recognizable link between the elements used and the COO from the consumers’ point of view.

Aichner (2014) divided these eight markers into two groups, explicit COO strategies and implicit COO strategies. Explicit COO strategies can be defined as those strategies for which the reader does not require analytical processes. These strategies are often used in order to leave no doubt about the COO of a particular product.

For instance, Figure 1 shows an add from the sports shoemaker New Balance which displays two COO markers: “Made in...” and COO flags and symbols. The receiver can quickly identify the COO od this product by the “Made in” text as well as the colours of the American flag.

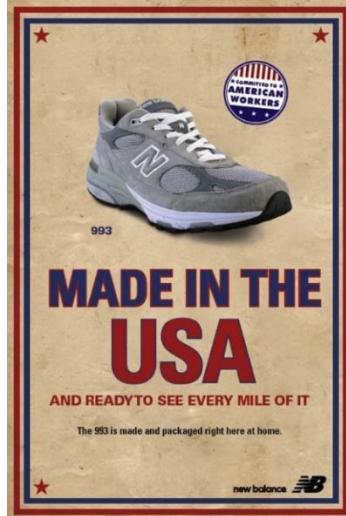


Figure 1. New Balance advertisement showing explicit COO strategies (Source: Pinterest.com)

On the other hand, there are companies that decide to employ COO strategies in a less explicit way. The use of implicit strategies may require from the reader to analyse the ad in more detail to find out the COO of the product. For instance, in Figure 2, Pizza Hut decided to make reference to the Pissa Tower (located in Italy) to suggest the Italian origin of their pizza.

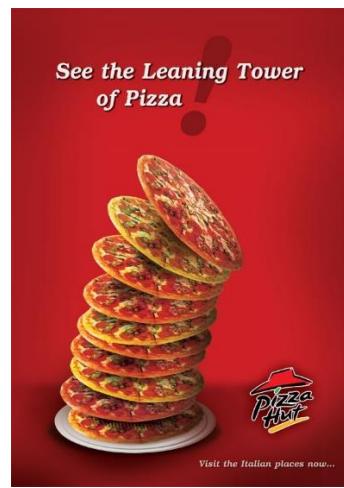


Figure 2. Pizza Hut showing implicit COO strategy (Source: Pizzahut.com)

Below, Table 1, taken from Aichner (2014), shows the classification of the different COO strategies.

Table 1. COO strategies Aichner (2014).

Strategy name	Strategy type	Communication complexity
1 ‘Made in...’	Explicit	Low
2 Quality and origin labels	Explicit	Low
3 COO embedded in the company name	Explicit	Low
4 Typical COO words embedded in the company name	Implicit	Medium
5 Use of the COO language	Implicit	Medium/high
6 Use of famous or stereotypical people from the COO	Implicit	Medium/high
7 Use of COO flags and symbols	Explicit/implicit	Low/medium
8 Use of typical landscapes or famous buildings from the COO	Implicit	Medium

As shown in the examples above, organizations may use different COO markers in their advertisements in order to highlight the COO of a product. In research, there has been a particular interest in studying the use of COO language (implicit COO) and its effect on different reader’s evaluations. Horniks, van Meurs and Hof (2013), for instance, investigated the use of foreign language in slogans for congruent and incongruent products and its effect on the perceived quality of the product, attitude towards the product and purchase intention. It was found that the use of foreign language in slogans leads to high perceived product quality, better product attitude and higher purchase intention for congruent products than for incongruent products.

An instance of the use of the use of COO language can be seen in the printed advertisements of the international French fashion brand Yves Saint Laurent (Figure 3). The advertisement displays the name of the brand together with text in French.

Moreover, the advertisement also makes use of another COO strategy which is the use of typical landscapes or famous buildings from the COO. In this instance, the Eiffel tower appears in the background.

French language “has become a social hieroglyphic for femininity, fashion and beauty in intercultural advertising communication” (Kelly-Holmes, 2000, p.74) and this maybe the reason why advertisers have decided to make use of French as COO strategy.



*Figure 3. Yves Saint Laurent advertisement showing COO language and COO buildings strategies
(Source: Adforum.com)*

The use of COO language becomes even clearer in TV ads where the brand name is pronounced in a clear and strong French accent.

Additionally, Leclerc et al. (1994) also analysed the use of COO language. In their study, they investigated the influence of a foreign language (French) in the brand name on product perception and attitudes. Results showed that a French pronunciation of a particular brand evokes more positive attitudes towards the brand and the brand name when compared to the English pronunciation.

Another study that also investigated the use of foreign language in brand names, was the one by Salciuviene et al. (2010). Similarly, Leclerc et al. (1994) studied the use of French in the brand name of congruent (e.g. Cars more likely linked to Germany, make up and fashion products more likely to be linked to France) and incongruent (e.g. Make up or fashion products less likely to be linked to Germany). They found that the use of French in the brand name had a positive effect on the attitude towards the brand, even when the product was not congruent with COO.

