

# **Sustainability, to practice or to preach?**

**An investigation into how consumers perceive sustainability claims.**

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# 1. Introduction

For the past decade, there has been a huge economic growth due to increased consumer spending in the whole world, resulting in much more use of natural resources than before. This overuse of natural resources has caused severe environmental issues, as global warming (Chen & Chai, 2010). The environmental deterioration has become a general public concern and as social consumer movements are increasingly concerned with it (Polonsky, 2011), business and marketing literature has been spending a tremendous amount of attention to green marketing lately (Chamorro, Rubio, & Miranda, 2009).

Profit driven firms often seek to satisfy customers and they try to build long-term customer relationships, because satisfaction and commitment increase profitability and enhance chances for firms to survive in a competitive industry. While consumers increasingly cared for the environment, companies felt pressured to react and started to pay more attention to green marketing. It became a competitive advantage to have an environmentally friendly policy, because it triggered consumers who wanted to live more sustainable and generated an environmentally friendly purchasing commitment (Chen & Chai, 2010).

However, research found that such pressure for legitimacy can also result in decoupling processes, causing corporate responses that are rather symbolic or just non-substantive (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Okhmatovskiy and David, 2012; Oliver, 1991). Companies include sustainability issues in their overall policies, but often tend to fail implementing those policies in their activities (Marquis & Qian, 2014). Making sustainability claims of which they either not know how to put into practice or of which they just never intend to hold on to. Therefore, external stakeholders should be able to distinct the firms that say one thing and do the other, the so called decoupler firms, from those that actually intend to behave sustainable, the implementor firms (Crilly et al., 2016). But since they are not able to distinct one another, consumers do not always take sustainability claims seriously.

Having said that, Crilly et al. (2016) found a way to distinct decouplers from implementors. They argue that decouplers and implementors use different language styles. To understand, one needs to take into consideration the fact that the activities a company is involved in are objectively assessable. For instance, imagine that company X states that it has implemented new requirements for company cars. All employees are from now on driving electric cars. This statement is factual, it is not an opinion regarding which consumers could disagree. However, the fact that consumers cannot disagree, does not mean the statement is actually true. It might as well be a lie to attract more customers. This immediately results in a

challenge for consumers, since they will not always be able to verify whether statements are truthfully made. It is, referring to the previous example, impossible for a customer to check whether all of company X's employees really drive electric cars. They would not get full insight in the company's database. But despite these constraints, there is a way for customers to assess the truthfulness of firm's claims. Crilly et al. (2016) make a distinction between implementor claims and decoupler claims and argue that these distinct claims differ in the use of grammar. So although the activities a company is involved in may be objectively assessable, these activities can be described in different ways (Crilly et al., 2016). Social actors, including companies, make certain choices regarding the way things are said. However these grammar choices are often made subliminal, which makes it difficult to make them explicit. That applies to the one who sends the message as well as to the one who receives the message. Moreover, in contrast to the content they speak, which is adjusted easily, people turned out not to be very capable of manipulating the grammar they use. For that reason, grammar is a qualified aspect to use when analyzing company's statements in order to find out what their underlying intentions are (Ireland & Pennebaker, 2010). This theory is based on the cognitive-linguistic perspective, which assumes that a speakers language is connected to its mental representations, implicating that the latter determines the former (Hart, 2014). On basis of this analysis, Crilly et al. (2016) argue that there are two types of language, distinguishable by a different category of words. Inclusive language consists mainly of conjunctions, prepositions and some adverbs (like "and" or "additionally") and is used for exaggeration and making grand claims (Bond Jr. & DePaulo, 2006). Exclusive language consists mainly of conjunctions and prepositions as well, but is also prone to use negotiations (such as "versus", "but" or "if") (Pennebaker & King, 1999). Additionally, exclusive language is used to contrast different concepts, to qualify statements and to provide caveats all in order to distinct different ideas (König, 2002). In defining sustainability, decouplers and implementors tend to use different language styles. Decouplers generally use inclusive language and their statements are most of the time less cognitively complex than the ones of implementors (Newman et al., 2003), which is probably caused by the fact that it can be a mental challenge to not speak the (full) truth and deceivers therefore try to reduce cognitive load (Vrij, Granhag, & Porter, 2010). What implementors try to do by using exclusive language, is to qualify their firm's responsibilities, to prioritize them and to make clear what aspects are not part of them. Meanwhile they reject the popular thought that a firm needs to fulfill everyone's needs (Crilly et al., 2016). Decoupler firms in turn, see it differently. Executives of decoupler firms that were asked about their view on their firm's

responsibilities, responded they see it as being open ended. In addition to stressing the limitations of their responsibility, implementors use exclusive language to point out necessary compromises and trade-offs, which results in more speaking complexity as it communicates interdependencies between different dimensions of performance.

As Crilly et al. (2016) focused their attention on the perception of all kind of stakeholders and stakeholder groups, they never studied the relationship between the type of language used by firms in sustainability claims and consumer responses specifically on those sustainability claims. However, since consumers are getting more concerned with the wellbeing of the environment, it seems no less than useful to understand whether customers are capable of distinguishing different types of sustainability claims and to understand how they probably will respond. Although there is much literature available about sustainability and companies communicating it, there is not so much investigation of how (environmental) sustainability claims are perceived by consumers (Cummins et al., 2014). Furthermore, sustainability claims in marketing are aimed at attracting customers who care for the environment, which stresses the relevance of research into consumer responses. In addition to the corporate advantages, understanding an organization's communication offers convenience to consumers as well, as it enables them to make appropriate choices in their consumption behavior. Especially for consumers that are aware of environmental issues and intend to live sustainable, it appears to be difficult to do the right thing as nearly all companies seem to care about the environment. These consumer issues are for the majority caused by information asymmetry and as it probably is not very realistic to expect companies to admit they in fact lied about their sustainability commitments, consumers are dependent on other ways to distinguish decoupler firms from implementor ones, like analyzing their grammatical choices.

To see how consumers respond to different types of organizational language, this research will be focused on their attitude towards the firm, which refers to an overall evaluation of the brand and can be influenced by all kind of activities of the firm. Examples of influencing factors are new product launches (Keller & Lehmann, 2006) and brand or line extensions (Kirmani, Sood, & Bridges, 1999). Moreover, the way claims and messages of firms are framed, is mentioned as affecting attitude towards a brand as well (Fazio, 2007). Therefore, *type of language* used is expected to influence the attitude consumers hold towards a firm.

Having said that, the way in which consumers interpret firms communication is probably not just depending on the type of language which is used. Therefore, other factors should be taken into account. Specifically, factors considering personal differences. For

instance, the urge to which people are prone to take action upon climate change, is certainly different from individual to individual. The public perception of climate change can be abstract and distant, which may undermine climate action (Wang et al., 2019). It may also affect the extent to which consumers think organizations should take responsibility and consequently it is likely consumers react differently to claims that indicate a decoupling firm when they feel climate change is an abstract and distant concept rather than a particularly dangerous and close one. To see whether there is a difference on the outcomes of this research for consumers that perceive environmental concerns as distant rather than close, construal level is included as moderator. The construal level theory suggests objects or events that are perceived as psychological close, are construed in a concrete way, whereas those perceived as psychological distant are construed in an abstract way (Trope & Liberman, 2010).