The effect of other COO strategies has also been investigated. Loureiro and Umberger (2003) focused their investigation on COO quality and origin labels and their influence on consumers' willingness to pay a higher price. Results showed that consumers were willing to pay a higher price for products containing "U.S. certified stake or "U.S. certified hamburger"

than for products without such labels. Similarly, Loureiro and McCluskey (2000) investigated the use of PGI label (Protected Geographical Indication) for meat products and its influence on perceived quality and consumer's willingness to pay more. The authors found that the presence of PGI labels on high quality cuts of meat evokes more positive attitudes towards the perceived quality and also increases the willingness of the customer to pay a higher price compared to those cuts of meat without PGI labels.

All the examples mentioned above show a clear effect of COO strategies. However, most of studies, like the ones mentioned before, focus on individual COO strategies and their influence on different variables (e.g. attitude towards product, intention to buy, etc.). Very few studies have attempted to compare the use of COO strategies to find out whether the use of one COO strategy is more effective than the other. Roozen and Raedts (2013) investigated the effects of the use of COO language in slogans and buildings related to COO on four different variables: attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product, purchase intention and perceived quality. The study showed that COO buildings had an effect on the four variables, whereas COO language in the slogan did not have significant influence on any of the variables. Although this study did compare two different COO strategies (language and buildings), both markers are considered to be implicit (Aichner, 2014) and therefore do not offer any information regarding possible differences between implicit and explicit markers.

Furthermore, Hornikx and van Meurs (2017) in their study 2, compared the effect of COO language in slogans with the effect of the use of a COO flag. It was found that associations evoked by an ad with COO language did not differ from those evoked by an ad with COO flag. According to Aichner (2014), COO flag and symbols are considered to be both an implicit and explicit strategy. Therefore, it may be interesting to further investigate possible differences between implicit and explicit COO strategies by using exclusively implicit and explicit COO markers.

The present paper aims to compare implicit and explicit COO markers in order to find out whether there is an effect of the use of implicit or explicit strategies on consumers' evaluations of quality, attitudes and purchase intention. Research on this topic may help organizations to decide on the best COO marker to use according to their specific goals.

Current research and decision-making process

In order to find out whether differences between explicit and implicit COO markers exist, four COO strategies were selected from the list provided by Aichner (2014): two implicit COO

strategies (use of typical landscapes or famous buildings from the COO and use of famous or stereotypical people from the COO), and two explicit COO strategies ('Made in...' and COO embedded in the company name).

The reason for selecting these four COO strategies is that there has been little research on the effect of all of them (with the possible exception of 'Made in...' which has been more investigated) therefore, it might be interesting to see whether these four COO markers have indeed any significant effect on consumers. "Made in" was selected because unlike the rest of the COO strategies, this strategy is more commonly used, and it is more regulated by law in different countries such as the US (Aichner, 2014)

Comparing implicit and explicit COO strategies could lead to some valuable results for advertisers and international organizations. For instance, it could help them to identify the best strategies to achieve particular goals such as improve purchase intention or attitude towards the product.

Therefore, the research question that this paper will attempt to answer is:

To what extent are there differences in the effects of explicit and implicit COO markers?

To help us answering this question the following sub-questions will be asked:

- a. To what extent there is a difference between explicit COO strategies and implicit COO strategies in their effect on attitude towards the product?
- b. To what extent there is a difference between explicit COO strategies and implicit COO strategies in their effect on attitude towards the advertisement?
- c. To what extent there is a difference between explicit COO strategies and implicit COO strategies in their effect on perceived quality of the product?
- d. To what extent there is a difference between explicit COO strategies and implicit COO strategies in their effect on purchase intention?
- e. To what extent are there differences between implicit and explicit COO strategies with regard to consumer's ability to link product with the COO?

Methodology

Materials

Five advertisements were created, each one of them containing a different COO strategy: two explicit COO strategies (“Made in...”, COO embedded in the company name), and two implicit COO strategies (buildings from COO and stereotypical people from COO), and one containing no COO marker which will serve as a baseline.

A pre-test was carried out in order to identify the buildings and stereotypical people that best represented the COO (see Appendix 1). For instance, in order to know which building people associate with France, three different options were offered to the participants. Using different seven-point Likert-scale items, participants indicated the degree of association of the buildings with France (e.g. “*This building makes me think of France*” with 1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree). The building with higher association score was selected to be shown in the advertisements. A similar procedure was applied to select the best fit of stereotypical person with COO. Appendix 2 shows all 15 different versions of the advertisements that were design for the experiment.

The other independent variable was COO advertised. This variable consisted of three levels: France, Spain and Italy. Previous studies have found a strong association of food products and these COO (Verlegh, Steenkamp and Meulenberg, 2005; Samiee, 1994; Roth & Romeo, 1992).

The products selected to be advertised in our experiment were food products. Research carried out by Kremers (2015) and de Vries (2015) showed that advertisements containing food products were more likely to make use of COO makers.

Subjects

Our research focused on The Netherlands. Therefore, our participants were all Dutch nationals. In total, 178 people took part in the study (age: $M = 37$, $SD = 14.68$; range 18-67; 73% women). The educational distribution was as followed: Basisschool 1, LBO (lower vocational education/VBO (prevocational secondary education)/ VMBO (prevocational secondary education) 8, MBO (medium-level tertiary vocational education) 47, HAVO (senior general secondary education/VWO (pre-university secondary education) 34, HBO (higher vocational education) 68 and WO (university education) 20.

Design

Our experiment had 5 (2 implicit COO markers + 2 explicit COO markers + 1 no marker) x 3 (COO product: Spain, Italy and France) design.

The design of our experiment was a mixed design. COO marker was a between-subject design whereas COO product was a between-subject. A base-line condition with an advertisement showing no COO markers was also shown.

Instruments

The questionnaire was developed in Dutch. The questionnaire started with a short introduction in which participants were explained the purpose of the questionnaire and the instructions.

Most studies on the effect of COO strategies used the following dependent variables to measure the effects on consumers: Attitude towards the product and purchase intention (Hornikx et al., 2013), perceived quality (Cameron & Eliot, 1994) and attitudes towards the advertisement (Roozen & Raedts, 2013). For the present study the same dependent variables were used. In order to find out to what extent our participants linked COO of the product with the COO strategy used, a single Likert-scale question was used (*to which country do you link the product shown in the ad?*).

Additionally, two background variables were investigated: the likeability of the product advertised measured using a single Likert-scale item (*I find the product in the ad nice*) as well as the familiarity of participants with COO measured using two Likert-scale items (*I visit Italy regularly* and *I speak Italian*)

For attitude towards the product two seven-point items were used: *This product is nice* and *I find this product attractive*; $\alpha = 0.82$ (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) (Hornikx et al., 2013). For purchase intention the statement *Buying this product is* was used and three seven-point items ranging from *Something that I would never do* to *Something that I would surely do*, *Something that I would not recommend to my friends* to *Something that I would recommend to my friends* and *Something that it is not for me for sure* to *Something that it is surely for me*; $\alpha = 0.91$ were used. For perceived quality, a single item on a seven-point scale was used: *The quality of this product is* (1= Very bad, 7= Very good) (Cameron & Eliot, 1994).

Lastly, for the attitude towards the ad the statement *This advertisement is* was used and five 7-point semantic scales items used by Roozen and Raedts, (2013) were also used in our questionnaire: negative/positive, Not attractive/attractive, Not convincing/convincing, Not credible/credible, Not interesting/interesting; $\alpha= 0.91$.

Procedure

The questionnaire was administered using the online tool survey Qualtrics. Participants were first presented with a short introduction to the experiment but were not told about the real aim of the research. Participants were also reminded that participation was voluntary and that they could quit at any moment. No incentive was offered.

Next, they were told they would look at 3 different advertisements. Each advertisement would be followed by a set of questions and they were told they were not allowed to go back to look at the advertisement while answering the questions. The average time that participants took to respond the questionnaire could not be calculated accurately since some of the participants left the questionnaire open. Therefore, the media response time reflects a more accurate estimate of the time participants took to respond the questionnaire which was seven minutes

Results

Manipulation check

Realism of the advertisements

A two-way analysis of variance with COO strategy and country as factors showed a significant main effect of COO strategy on realism of the ads. ($F(4,519) = 13.51, p <.001$). However, there was no significant main effect of country ($F(2,519) < 1$) and no significant interaction either ($F(8,519) < 1$). Table 7 displays mean scores and standard deviations of realism of the advertisements.

Table 7. Mean scores and standard deviation of realism of the advertisements in function of COO and COO strategy (1 = low; 7=high)

COO strategy	M	SD	n
Base line	4.57	1.05	38
Made in	4.03	1.39	31
COO name	3.77	1.33	35
Person	3.38	1.48	37
Building	3.23	1.63	37
Total	3.61	1.45	178

Advertisements including the “Made in” strategy ($M = 4.98$, $SD = 0.68$) were considered to be significantly more realistic than ads showing “COO name” strategy ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 0.92$) “COO building” strategy ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 1.31$) and “COO stereotypical person” strategy ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 1.11$).

Background variables

Product liking

A paired samples t-test showed a significant difference between Spain and France ($t(533) = 3.48$, $p = .001$), Spain and Italy ($t(533) = 15.28$, $p < .001$) and France and Italy ($t(533) = 10.05$, $p < .001$) with regard to the likeability of the products advertised. Pizza ($M = 5.81$, $SD = 1.15$) was found to be more likeable than Brie ($M = 4.84$, $SD = 1.87$) and Paella ($M = 4.51$, $SD = 1.51$).

Familiarity

With regard to familiarity with COO used in the experiments, two questions were asked to measure this. The first question was related to the frequency participants visit the COO. A paired samples t-test showed a significant difference between Spain and France ($t(533) = 14.90$, $p < .001$), Spain and Italy ($t(533) = 7.35$, $p < .001$) and France and Italy ($t(533) = 9.08$, $p < .001$). Participants reported that they visited France ($M = 4.62$, $SD = 1.64$) significantly more often than Spain ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 1.74$) and Italy ($M = 3.87$, $SD = 1.74$).

Additionally, the second question was related to the knowledge of the language from the COO.