### ***1.1 Research objective***

The objective of this study is to test the effect of *type of language used* in sustainability claims on consumer's *attitude towards the firm*. In order to extend existing literature on firm's sustainability practices and organization's deceiving way of communicating. The research question that will be answered in this regard is: What is the effect of *type of language used* in sustainability claims on consumer's *attitude towards the firm*?

### ***1.2 Relevance***

Green marketing has grown to be one of the most important trends in current business (Kassaye, 2001). Much of the research considering these green marketing trends, has been focusing on the typical green customer, the motivations behind their green purchasing behavior and the strategies to improve green product sales (Olsen, Slotegraaf, & Chandukala, 2014). However, less research has been conducted on considering the consequences of green advertising and there is only limited literature about the effects of sustainability claims on brand-specific aspects, while there are even some researchers suggesting certain marketing efforts are able to destroy a brand instead of building it (Ataman, Mela, & Van Heerde, 2008).

With regard to *type of language used* in green advertising, prior research was first focused on discovering the linguistic structures that are used to claim sustainable behavior and second on the reaction of all kind of stakeholders to the different uses of grammar (Crilly et al., 2016). This study intends to use those findings in order to expand theory about consumer

behavior in response to sustainability claims. Before, it was never made clear how consumers perceived language used by companies and this research contributes to that understanding.

Since consumers are reported to have growing concerns about the wellbeing of the environment and sustainability practices are being seen as a crucial factor in creating competitive advantage, it is important to come up with a green marketing strategy that is successful in order to profit from what are mostly expensive investments in sustainability. On the other hand, when businesses only see the financial advantages of social responsible behavior and external actors (e.g., consumers) do not have enough influence to steer firms in green directions, no effort will be made. The asymmetry of information plays a large role as to why stakeholders, like consumers, do not detect whether a firm implements its policies (Crilly et al., 2016). Consequently, consumers will be paying premium prices for products or services that are not created environmentally friendly. These decoupling firms will cash the premiums, but do not have the expenses actually policy implementing firms have. Which makes it extra difficult for implementing firms to deliver sustainable products for reasonable prices, because they require large investments (Chen & Chai, 2010). Additionally, since consumers can be deliberately suspicious when it comes to green advertising, it is crucial implementors have a profound understanding of advertisement strategies that will convince customers of their sustainable efforts (Chen & Chai, 2010).

### ***1.3 Overview***

In order to answer the research question adequately, in the following chapter all relevant theory will explained in an extensive literature overview. It will also consist of variable definitions in order to support the operationalization phase and a conceptual model to show the prospected relationships between the variables. The third chapter gives a methodology overview, describing the execution phase of the research. The fourth chapter provides the results as on which conclusions are made in the fifth chapter. This final chapter will also give some implications for future research.

## 2. Literature review

In the literature review an extensive theoretical framework is presented which first elaborates on sustainability and claiming sustainability. Thereafter, an explanation is given of the cognitive linguistic perspective and its role in tracking implementors and deceivers in sustainability claims. Followed by a conceptualization of consumer *attitude towards the firm* and finally, the moderators are specified and linked to the concept of *type of language used* and attitude.

### **2.1 Sustainability**

In current times, sustainability is considered a tremendously important business aspect. Environmental sustainability was a concept that started to grow around the 1960's, probably initiated by the launch of Rachel Carson's book 'Silent Spring' which firstly stressed the negative consequences human activities have on the environment and secondly suggested that those human activities are mainly due to economic factors (Kilbourne & Beckmann, 1998). For the past century, humankind has faced seemingly unlimited economic growth and increasing prosperity. The efforts that were made in the industrial revolutions, caused a tripling in income per capita globally, a massive increase of approximately two thirds in average life expectancy and an incredibly well-educated population (Hoffman & Bazerman, 2007). Industrial developments, like medicines, communication and food production, enabled all those prosperity improvements. In the second half of the twentieth century, however, people began to wonder whether the commonly held assumption that the earth would provide unlimited resources was realistic. On top of that, the concern started to grow that not all people got equally benefitted by the growing prosperity, because many did not have access to all the opportunities this world had to offer. Both problems, the limited resource availability and the non-equally shared prosperity, were recognized to be caused by corporate activities, making organizations the source of social and environmental problems. Although, somewhat later in time the thought arose that industry could be part of the solution as well, a large amount of studies followed, discussing concerns regarding human consumption practices and the environment as something that needs to be protected (Cummins et al., 2014). Built upon the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR), other studies focused on how to coincide sustainability and marketing activities (Mitchell, Wooliscroft, & Higham, 2010). The environmental concern, however, stopped being limited to scientists and started to grow on investors, policy makers and even consumers (Epstein & Roy, 2003) (Hart, 2007). Being sustainable is already characterized as an emerging megatrend by Lubin & Esty (2010), which makes it impossible for companies not

to be concerned and forces them to implement sustainability rightfully in their activities. Lubin & Esty (2010) further note that the majority of company leaders are fully aware of the consequences a mismanaged reaction to the sustainability challenge can have for competitiveness, and in worst case scenario, even for the survival of their organizations.

While most of the researchers and companies agree that environmental sustainability is a matter of increasing importance, they are not always congruent in thinking what sustainability actually contains (Hoffman & Bazerman, 2007). The Bruntland definition is the most basic one and states that sustainability is about meeting the needs of present generations without compromising on the ability of future generations to meet theirs. This definition is really broad and inclusive, but also abstract. Therefore, many studies extended on the Bruntland definition by using a triple bottom line like the three E's (economy, environment and social equity) or the three P's (people, planet and profit) (Elkington, 1998). In addition, some academics make sustainability an even broader concept by including eco-efficiency, corporate social responsibility, transparency and inclusion (Holliday, Schmidheiny, & Watts, 2002).

Hoffman and Bazerman (2007) acknowledge that although firms have positive influence on the environment by creating economic growth which enhances human prosperity, they also impact the environment negatively through the large amount of resource extraction and pollution emissions that are needed to let the economy grow. This negative impact has become even more vivid and severe through increased globalization. Firms tend to expand their commercial activities abroad and become consequently larger and more powerful. This development makes it impossible to tackle the sustainability challenge without the support of corporate organizations for several reasons (Hoffman, 2005). First, organizations need materials, labor and energy. Management decisions regarding which of those inputs to use and what to do with outputs and waste for a significant part determines social and environmental well-being, implying that organizations are directly responsible for sustainability related problems (Hoffman & Bazerman, 2007). Second, corporate organizations are usually the ones that come up with technical innovations. Having specified knowledge makes them able to understand what good and what harm an innovation will do. Furthermore, they tend to oversee the economic aspects of innovation as well, which is easily overlooked by corporate critics who rather see systemic change. Third, an increasing amount of policy makers suggest to include organizations in regulatory processes for the reason that governments tend to fail in prescribing solutions to organizations due to a lack of resources and knowledge at government agencies in comparison to firms. Fourth, as mentioned before, the impact and power of organizational

activities have been growing tremendously, which led to the growth of firm's ability to influence the structure of social, economic and even political activity. As a consequence, corporate organizations nowadays have the resources they need to be more efficient in creating coordinating mechanisms that result in solutions to challenges regarding sustainability. Think of all the innovative solutions companies already have come up with, both on the environmental and social challenges. The automotive industry for instance invented the hybrid car in the late twentieth century, followed by the electric car and even fuel cell cars all in order to reduce harmful emissions. To cover more socially related problems, they came up with the options for car sharing and private lease, so that people who could not afford a car, could still drive one. Fifth, as solutions to environmental struggles might change the market, companies should be enabled to make a profit out of it instead of getting financially harmed (Hoffman, 2005).