A paired samples t-test showed a significant difference in knowledge of the language spoken in Spain and France ($t(533) = 13.95$, $p < .001$), Spain and Italy ($t(533) = 3.18$, $p = .002$) and France and Italy ($t(533) = 18.19$, $p < .001$). Participants reported that they had more knowledge of French ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 1.62$) than of Spanish ($M = 2.14$, $SD = 1.55$), and Italian ($M = 1.92$, $SD = 1.26$).

Main variables

Attitudes towards the ad

A two-way analysis of variance with COO strategy and country as factors showed a significant main effect of COO strategy on attitudes towards the ad ($F(4,519) = 2.79$, $p = .026$). Additionally, country was found to have a significant effect on attitude towards the ad ($F($

$2,519) = 3.17, p = .043$). However, the interaction effect between COO strategy and country was found to be non-significant ($F(8,519) < 1$). Table 2 displays the mean scores and standard deviations of attitudes towards the product.

With regard to the COO strategy, people that looked at the “Made in” strategy ($M=4.60, SD = 1.31$) showed significantly more positive attitudes towards the advertisement than people who looked at the advertisement with “COO stereotypical person” strategy ($p = .018$ Bonferroni-correction; $M=4.02, SD = 1.22$). The rest of the COO strategies did not differ significantly with regard to the attitude towards the ad (all p ’s $> .195$)

With regard to the country, Bonferroni post-hoc tests revealed no differences among the three COOs (all p ’s $< .072$).

Table 2. Mean scores and standard deviations of attitudes towards the advertisement in function of COO and COO strategy (1=negative; 7 positive)

	Spain			France			Italy			Total		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>									
Base line	4.14	1.31	38	4.44	1.26	38	4.35	1.39	38	4.31	1.31	114
Made in	4.56	1.14	31	4.58	1.36	31	4.67	1.45	31	4.60	1.31	93
COO name	4.22	1.11	35	4.40	1.33	35	4.47	1.29	35	4.36	1.24	105
Person	3.84	1.30	37	3.98	1.13	37	4.24	1.20	37	4.02	1.22	111
Building	3.69	1.32	37	4.55	1.51	37	4.27	1.41	37	4.17	1.45	111
Total	4.07	1.27	178	4.38	1.33	178	4.39	1.34	178	4.28	1.32	534

Attitude towards the product

A two-way analysis of variance with COO strategy and country as factors showed a significant main effect of COO strategy on product attitude ($F (4,519) = 3.85, p = .004$). Additionally, country was found to have a significant main effect on product attitude ($F (2,519) = 17.72, p < .001$). However, the interaction effect between COO strategy and country was found to be non-significant ($F (8,519) = 1.14, p = .335$). Table 3 displays the means cores and standard deviations of attitude towards the product.

With regard to COO strategy, people who looked at the advertisements displaying the “Made in” strategy ($M=4.71, SD = 1.17$) reported more positive attitudes towards the product than those who looked at the ads displaying the “COO building” strategy ($p = .027$ Bonferroni-correction; $M=4.23, SD = 1.15$). The rest of the COO strategies did not differ significantly with regard to the attitude towards the product (all p ’s $< .085$).

With regard to the country, people that looked at the advertisements from Italy $M=4.86$, $SD = 1.13$) reported higher attitude towards the product than those that looked at the ads from Spain ($p < .001$ Bonferroni-correction; $M=4.16$, $SD = 1.05$) and France ($p = .001$ Bonferroni-correction; $M=4.44$, $SD = 1.22$). French ads and Spanish ads did not differ significantly in their evaluations towards the product ($p = .053$; Bonferroni-correction).

Table 3. Mean scores and standard deviations of attitudes towards the product in function of COO and COO strategy (1=negative; 7=positive)

	Spain			France			Italy			Total		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>									
Base line	4.43	0.99	38	4.40	1.28	38	5.05	0.83	38	4.63	1.08	114
Made in	4.35	0.95	31	4.66	1.26	31	5.12	1.19	31	4.71	1.17	93
COO name	4.24	0.98	35	4.67	1.13	35	4.90	1.07	35	4.60	1.08	105
Person	3.87	1.20	37	4.08	1.22	37	4.93	1.17	37	4.29	1.27	111
Building	3.91	1.01	37	4.44	1.17	37	4.35	1.23	37	4.23	1.15	111
Total	4.16	1.05	178	4.44	1.22	178	4.86	1.13	178	4.48	1.17	534

Perceived quality

A two-way analysis of variance with COO strategy and country as factors showed a significant main effect of COO strategy on perceived quality ($F (4,507) = 3.26$, $p = .012$). Additionally, country was found to have a significant effect on product attitude ($F (2,507) = 10.98$, $p < .001$). However, the interaction effect between COO strategy and country was found to be non-significant ($F (8,507) = 1.55$, $p = .137$). Table 4 displays the mean scores and standard deviations of attitudes towards the product.

With regard to COO strategy, people who looked at the advertisements displaying the “Made in” strategy ($M=3.54$, $SD = 0.80$) evaluated the product higher with regard to quality than those who looked at the ad displaying the “COO building” strategy ($p = .010$ Bonferroni-correction; $M=3.18$, $SD = 0.96$). The rest of the COO strategies did not differ significantly with regard to the perceived quality of the product (all p 's $> .127$)

With regard to the country, people that looked at the advertisements from Italy ($M=3.48$, $SD = 0.83$) did not differ significantly to the people that looked at advertisements from France ($p > .05$, Bonferroni-correction; $M=3.43$, $SD = 0.84$) with respect to the perceived quality of the product. However, people that looked at advertisements from Italy perceived the products to be significantly higher in quality than those who looked at the advertisements from Spain ($p < .001$, Bonferroni-correction; $M=3.11$, $SD = 0.71$). Lastly, people that looked at French

advertisements ($p < .001$, Bonferroni-correction; $M = 3.43$, $SD = 0.84$) perceived the products significantly higher in quality than those people that looked at the Spanish advertisements.

Table 4. Mean scores and standard deviations of perceived quality in function of COO and COO strategy (1=negative; 7=positive)

	Spain			France			Italy			Total		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>									
Base line	3.27	0.61	36	3.59	0.66	32	3.41	0.65	34	3.42	0.65	102
Made in	3.45	0.72	31	3.54	0.80	31	3.64	0.87	31	3.54	0.80	93
COO name	3.20	0.58	35	3.28	0.89	35	3.54	0.85	35	3.34	0.79	105
Person	2.94	0.70	37	3.29	0.77	37	3.56	0.80	37	3.27	0.79	111
Building	2.75	0.76	37	3.48	1.01	37	3.29	0.96	37	3.18	0.96	111
Total	3.11	0.71	176	3.43	0.84	172	3.48	0.83	174	3.34	0.81	522

Purchase intention

A two-way analysis of variance with COO strategy and country as factors showed a significant main effect of country on purchase intention ($F(2,519) = 25.15$, $p < .001$). However, COO strategy was not found to have a significant effect on purchase intention ($F(4,519) = 1.31$, $p=.263$). Additionally, the interaction effect between COO strategy and country was found to be non-significant ($F(8,519) < 1$). Table 1 displays the mean scores and standard deviations of attitudes towards the product.

Participants who looked at the advertisements from Italy ($M=4.79$, $SD = 1.54$) reported higher purchase intention than those who looked at the advertisement from Spain ($p < .001$, Bonferroni-correction; $M=3.61$, $SD = 1.45$). At the same people that saw the advertisements from Spain reported significantly less intention to buy compared with people who saw the advertisements from France ($p < .001$, Bonferroni-correction; $M = 4.44$, $SD = 1.76$). Advertisements from France and Italy did not differ significantly with respect to purchase intention ($p>.05$).

Table 5. Mean scores and standard deviations of purchase intention in function of COO and COO strategy (1=low; 7=high)

	Spain			France			Italy			Total		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>									
Base line	3.72	1.32	38	4.68	1.64	38	4.77	1.63	38	4.39	1.60	114
Made in	4.03	1.39	31	4.60	1.75	31	5.01	1.59	31	4.54	1.62	93
COO name	3.77	1.33	35	4.56	1.75	35	4.49	1.62	35	4.27	1.60	105
Person	3.38	1.48	37	4.13	1.76	37	4.94	1.37	37	4.15	1.66	111
Building	3.23	1.63	37	4.28	1.92	37	4.78	1.55	37	4.10	1.81	111
Total	3.61	1.45	178	4.44	1.76	178	4.79	1.54	178	4.28	1.66	534

Link between COO and COO strategy

A Chi-square test showed a significant relation between COO and COO strategy ($\chi^2(4) = 16.11$, $p = .003$). Participants who saw the “COO name” strategy gave relatively more correct answers (95.2%) and relatively fewer correct answers (4.8%) compared to participants who saw the “COO building” strategy. The latter gave relatively fewer correct answers (80.2%) and relatively more incorrect answers (19.8%). Table 6 displays the results of the Chi-square test.

Table 6. Results of Chi-square test and descriptive statistics for the link between COO and COO strategies

Link to COO	COO strategy			
	Made in	COO name	COO person	COO building
Correct	87 (93.5%)	100 (95.2%)	94 (84.7%)	89 (80.2%)
Incorrect	6 (6.5%)	5 (4.8%)	17 (15.3%)	22 (19.8%)

Note. $\chi^2 = 16.11$, df = 4. Numbers in parentheses indicate column percentages.

* $p < .05$

Conclusion and discussion

The present study aimed at comparing implicit and explicit COO strategies to determine whether they evoke different attitudes in consumers. For this purpose, an experiment was carried out among Dutch participants using 2 implicit strategies (COO building and COO stereotypical person) and two explicit strategies (Made in and COO language).

Attitudes towards the advertisement.

For attitudes towards the advertisement, there is no sufficient evidence to claim that all explicit COO strategies generate different attitudes towards the advertisement compared to ads using implicit COO strategies. Results showed that this effect was only found between “Made in” (explicit COO strategy) and “COO stereotypical person (implicit COO strategy). Advertisements showing the “Made in” strategy evoked significantly more positive attitudes than the advertisements showing “COO stereotypical person”

Interestingly, when looking at the realism of the advertisements, ads displaying a “Made in” strategy were considered to be more realistic than those ads showing a stereotypical person. Therefore, such a difference in realism might have influenced the attitude towards the advertisement rather than the use of one COO strategy or another. Further research on this field

should take this into consideration when designing the materials for their research. More detailed suggestions are given in the limitations and suggestions section below.