## ***2.2 Sustainability claims***

For firms to make a profit out of their sustainable activities, they will need to have customers that buy their sustainable products or services. To enhance demand for environmentally friendly products, companies use green advertising (Wong, Turner, & Stoneman, 1996). Green advertising, which can also be called environmental advertising (Davis, 1993), is the response of marketers to the increased awareness and concerns of consumers with the environmental conditions, by advertising and marketing their products as being environmentally-improved or environmentally sensitive (Davis, 1993).

It probably does not come as a surprise, that environmental advertising turned out to be a success. Most of the consumers reacted to this kind of advertising by either purchasing the product or service or rejecting it based on the environmental aspects (Dunlap & Scarce, 1991). Additionally, consumers did not mind to pay an extra for an environmentally friendly product which enabled companies to apply a price premium (Dunlap & Scarce, 1991). Based on the massive increase in green products, it is to say that marketers believed in green consumers as one of the main marketing targets, since consumers actually seemed to care for contributing to environmental improvement (Davis, 1993). However, shortly after, marketers faced some slight problems with environmental advertising. First, because there was a significant abuse of sustainability claims, causing all kind of regulatory difficulties for green advertising. Second, marketers had some troubles getting consumers to abandon their traditional brands and embracing the green alternative. Davis (1993) believes that fixing the first problem does not guarantee a successful environmental marketing strategy and proposes a successful strategy

will result out of properly identifying and satisfying the needs and requirements consumers have. A marketer should really understand a consumer's perspective. Therefore, he presents insights in what factors could enable a successful environmental marketing campaign.

First, marketers use a certain degree of specificity in the claims they make regarding sustainability. Marketers that create specific advertisements come up with specified sustainability claims which show tangible and concrete aspects of the product benefitting the environment, supported by objective, factual information (Davis, 1993). An example of specific advertising in the coffee to-go market could be: 'Due to the use of carton as building material for the coffee cups, this cup is now for 50% more recyclable.' In contrast, some marketers used rather unspecified and vague sustainability claims. These claims, which are made out of abstract and ambiguous wording, are not supported by any factual or objective information. An example would be: 'Better materials, less waste, less pollution.' Although the differences tend to be small, consumers are usually perfectly capable to point out which companies use vague claims and which use specific ones. Also, consumers are proven to be sensitive to the difference and are inclined to respond more positive to specific claims in comparison to vague ones. Therefore, Davis (1993) determined the underlying criteria consumers use to distinguish specific claims from vague ones and argued why they rather have specific sustainability advertisements. That is first, because specific advertisements give detailed information that can help for consumers to distinct one product from another and to see the clear difference. This consequently enables them to make the decisions they prefer. Consumers do not only see the difference between vague and specific claims, but they also believe that companies should provide them with specific information in their advertising, especially when it concerns a firm's environmental activities. Consumers want those claims to be specific, informative and detailed (Davis, 1993). Only if that is the case, they can make consumption decisions that are in line with their beliefs and act in an environmentally responsible manner. The second criteria consumers use, is that they want sustainability claims to be about real benefits. Firms tend to use superiority claims (Davis, 1993), with which marketers stress the dominance of their product against the ones of competitors, while their product is in fact not superior. Imagine a vacuum cleaner manufacturer claiming there is no product on the market that is more efficient on electricity than this vacuum cleaner, while there are at least a dozen products on the market that have comparable efficiency. In fact, this manufacturer does not really lie and therefore it is not forbidden. Still, consumers do not think it is appropriate and will not accept this implied superiority claims in the surroundings of environmental advertising. The third criterium Davis (1993) discovered is

claims regarding sustainability need to reflect meaningful benefits from a consumers standpoint of view. The benefits reflected should sincerely be improving environmental conditions and it must be understandable for consumers how the claimed benefit helps to improve those conditions. Sustainability claims that are only slightly related to environmental improvement will probably be rejected by consumers. Based on these three requirements, consumers assess the specificity of sustainability claims. When they perceive the claims to be vague instead of specific, they tend perceive these companies as being manipulative, deceptive and unethical (Davis, 1993). In addition, consumers do not believe those companies have a genuine desire to improve environmental conditions. Specific sustainability claims, however, cause positive consumer evaluations regarding the product as well as the company.

These findings are supported by Cummins et al. (2014), as they also remark a growing consumer skepticism towards the truthfulness of environmental advertising claims, explained by the absence of depth and meaning in environmental advertising. In accordance with this view, Puntoni et al. (2010) believe this consumer skepticism is due to the sustainability claims being vague. Consequently, advertising polysemy arises, which means that consumers tend to interpret the content of the environmental advertisements differently.

### ***2.3 Cognitive linguistic perspective***

Taking into consideration what is discussed before, it is a fact that consumers distinct specific sustainability claims from vague ones. Whats more, they tend to have a preference for the specific claims over the vague ones. Be that as it may, consumer's ability to distinct the degree of specificity does not necessarily reflect their ability to assess the truthfulness of companie's environmental claims, since there is no evidence that the degree to which a claim is specific is a proper measure of companie's true intentions in claiming sustainability. That said, there would be no way for consumers to discover the truthfulness of sustainability claims.

However, Crilly et al. (2016) investigated sustainability claims and discovered they could assess the sincerity of organizations intentions by using the cognitive-linguistic perspective. To explain this theory, some background information regarding language and cognitive coordination is required.

To understand the cognitive-linguistic perspective, one first needs to understand the way human conversations work. One of the main devices of linguistic coordination in a conversation is finding common grounds. That is, people will try to find matching cognitive frameworks (e.g., shared values or shared knowledge) and will converse about it (Ireland & Pennebaker,

2010). This process of cultivation does not happen necessarily by intention, what happened to be the traditional idea among cognition studies (Clark & Brennan, 1991), but could also be initiated automatically. In fact, the idea that common ground is the automatic result of different cognitions that get together is currently the more accepted theory (Pickering & Garrod, 2004). This thought is well aligned with the evidence-based idea that the human brain tends to prefer quick and dirty over complex and precise calculations (Ferreira & Patson, 2007).

This tendency to find common ground is not limited to face-to-face conversations. Instead, humans are inclined to synchronize with others in all kinds of situations where language is applied, even if there is no natural person involved (Ireland & Pennebaker, 2010). This results, for instance, in authors unconsciously imitating each other. Within this concept of people imitating each other, there is an important distinction to make, namely between language content and style (Ireland & Pennebaker, 2010). Content is the basic, substantive information the text tries to deliver. It regards what the writer is writing about and is mainly covered by the use of nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. The style of a text is the way in which one is trying to deliver the content. It deals with how the writer is writing and is covered by a wide range of pronouns, prepositions, articles, conjunctions and auxiliary verbs, which together are called function words. Although the style words do not have any value in itself, they can still provide clues that give us the direction of marketers intention.

So, as opposed to focusing on the content of texts, cognitive language perspectives start with the assumption that the way in which humans formulate their ideas, strongly reflects their mental representations. Which makes grammar a highly important and meaningful aspect to study in regard to sustainability claims. The focus on style words is profoundly fascinating, since it is not the natural aspect of language one would use to figure out what a text could mean. It would, therefore, make more sense to focus analyses on content. But, it may indeed be more fruitful to rely on the aspects that cannot be controlled. The style aspects are, however, a little hard to comprehend compared to the basic content.

Grammar is about the aspects that are not considered to be content. It is not what people try to say, but merely how they express themselves. Grammar is in essence an element of support to understand and take part in the world (Langacker, 2008). It makes communicating easier and more effective. As described earlier, facts are, though objective, describable in different ways. So, the actual content will not always tell the reality put into perspective. Firms will always try to manipulate the message they send out to improve their image. Take in mind the following example. A large travel company which initiates journeys by bus across the whole

European continent, currently has a hundred coaches in its line-up. Recently, the firm has purchased one brand-new coach that is being driven by electric motors that do not cause any emission. However, the technology around electric coaches is still in its early days and due to the limited amount of batteries, this electric bus is only capable of driving 250 kilometers before it runs out of power. Therefore, this bus is only useful for intra-country tours that do not exceed the range of 250 kilometers. It will only be used for demonstration purposes and small trips, like school excursions. Though these trips do not count very much on the total distance all hundred coaches are driving, it still reduces the whole fleets average CO<sub>2</sub> emission per kilometer. Even if it is only by the tiniest bit, this fact cannot be proven wrong. The travel company set off a marketing campaign in which they stated; ‘because we care about the environment, we reduced the CO<sub>2</sub> emission of our busses.’ Although this statement is factually true, it is not really put into perspective. It is rather unspecific and vague. The company using vague terms to stress their concern for the environment, might indicate a self-serving strategy in which the company does not want consumers to know much of the specifics. Which it in this case does, because pointing out specific facts would devalue the claim of sustainability. Imagine they would have stated instead; ‘because we care for the later life of our children and grandchildren, we managed to reduce our fleets average CO<sub>2</sub> emission per kilometer with 5 gram to 635.’ This statement does not seem to be a real effort and does most certainly not seem to be of significant help to reduce global warming. Releasing it, would not be in the advantage of the travel company. So, even though both statements are describing the same fact and do not mention anything that is untrue, consumers will still perceive them very differently. Although it is hard to come up with exemplary materials considering cognitive processes and the above example does not really cover any subconscious thinking, it does already illustrate the way in which communications can be manipulated in order to take advantage of the situation.

As we have seen now, the content of communications is very easily manipulated. The way this content is expressed, however, is not (Ireland & Pennebaker, 2010). Grammar is, for that reason, a capable tool for distinguishing deceptive claims from truthful ones (Crilly et al., 2016). One of these distinguishing elements is that deceiving messages evidentially have a simpler structure compared to truthful messages, which tend to put ideas in perspective and take a more contrasting view (Newman et al., 2003).

To provide a more sophisticated insight into the characteristics of these different types of claims, Crilly et al. (2016) compared the language used by implementors of sustainability claims to the language used by decouplers. They revealed that implementors of sustainable

policies conveyed their claims regarding sustainability in the form of exclusive language. This type of language uses conjunctions, prepositions and negations to put concepts against each other, make qualifying statements and protests, which are all set to draw distinctions between ideas. Words that are commonly used to express exclusive language are ‘versus’, ‘but’, ‘only’, ‘not’ and ‘if’ (Pennebaker & King, 1999). Companies that are not sincere in their sustainability claims are called decouplers or deceivers and they tend to express their claims through inclusive language. Decouplers use a different category of words that for the majority exists out of conjunctions, prepositions and some adverbs and they use these words to make exaggerations and for doing grand claims (Bond Jr. & DePaulo, 2006). Words that are commonly used to express inclusive language are ‘and’ and ‘additionally’.

With implementors using exclusive language, they provide a sophisticated view on the particular issue giving more specific information about the commitments at hand (Crilly et al., 2016). The underlying reason for implementors giving more specific information than decouplers, might be that it is mentally taxing to not tell the (entire) truth (Newman et al., 2003). To rephrase, it is not easy to deceive and therefore it is convenient to drop the cognitive load of linguistic expressions (Vrij, Granhag, & Porter, 2010), and to use scripted language and simple expressions instead (DePaulo, et al., 2003).

Being more specific about sustainability practices enables implementors to put limits to the conceptual idea of sustainability and to set boundaries to their own responsibility. Companies cannot save the world or deliver a better life to everyone. Instead, they need to prioritize and to make some necessary trade-offs and compromises. Implementor firms are not afraid to highlight those aspects of their sustainability practices. In contrast to implementors, Crilly et al. (2016) found decouplers to be less inclined to devalue their responsibilities regarding sustainability issues. On the contrary, they considered their responsibilities as limitless. The commonly used words by decouplers discussed before, ‘and’ and ‘additionally’, indicate numerations with which decouplers refuse to prioritize sustainability concepts, but instead stress their equality. Also, some decouplers mentioned a certain group of stakeholders as the important stakeholders, usually shareholders, which is typical for people holding extreme views or not being entirely open (Conway et al., 2008).

Besides differences in specificity, implementors and decouplers tend to use different time frames in their communications as well (Crilly et al., 2016). Implementor firms were inclined to refer to things they made happen in the past while decoupler firms would rather

emphasize future commitments. Apparently it is more difficult to lie about things that did not happen in the past than to lie about things that are not going to happen in the future.

Crilly et al. (2016) tested on several groups of stakeholders to see whether they were able to distinguish implementors from decouplers based on firm's communications. Overall, the dependent variable 'perceived sustainability performance' had a higher value for implementor firms than for decoupler firms. This investigation in stakeholder responses was focused on two groups with which a wide variety of stakeholders was covered. That is, industry structure and socio-political stakeholders on the one hand, and resource-providing stakeholders on the other hand, the latter including customers. However, Crilly et al. (2016) did not directly involve consumers in their study, but rather approached their representatives, such as customer groups. Therefore, it is still not known how actual consumers respond to the communication of implementor or decoupler firms.

#### ***2.4 Attitude towards the firm***

This gap in knowledge is actually quite disturbing, as a firm's well-being is especially dependent on consumer evaluations, since they will not consume at a company that does not fit their values. The way consumers evaluate firms is reflected in consumers attitude towards the firm, which is also called brand attitude. It refers to a consumers overall evaluation of the brand and covers cognitive, behavioral and affective intentions (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Although attitudes are usually relatively stable and uneasily influenced once they are formed, past studies have suggested that attitudes still can be influenced by some marketing activities (Keller & Lehmann, 2006). Furthermore, actions with regard to corporate social responsibility enable consumers even more to identify themselves with a company than traditional positioning strategies, because it humanizes the company (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003).