Attitudes towards the product

Results revealed that attitudes towards the product advertised did differ between explicit and implicit COO strategies, but only between the ads using “Made in” strategy and “COO building”. Advertisements including “Made in” strategy evoked more positive attitudes towards the product advertised than advertisements showing “COO building” strategy did. Again, it is possible to see a difference between implicit and explicit COO strategies but only in two out of four ads used. Therefore, there is no enough evidence to claim that all implicit COO strategies will differ from explicit COO strategies with regard to product attitudes.

Our results differ from those found by Roozen and Raedts (2013) whose research showed an effect of COO building on attitudes towards the ad, attitudes towards the product, purchase intention and perceived quality when compared to COO language.

The difference in attitudes towards the product between these implicit and explicit COO strategies may have been caused by the likeability to the product itself and not by the COO strategy showed. For instance, pizza was found to be more likeable than paella and brie, and therefore when a “Made in” ad was presented together with a pizza, it might have evoked more positive attitudes not because of the strategy used but because of the likeability of the product itself. At the same time, paella was found to be least likeable out of the 3 products, therefore, when presented together with the product paella, it may evoke lower attitudes towards the product because of the lower likability of the product itself and not because of the COO used.

Further research should therefore take these influences into account when deciding the product to be used in the experiments. More details on this matter are given in the limitations and suggestions section below

Perceived quality

With regard to perceived quality, results showed a significant difference between explicit and implicit COO markers. Advertisements using the “Made in” strategy were found to be perceived significantly higher in quality in comparison with the advertisements showing “COO building” strategy. However, this did not apply for the rest of the COO strategies used.

It is worth mentioning that such results could have also been affected by other factors such as realism of the ad and or likeability of the product displayed. For instance, since advertisements showing “Made in” COO strategy were found to be more realistic, this evaluation could have also evoked a higher perceived quality. Product likeability could have also been a determinant; for instance, using “Made in” strategy together with pizza (which was found to be the most likeable product) could have caused higher perceived quality not because of the use of “Made in” but because of the product pizza.

Purchase intention

For purchase intention, results show no significant differences between implicit and explicit COO markers. Regardless of the COO strategy used, consumer’s purchase intention was relatively the same. What results suggested instead was an influence of country on purchase intention, with pizza as the product which consumer reported higher purchase intention for.

These results seem to differ from those found by Loureiro and Umberger (2003) whose results showed a willingness to pay a higher price for products containing the explicit COO strategy “Made in” compared to those without such label.

Link between COO and COO strategy

Results showed a significant difference between explicit strategy and implicit strategy and the link with COO. However, this difference was only observed for “COO name” and “COO building”. People that saw advertisements in which the COO was embedded in the brand name were more successful at linking the ad with the correct COO, whereas people who so advertisement showing a COO building were less successful in linking the advertisement with the correct COO.

In summary, results show a relative difference in the effect of implicit and explicit COO strategies but only for specific strategies and for specific variables: the “Made in” strategy evoked more positive attitudes towards the advertisement than “COO person”. “Made in” strategy evoke more positive attitudes towards the product than “COO building”. Ads using “Made in” strategy are perceived as higher in quality than ads using “COO building”. Ads using “COO name” were more often linked to the correct COO than ads using “COO building”. The only variable that seems not to be affected by the type of COO strategy was purchase intention.

Results mentioned above can be of interest for advertisers, particularly the results regarding purchase intention, which is not affected by the COO strategy used. This means that if advertisers are looking to increase consumers’ purchase intention, they should not rely on

COO markers to achieve that goal. Perhaps, the use of “Made in” labels in advertisements could be more effective if the aim of the advertisers is to influence consumers’ attitudes since this strategy was shown to influence attitudes the most.

However, as mentioned in the beginning of this paper, advertisers should be aware of the regulations and laws that exist in the different countries where they plan to advertise. Some countries such as the US have laws that regulate the use of this label and should be carefully taken into account when designing advertisements.

Limitations and suggestions

As it was mentioned above, there were some variables that may have influenced the results obtained. First, the realism of the advertisements used differed significantly depending on the COO strategy used. Further research should pay attention to this variable when designing the materials used.

Perhaps, a solution could be to pre-test the COO strategies used in the advertisements to make sure that all of them are perceived equally realistic and avoid realism from influencing results.

Secondly, the likeability of the product advertised was also found to be significantly different. A solution to this might be to use more ‘neutral products’ that are equally likeable. Conducting a pre-test to select the products used in the experiment could avoid the influence of this variable on the results obtained.

Another suggestion for further researchers would be to limit the number of items in the questionnaire. It was perceived from the participants that the number of questions in the questionnaire were too many and this might have led them to answer the questionnaire without really paying attention to the questions. Perhaps by reducing the number of products or the COO strategies analysed the number of items used in the questionnaire could lead to an increase of participants’ attention.

Lastly, since the questionnaire was distributed online, there was no way to have control on factors that could have caused distractions. Therefore, it is suggested to future researchers to administer the questionnaire face-to-face and in a quiet setting to avoid distractions.