The cognitive part of consumer evaluations is influenced through the belief of consumers that companies can offer other functional benefits as they can deliver corporate social responsible practices (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2007). The identity companies build by applying a sustainable strategy, is one to be easily identified with by consumers (Reed, Acquino, & Levy, 2007). So, when claiming to be sustainable, companies launch a specific identity that influences cognitive evaluations of the brand.

Besides the cognitive part, consumer attitudes have an affective part as well. And on this attitudinal aspect, deceptive behavior of outside actors is highly influential (Laufer, 2003). Whereas actually executed corporate social responsibility activities generate positive affective

evaluations, this affection gets heavily damaged when firms appear to lie about, for instance, their sustainability efforts. Mainly, because deceiving decreases trustworthiness, which vanishes positive evaluations (Olsen, Slotegraaf & Chandukala, 2014).

The third and final part of consumers brand attitude is the behavioral aspect. This behavioral aspect is mainly reflected by purchase intention. Again, actively participating in socially responsible activities will raise purchase intention. The image companies have regarding their socially responsible behavior has a positive influence on purchase intention. Consumers are even willing to pay an extra if products are made in an environment friendly process. But, that will only do the job as long as claims firms make regarding sustainability are actually true. It makes sense if purchase intentions will fall along with cognitive evaluations when companies turn out to decouple on claims. Therefore, it is expected attitude to the firm will be negatively influenced by inclusive language styles used by organizations.

According to the description of attitude to the firm above, it is *expected type of language used* affects attitude towards the firm. Therefore, the first hypothesis is:

*H1: Consumer attitude towards the firm is more positive for firms that use exclusive language than for those using inclusive language.*

## **2.6 Construal level theory**

While it is expected that the type of language used by companies in their sustainability related advertisement campaigns, is of significant influence on the attitude consumers have towards firms, this attitude cannot only be related to firm specific characteristics. That is, as long as people do not have similar feelings and thoughts with regard to climate change and its possible consequences, they will feel differently about every sustainability-related action. Consequently, they will, possibly unconsciously, use different measures of assessment in evaluating companies sustainability claims.

This individual perception of climate change has been thoroughly reviewed in literature and, based on this body of evidence, McDonald, Chai & Newell (2015) concluded the key variable in the different evaluations on climate change is one's perception of climate change as a distant phenomenon. As the perceived psychological distance to climate change increases, the public concern together with the individually perceived urge for change decreases. The European Commission has for instance issued a report in which it states the insufficient public support for climate change constraining actions, is due to people's perceptions of climate

change as a distant threat (European Commission, 2011): it can only affect strangers or at least it will not be affecting my personal situation for a long period of time (Fleury-Bahi, 2008; Lorenzoni, Nicholson-Cole, & Whitmarsh, 2007).

The theory on psychological distance is based on the construal level theory (CLT), on which Trope & Liberman (2010) did much research. According to their research, people can have different perceptions with regard to the psychological closeness of certain objects, which will lead to different individual levels of construal. CLT assumes people can only directly experience the situation as it is present (Brügger, Morton, & Dessai, 2016). For all things or events that are anyhow removed from this current situation, a mental construal is required. The more distant an object or event is from the current situation to someone, the more effort he or she will need to construe it and the higher the level of construal. High construal levels result in abstract and generalized mental presentations (Brügger et al., 2016). Vice versa, construal of the current situation is very easy and requires only low levels of construal, resulting in very specific mental representations that are rich in information. So, in other words, depending on the perceived closeness of objects, people tend to construe things in abstract or in rather concrete ways.

Then, based on these mental representations, people form certain judgements and decisions, affecting their behavioral intentions (Trope & Liberman, 2010). However, the relationship between construal level and behavior is not irrefutable. That is, construal level only influences what intentions are based on and it does not directly impact motivation to act (Brügger et al., 2016).

#### *Construal level and emotions*

According to Brügger et al. (2016), two mental constructs affect how people feel about climate change and consistently respond. These factors, fear and skepticism, are both related to construal level, as they both belong to or cause different levels of construal. For this study, these are used to illustrate how construal level can influence the way consumers respond to different styles of language with regard to sustainability.

Fear is, together with feelings of among others pain, anger and sadness, considered a low level construal emotion. These are spontaneous reactions, and with these emotions present, there is no construal process involved (Liberman, Trope, & Stephan, 2007). That is, because the relevant object or event caused these emotions, it is perceived without distance. Applying this information to the context of climate change, fear is considered as a driver of personal

actions, as well in general as for environmentally related topics (Maibach, Roser-Renouf, & Leiserowitz, 2008; Moser, 2007). Consumers that fear the consequences climate change will probably have, perceive its risk to be higher and are more prone to change their attitude with regard to sustainability (Leiserowitz, 2006). Therefore, we expect consumers with low levels of construal to react with more aversion to decoupling messages and thus to change their attitude towards the firm more negatively.

Conversely, climate skepticism is relevant in this context, because it is an emotion related to rather high levels of construal resulting in abstract and undetailed representations of climate change. Therefore, it influences and minimizes people's motivation to be involved in climate change constraining activities (Lorenzoni et al., 2007). After all, why would someone be willing to put any effort in climate change restraining activities if he or she does not even believe climate change is ever going to be a real threat to humanity. Consequently, it would be senseless for a climate skepticist to change its attitude towards a firm based on its presumably false claims with regard to its sustainability practices. As a result, it is expected high levels of construal will affect the attitudes consumers will adopt with regard to companies based on their way of communicating their sustainability policies.

In accordance with these findings, the following hypotheses were proposed:

*H2a: Low levels of construal result in a deteriorated effect on consumer's attitude towards the firm.*

*H2b: High levels of construal result in an enhanced effect on consumer's attitude towards the firm.*

## 2.6 Conceptual model

The conceptual model shows how these concepts are expected to relate to each other (figure 1).

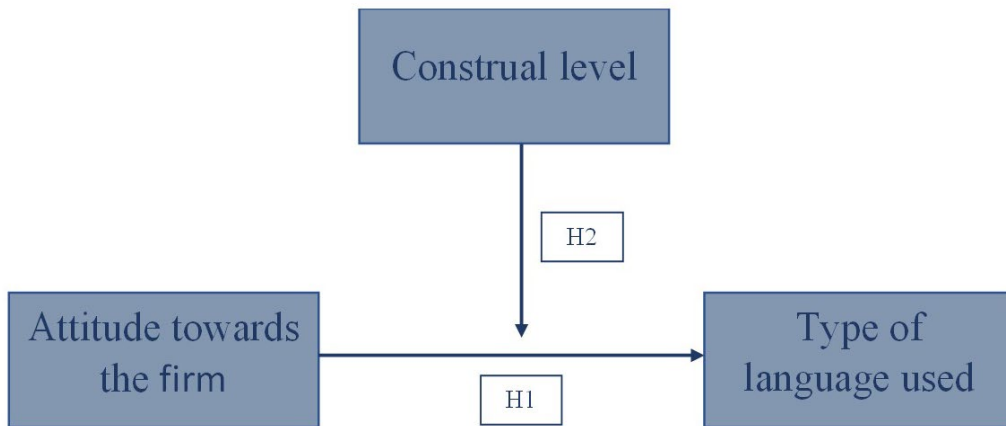


Figure 1 Conceptual model

### 3. Methodology

In this part the research design is presented, including the stimuli development. Afterwards, the experiment procedure is explained, followed by the operationalization of the variables.

#### *3.1 Research design*

In order to answer the research question properly and to understand how consumers respond to different kind of sustainability claims, an empirical study is required. Because the objective of this study is to test the effect of type of language used in sustainability claims on consumer attitude to the firm and since the independent variable consists of two levels (i.e., inclusive and exclusive language), this study contains two different situations. Therefore, an experimental research will be conducted. An experimental research requires certain components (e.g., variables that can be measured, quantified and compared) and is different from other research strategies for the reason that is executed in a controlled environment (Harland) created by the researcher. Additionally, according to Field (2013) an experiment is the most suitable way to investigate a causal relationship, since it is able to isolate the causes and effects by manipulating the independent variables. In this study, the controlled environment consisted of two conditions, dividing the respondents in two groups. In both situations respondents were exposed to advertisements claiming organizations sustainability. However, under the first condition respondents were displayed ads with inclusive language and under the second condition respondents were displayed ads with exclusive language.

#### *Stimuli development*

For this research, the independent variable *type of language used* was manipulated leading to a two-conditional between-subject design eliminating the risk of within-process learning. In table 3.1 the two experimental conditions are displayed.

<b>Experimental condition</b>	<b>Type of language used</b>
Condition 1	Inclusive language
Condition 2	Exclusive language

*Table 3.1. Research design.*

In accordance with prior experimental research in this field, fictitious advertisements belonging to a fictitious company were developed to prevent prior experiences, personal preferences or

differences in knowledge to influence consumer perceptions (De Jong, Harkink, & Barth, 2018; Chang et al., 2019; Parguel, Benoît-Moreau, & Larceneux, 2011). This fictitious company was named BootsLife, a shoe manufacturer and was introduced to the participants before they were exposed to the ad. The shoe business was considered a good fit for this study, because it is a relatable industry for the majority of consumers and it is not unfamiliar with brands that are environmentally concerned (e.g., Timberland and Toms). Type of language was manipulated by creating two advertisements for the fictitious shoe manufacturer BootsLife. Both of these ads had the same visuals (e.g., picture of a shoe, background, color), but had different written sustainability claims according to the different experiment conditions. The shoe picture was downloaded from a website that offers free pictures with no copyrights (freepik.com) and shows a pair of brandless boots.

Since there were no scientific resources found that used type of language as stimuli and of which materials were freely available, the included sustainability claim was self-developed. However, claims of an existing brand were used as inspirational source and to ensure both the persuasiveness and realism of the BootsLife ad. These statements were retrieved from the Timberland website, adapted severely in order to make them untraceable and converged into two different stimuli. The first stimuli is, in accordance with the first condition, made to reflect inclusive language, whereas the second stimuli is made to reflect exclusive language. The stimuli are displayed in table 3.2. In order to create stimuli that properly reflected inclusive and exclusive language, a clear distinction was made between inclusive and exclusive language based on the theory of Pennebaker & King (1999) and Crilly et al. (2016).

Inclusive language is built upon words that are used to encompass or join categories, usually prone to express broad commitments. Inclusive words are: and, with, include, additionally, all and also.

Exclusive language is used to make a distinction in elements that are included and elements that are not. Exclusive words are: but, without, exclude, especially and only.

Stimulus condition 1	Stimulus condition 2
Inclusive language	Exclusive language
Creating high quality boots is our core business. We <b>also</b> recognize the responsibility we have as a company to protect our society. Therefore, we create high quality boots while operating at a 100% sustainable level. We go beyond limiting our	Creating high quality boots is not that difficult. <b>But</b> , creating high quality boots while operating at a 100% sustainable level is. We do our best to make this earth a better place, by reducing carbon emissions and enhancing biodiversity, but we can <b>only</b> do as much as

<p>environmental impact, as we believe we can leave this earth as a better place than we found it. That is why we do several things, which <b>includes</b> reducing carbon emissions, enhancing biodiversity <b>and</b> improving the local water quality. <b>Additionally</b>, we think it is important to show commitment to the wellbeing of local farmers by offering them fair earnings and actively opposing local deforestation, because they enable us to do what we do and do so often in vulnerable positions.</p>	<p>we can and being sustainable does not mean we as a brand can save the world. For us, it is <b>especially</b> important to be committed to the wellbeing of local farmers, because they enable us to do what we do and do so often in vulnerable positions. Therefore, we offer them fair earnings and we actively oppose deforestation by planting trees. However, <b>without</b> the support of our loyal customers we will not be able to do so.</p>
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Table 3.2. Stimuli.

The final version of the complete advertisements can be found in appendix A.

### 3.2 Procedure

Participants that joined the experiment entered the questionnaire, that is included in appendix C, at the introduction . The introduction started and ended with thanking the respondents for their participation. In between, they were informed about the background of this research (i.e., that it regards a master thesis from the master Marketing was mentioned). In order to avoid biases, the real aim of this study was not mentioned (Nyilasy, Gangadharbatla, & Paladino, 2014). Instead, participants were informed the purpose is to understand consumer responses to corporate advertising. Additionally they were briefly informed about the structure of the questionnaire (i.e., there are 4 segments, every segment is preceded by a brief explanation and the final segment contains general questions) and about the expected duration (i.e., approximately 10 minutes). The final part of the introduction was included to stress the anonymity of participants response as well as that their participation is completely voluntary and there can be given no right or wrong answers.

By entering the next section, respondents got randomly assigned one of the two aforementioned conditions. Subsequently, respondents were informed in a couple sentences about the advertisement displayed in this section and on how to respond. On the next page the ad was displayed with the items regarding the manipulation check as well as attitude towards the firm.

The following section was aimed at measuring construal level. On top of the page the only remark was to inform respondents about the general take of these questions and to express that they were not specifically connected to the previously shown ads. All construal level items were included in only one page.

Subsequently, the final section contained questions with regard to the control variables as well as to demographic characteristics.

The final page of the questionnaire expressed again the gratitude of the researcher and informed the respondents on reaching the end of the questionnaire. Additionally it explained to them the exact purpose of this study, as it was not possible to explain them beforehand for bias matters.

### *3.2.1 Sample*

Since this study is aimed at making conclusions about the behavior of consumers, the target group is everyone that is a consumer. Therefore, the target group is not only large, but also well approachable, as everyone is a consumer. For this reason, empirical data will be collected by convenience sampling (i.e., a type of nonprobability sampling, the data is withdrawn from a part of the population that is close to hand). Although some literature suggests a sample of 20 respondents for each condition is sufficient (Hair et al., 2014), in this study the guideline of Simmons, Nelson & Simonsohn (2013) of a minimum of 50 required responses per condition will be used, considering the fact that only 2 conditions are included in this study and a total of forty responses is not optimal for generating generalizable results. Thus, the target is to reach a total of 100 respondents.