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Appendix 1. Example pre-test for France

Beste deelnemer,

Deze enquête is onderdeel van ons onderzoek voor onze Bachelorscriptie voor de opleiding Communicatie- en Informatiewetenschappen aan de Radboud Universiteit. In deze enquête zullen wij onderzoeken hoe sterk de links zijn tussen bepaalde merknamen, etenswaren, gebouwen en personen en bepaalde landen.

Tijdens de enquête krijgt u telkens een merknaam of een foto van een gebouw, etenswaar of persoon te zien, gevolgd door enkele vragen. U zal per onderdeel van de enquête nog een gedetailleerde uitleg krijgen over wat er precies van u verwacht wordt. Het invullen van de enquête zal ongeveer 15 minuten duren.

Uw deelname aan dit onderzoek is vrijwillig en u heeft het recht om het onderzoek op elk moment stop te zetten door de enquête af te sluiten. Uw antwoorden zullen anoniem worden verwerkt en alleen gebruikt worden voor dit onderzoek.

Door deel te nemen aan dit onderzoek bevestigt u dat u:

- De bovenstaande informatie heeft gelezen
- Vrijwillig instemt met deelname aan dit onderzoek
- 18 jaar of ouder bent

Als u niet meer wil deelnemen aan dit onderzoek, weiger uw deelname dan door deze webpagina af te sluiten.

Mocht u nog verdere vragen hebben over uw deelname en het onderzoek, neem dan contact met ons op via het volgende email adres: s.potze@student.ru.nl

Wij danken u voor uw deelname.

Leon Boogaard
Mirthe Eskes
Catherine Denis
Ruben ter Haar
Sanne Potze
Alberto Villamil

Attitudes towards company names

Baguette Boulangerie Française

1. Hoe leuk vindt u de merknaam? → based on Leclerc et al. (1994)
Helemaal niet ----- Heel erg
2. Welk land associeert u met deze merknaam?

Croissant Pain de France

1. Hoe leuk vindt u de merknaam? → based on Leclerc et al. (1994)
Helemaal niet ----- Heel erg
2. Welk land associeert u met deze merknaam?

Brie de France

1. Hoe leuk vindt u de merknaam? → based on Leclerc et al. (1994)
Helemaal niet ----- Heel erg
2. Welk land associeert u met deze merknaam?

Macarons Pâtisserie de France

1. Hoe leuk vindt u de merknaam? → based on Leclerc et al. (1994)
Helemaal niet ----- Heel erg
2. Welk land associeert u met deze merknaam?

Frans eten



1. Dit eten is Frans

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

2. Dit is typisch eten uit Frankrijk

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

3. Ik associeer dit eten met Frankrijk

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

4. Dit eten doet me aan Frankrijk denken

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

5. Er wordt naar Frankrijk verwezen met dit eten

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

6. Er is een sterke link tussen Frankrijk en dit eten

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens



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4. Dit eten doet me aan Frankrijk denken

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

5. Er wordt naar Frankrijk verwezen met dit eten

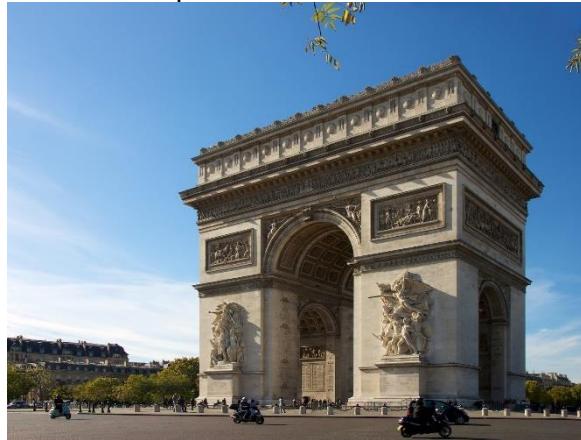
Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

6. Er is een sterke link tussen Frankrijk en dit eten

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

Gebouw herkenning Frankrijk

Arc de Triomphe



1. Dit gebouw is Frans

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

2. Dit is een typisch gebouw uit Frankrijk

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3. Ik associeer dit gebouw met Frankrijk

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5. Er wordt naar Frankrijk verwezen met dit gebouw

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6. Er is een sterke link tussen Frankrijk en dit gebouw

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1. Dit gebouw is Frans

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2. Dit is een typisch gebouw uit Frankrijk

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4. Dit gebouw doet me aan Frankrijk denken

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5. Er wordt naar Frankrijk verwezen met dit gebouw

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6. Er is een sterke link tussen Frankrijk en dit gebouw

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1. Dit gebouw is Frans

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2. Dit is een typisch gebouw uit Frankrijk

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3. Ik associeer dit gebouw met Frankrijk

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4. Dit gebouw doet me aan Frankrijk denken

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Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens



1. Dit gebouw is Frans

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

2. Dit is een typisch gebouw uit Frankrijk

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

3. Ik associeer dit gebouw met Frankrijk

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

4. Dit gebouw doet me aan Frankrijk denken

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

5. Er wordt naar Frankrijk verwezen met dit gebouw

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

6. Er is een sterke link tussen Frankrijk en dit gebouw

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

Stereotypical person



1. Deze persoon is Frans

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

2. Dit is een typisch persoon uit Frankrijk

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

3. Ik associeer deze persoon met Frankrijk

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

4. Deze persoon doet me aan Frankrijk denken

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

5. Er wordt naar Frankrijk verwezen met deze persoon

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

6. Er is een sterke link tussen Frankrijk en deze persoon

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens



1. Deze persoon is Frans

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

2. Dit is een typisch persoon uit Frankrijk

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

3. Ik associeer deze persoon met Frankrijk

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

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Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

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3. Ik associeer deze persoon met Frankrijk

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

4. Deze persoon doet me aan Frankrijk denken

Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

5. Er wordt naar Frankrijk verwezen met deze persoon

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Sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - deels mee oneens - neutraal - deels mee eens - mee eens - sterk mee eens

Appendix 2. Example of Main questionnaire for “Made in” strategy

Beste deelnemer,

Deze enquête is onderdeel van ons onderzoek voor onze Bachelorscriptie voor de opleiding Communicatie- en Informatiewetenschappen aan de Radboud Universiteit. In deze enquête krijgt u verschillende advertenties te zien, waarbij we u vragen om deze te beoordelen. Er zijn geen goede of foute antwoorden. Wij zijn geïnteresseerd in uw persoonlijke mening. De enquête zal ongeveer 15 minuten duren.

Uw deelname aan dit onderzoek is vrijwillig en u heeft het recht om het onderzoek op elk moment stop te zetten door de enquête af te sluiten. Uw antwoorden worden anoniem verwerkt en alleen gebruikt voor dit onderzoek.

Door deel te nemen aan dit onderzoek bevestigt u dat u:

- De bovenstaande informatie heeft gelezen
- Vrijwillig instemt met deelname aan dit onderzoek
- 18 jaar of ouder bent

Als u niet meer wil deelnemen aan dit onderzoek, weiger uw deelname dan door deze webpagina af te sluiten.

Mocht u nog verdere vragen hebben over uw deelname en het onderzoek, neem dan contact met ons op via het volgende email adres: s.potze@student.ru.nl

Wij danken u voor uw deelname.

Alberto Villamil
Catherine Denis
Leon Boogaard
Mirthe Eskes
Ruben ter Haar
Sanne Potze



In totaal krijgt u drie advertenties te zien. Na elke advertentie wordt u gevraagd om een aantal vragen te beantwoorden. U krijgt elke advertentie maar één keer te zien en u kunt niet terug naar de vorige pagina.

Attitude towards the quality

1 De kwaliteit van dit product is:

Zeer slecht - - - zeer goed → FIVE point semantic differential scale

Attitude towards the product

2 Dit product is leuk

Zeer sterk mee oneens - sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - neutraal - mee eens - sterk mee eens
- zeer sterk mee eens

3 Ik vind dit product aantrekkelijk

Zeer sterk mee oneens - sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - neutraal - mee eens - sterk mee eens
- zeer sterk mee eens

Attitude towards advertisement

4-8 Deze advertentie is

Negatief - - - - positief → SEVEN point semantic differential scale

Niet aantrekkelijk - - - - aantrekkelijk

Niet overtuigend - - - - overtuigend

Niet geloofwaardig - - - - geloofwaardig

Niet interessant - - - - interessant

Purchase intention

9-11 Dit product kopen is

Iets wat ik nooit zou doen - - - - iets wat ik zeker zou doen → SEVEN point semantic differential scale

Iets wat ik niet aan mijn vrienden zou aanraden - - - - iets wat ik aan mijn vrienden zou aanraden

Zeker niet iets voor mij - - - - Zeker iets voor mij

Link to COO

12 Aan welk land link je het product in de advertentie?

Open vraag

Background variables

13 Ik vind het product in de advertentie leuk

Zeer sterk mee oneens - sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - neutraal - mee eens - sterk mee eens
- zeer sterk mee eens

14 Ik gebruik het product in de advertentie regelmatig

Zeer sterk mee oneens - sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - neutraal - mee eens - sterk mee eens
- zeer sterk mee eens

15 Ik vind Spanje leuk

Zeer sterk mee oneens - sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - neutraal - mee eens - sterk mee eens
- zeer sterk mee eens

16 Ik associeer dit eten met Spanje

Zeer sterk mee oneens - sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - neutraal - mee eens - sterk mee eens
- zeer sterk mee eens

17 De advertentie is een goed voorbeeld van een realistische advertentie

Zeer sterk mee oneens - sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - neutraal - mee eens - sterk mee eens
- zeer sterk mee eens

Familiarity with the country (also a background variable)

18 Ik heb Spanje regelmatig bezocht

Zeer sterk mee oneens - sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - neutraal - mee eens - sterk mee eens
- zeer sterk mee eens

19 Ik spreek Spaans

Zeer sterk mee oneens - sterk mee oneens - mee oneens - neutraal - mee eens - sterk mee eens
- zeer sterk mee eens

Appendix 3. All the advertisements used in the experiment