Because the convenience sampling technique is used, automatically the people who are most willing to offer their time to fill out the whole survey are selected, raising the probability that the collected data is actually useful (Given, 2008). The survey is mainly spread through social media channels (e.g., WhatsApp).

The survey is created in an online tool called *Qualtrics*. Because of the between-subject design, it is necessary the survey with inclusive language and the survey with exclusive language are randomly distributed among the respondents so that the allocation of participants does not affect study results. To guarantee this requirement, *Qualtrics* includes a tool that ensures people randomly get one of the two versions when they enter the survey.

### **3.3 Operationalization**

Several measurements were used to measure the variables in the model. These are described in this section.

*Attitude towards the firm.* The degree to which consumers believe the brand will continue to deliver what it has promised. The items that are used to measure this variable, were

retrieved from Bruner & Gordon (2012), which included seven measurement items. Only six of them are used, as one of the items was meant to evaluate prior brand experiences over time, which is not applicable to the fictitious brand participants are exposed to. Among the items used are ‘This brand delivers what it promises’ and ‘this brand’s product claims are believable’. Respondents were asked to indicate their attitude towards the firm on a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from *totally disagree* to *totally agree*.

*Type of language used.* This study is aimed at testing a manipulated effect. Therefore, evaluation of the manipulation beforehand is important. However, since there were no measurement scales available for *type of language used*, these had to be self-constructed based on prior literature. Although it may be considered unusual, the manipulation check is included in the questionnaire before the construal level test instead of after. That is, when respondents answered the manipulation check questions, they needed to be able to see the advertisement, as was not the case for the construal level questions. For the manipulation test a variable was used that measured the perceived inclusiveness and exclusiveness of language, with six items. Three items measure inclusiveness (indicated with ‘I’ in table 3.3) and similarly three items measure exclusiveness (indicated with ‘E’ in table 3.3). Among the six items used were ‘*BootsLife joins different sustainability categories in its policy*’ and ‘*BootsLife focuses its sustainability actions*’. These items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *totally disagree* to *totally agree*.

*Construal level.* The extent to which people form an abstract or a specific mental construal of objects, resulting in a high versus a low level of construal. The construal level of respondents was measured with an, by Wang et al. (2019), adapted version of the Behavioural Identification Format that is called BIF-E. This adapted version is particularly focused on the construal of climate change and pro-environmental actions, but also includes general scales from the original measure from Vallacher & Wegner (1987). This scale includes a total of 22 items, of which 11 are environmentally related. Each of these items state a certain behavior. For every item, a concrete and an abstract description is provided and respondents are asked to select one of those based on their own preferences. One of these items is *using a shower timer*. The descriptions participants can chose from are (a) *reducing water use* (abstract) and (b) *having shorter showers* (concrete). The complete list of items with the answer options included can be found in appendix B.

*Environmental concern.* To control for other aspects that perhaps influence the relationship between the main variables in this research, two control variables were included,

the first one being environmental concern. It controls for the personal concerns individual respondents have regarding climate change and for the attitudes and behaviors these concerns result in. For this variable, Matthes and Wonneberger's (2014) construct *green consumerism* was used, that covers the concern itself, but also the according attitudes and behaviors caused by these concerns (i.e., preferring green and environmentally friendly products). This construct contained eleven items, among the items were '*I am concerned about the environment*' and '*I like green products*'. These items were measured on a 7-points Likert-scale ranging from *totally disagree* to *totally agree*.

*General advertising skepticism.* The second control variable controls for consumer's tendency to have a disbelief regarding corporate advertised claims in general (Obermiller & Spangenberg, 1998). This construct was measured with four items, retrieved from Mohr, Eroğlu and Ellen (1998). Among these items were '*most advertising is very annoying*' and '*most advertising makes false claims*'. These items were measured on a 7-points Likert-scale ranging from *totally disagree* to *totally agree*.

*Demographic variables.* The items with regard to the demographic characteristics were included in the questionnaire, so that the results could be controlled for these variables as well. Four of these demographics were addressed, positioned at the end of the questionnaire. The first demographic was gender and the belonging question '*What is your gender?*' Participants could respond out of three answer options, being: '*male*', '*female*' and '*other/would rather not say*'. The second demographic was age, the belonging question '*What is your age?*'. Participants could respond by filling in their age in years for which an open field was provided. The third demographic was level of education, with the belonging question '*What is the highest degree or level of education that you have succeeded?*' Given answer options out of which participants could choose were (based on the Dutch schooling system): '*elementary education*', '*vmbo*', '*mbo*', '*havo*', '*vwo*', '*hbo*', '*wo-bachelor's degree*' and '*wo-master's degree*'. The fourth and final demographic included was status of employment, the question belonging to this demographic was '*What is your current status of employment?*' Given answer options from which participants could choose were: '*full-time*', '*part-time*', '*out of work*', '*retired*', '*student*' and '*other*'. Respondents indicating the final answer option were asked to fill in their individual answer in an open field provided.

CONCEPT	DEFINITION	MEASUREMENT ITEMS	SCALE SOURCE
<b>ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE FIRM</b>	The degree to which consumers believe the brand will continue to deliver what it has promised.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This brand delivers what it promises.</li> <li>2. This brand's product claims are believable.</li> <li>3. This brand has a name you can trust.</li> <li>4. This brand does not pretend to be something it is not.</li> <li>5. This brand is committed to delivering on its claims, no more and no less.</li> <li>6. This brand has the ability to deliver on what it promises.</li> </ol>	Bruner & Gordon (2012)
<b>TYPE OF LANGUAGE USED (MANIPULATION-CHECK)</b>	<p>Inclusive language is built upon words that are used to encompass or join categories, usually prone to express broad commitments.</p> <p>Exclusive language is used to make a distinction in elements that are included and elements that are not.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. BootsLife joins different sustainability categories in its policy. <b>(I)</b></li> <li>2. BootsLife focuses its sustainability actions. <b>(E)</b></li> <li>3. BootsLife makes broad commitments with regard to its sustainability practices. <b>(I)</b></li> <li>4. BootsLife's sustainability policy only includes things that are achievable. <b>(E)</b></li> <li>5. BootsLife intends to include as much sustainability practices as possible in its policy. <b>(I)</b></li> <li>6. BootsLife is sufficiently nuanced in</li> </ol>	

describing its sustainability policy.

**(E)**

<p><b>CONSTRUAL LEVEL</b></p>	<p>The extent to which people form an abstract or a specific mental construal of objects, resulting in a high versus a low level of construal.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Washing clothes</li> <li>2. Buying local products</li> <li>3. Littering</li> <li>4. Measuring a room for carpeting</li> <li>5. Installing solar panels</li> <li>6. Turning off lights in empty rooms</li> <li>7. Cleaning the house</li> <li>8. Painting a room</li> <li>9. Taking public transport</li> <li>10. Caring for houseplants</li> <li>11. Growing a garden</li> <li>12. Using canvas bags for shopping</li> <li>13. Voting</li> <li>14. Composting</li> <li>15. Taking a test</li> <li>16. Carpooling</li> <li>17. Recycling</li> <li>18. Greeting someone</li> <li>19. Resisting temptation</li> <li>20. Eating</li> <li>21. Having a cavity filled</li> <li>22. Using a shower timer</li> </ol>	<p>Wang et al. (2019)</p>
<p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN</b></p>	<p>Personal consumer concerns regarding climate change and the attitudes and behaviors these concerns result in.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am concerned about the environment.</li> <li>2. The condition of the environment affects the quality of my life.</li> <li>3. I am willing to make sacrifices to protect the environment.</li> <li>4. I like green products</li> <li>5. I feel positive toward green products.</li> <li>6. Green products are good for the environment.</li> <li>7. I feel proud when I buy/use green products.</li> <li>8. I make a special effort to buy products in biodegradable packages.</li> <li>9. I would switch from my usual brands and buy environmentally safe cleaning products, even if I had to give up some cleaning effectiveness.</li> </ol>	<p>Matthes &amp; Wonneberger (2014)</p>

<b>GENERAL ADVERTISING SKEPTICISM</b>	Consumers tendency to have a disbelief regarding corporate advertised claims in general.	<p>10. I have switched products for ecological reasons.</p> <p>11. When I have a choice between two equal products, I purchase the one less harmful to the environment.</p> <p>1. Most advertising is very annoying.</p> <p>2. Most advertising make false claims.</p> <p>3. If most advertising were eliminated, consumers would be better off.</p> <p>4. Most advertising is intended to deceive rather than inform.</p>	Mohr, Eroğlu & Ellen (1998)
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Table 3.3. Construct measurements.

### 3.4 Research ethics

Respondents were beforehand informed about what they could expect as well as what was expected from them. To them was explained their responses would be used solemnly for the purposes of this research. Additionally, participants were informed on the confidentiality of their response. Their participation was completely anonymous. Also, the voluntary nature of their involvement was stressed. Accordingly, they were allowed to leave the questionnaire at any time.

To avoid response biases, participants were not entirely informed about the aim of the this study. Explicating the purpose could have caused increased caution for the constructs that were tried to measure in an as naturally operated environment as possible, which would have resulted in biased and invalid outcomes. Therefore, respondents where only enlightened about the research objective in general terms.

## 4. Analysis

The computer program IBM SPSS Statistics 26 was used to analyze the collected data. Because Qualtrics saves all responses, no matter how much progress the respondent has made, a significant part of the responses needed to be deleted first. Qualtrics recorded a total of 172 responses, but 65 of them were not usable for analysis, either because these were self-generated for testing purposes or because these were generated by respondents that only opened the link, but not filled out the entire questionnaire. All of these 67 were deleted, leaving 105 responses left for analysis, which is in compliance with the target response of 100. The data was also checked for possible outliers, but no outliers were found.

### 4.1 Respondents

Of the 105 responses that were included in the analyses, about 40 percent was male and 60 percent female. Since for the distribution of the questionnaire convenience sampling was used, it is not surprising most of the respondents belong to the age group of 21 to 30 years old, because that would be the age group of the researcher. This group covers as much as 62 percent of the total sample. 17 percent of the respondents are 20 years old or younger, just over 10 percent is between 51 and 60 and the remaining part is between 31 to 40 (6.7%) or 41 to 50 (3.8%). With regard to level of education, the distribution is more equal. the largest part filled in 'vwo' as highest completed level of education (21.9%), the second most chosen is 'hbo' (21%), third 'wo-master' (16.2%), fourth 'havo' (15.2%) and fifth 'mbo' (10.5%). to the remaining categories belonged only one or two respondents. halve of the respondents were students, 33% was fulltime employed and 16 percent parttime.

<b>Gender</b>		<b>Age (years)</b>		<b>Level of education</b>		<b>Current employment</b>	
<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
<b>Male</b>	40	≤ 20	18	elementary School	1	Full-time	35
<b>Female</b>	65	21-30	65	vmbo	2	Part-time	17
<b>Other</b>	0	31-40	7	mbo	11	Out of work	2

		41-50	4	havo	16	Student	51
		51-60	11	hbo	22		
		≥ 60	0	vwo	23		
				wo - bachelor's degree	13		
				wo - master's degree	17		
<b>Total</b>	105		105		105		105

Table 4.1. Respondents

#### 4.2 Reliability analysis

On all construct variables with at least two items that were measured on a Likert scale, a reliability analysis was performed, using Cronbach's Alpha. According to Hair et al. (2014) Cronbach's Alpha should have a score of .6 at minimum and preferably above .7, but ideally the score is even closer to 1.

Since respondents were allocated to different routes within the questionnaire, their responses on *attitude towards the firm* and on the manipulation check were recorded in different variables. In other words, Qualtrics created separate variables for the same items, one for the respondents allocated to condition one and one for the respondents allocated to condition two. Hence, to enable analyzing these items as one, they needed to be put together into one variable. Therefore, new variables were created that included both the responses of condition one and the responses of condition two.

The dependent variable *attitude towards the firm* scored considerably well on the reliability test, as it had a Cronbach's Alpha value of .810.

Because with the manipulation check two different things were being measured (i.e., inclusive language and exclusive language, see table 3.3), this variable consisted of two constructs. Therefore, Cronbach's Alpha was measured first for the items measuring inclusive language and thereafter for the items measuring exclusive language. For the inclusive language items, Cronbach's Alpha was considered non-sufficient, with a value of .542. Excluding one of the items would not improve Cronbach's Alpha significantly. For the exclusive language items, the value was .632, which is not ideal, but at least sufficient. Deleting items from the construct would not make any difference here as well, at which point the conclusion should be made that

Cronbach's Alpha for the manipulation check will remain too low (especially for the inclusive language items). Fortunately, the manipulation check is not incorporated in the main analysis and therefore there are no changes made to these constructs. Instead, the results of the manipulation check should be interpreted more cautiously.

The variable *environmental concern* scored with .881 relatively well on Cronbach's Alpha. However, the variable *general advertising skepticism* had a value of only .611, which is not as high as one would prefer. Again, deleting items would not help to get alpha above .7 and the value is still above the absolute minimum Hair et al. (2014) provide. Therefore, no further action was taken.

	<b>Attitude towards the firm</b>	<b>Manipulation check 1 (inclusive language)</b>	<b>Manipulation check 2 (exclusive language)</b>	<b>Environmental concern</b>	<b>General advertising skepticism</b>
<b>Number of valid results</b>	105	105	105	105	105
<b>Mean</b>	20.74	11.63	9.70	36.68	12.18
<b>Std. Deviation</b>	3.749	1.867	2.189	7.186	2.468
<b>Number of construct items</b>	6	3	3	11	4
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	.810	.542	.632	.881	.611
<b>Cronbach's Alpha if item deleted</b>	.811	.555	.667	.880	.621

Table 4.2. Reliability Analysis

### 4.3 Validity

To test whether the used measures do actually measure what they are supposed to do, the metrically scaled variables were assessed on their validity. A factor analysis was conducted to determine the number of factors and to assess construct validity.

To find out whether the constructs in this analysis did actually measure what they were intended to measure, validity tests were conducted with factor analyses. Therefore, first all the multi-item constructs that were metrically scaled were analyzed separately, starting with the dependent variable *Attitude towards the firm*. To test whether the sample adequately represented the population, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure was used, which provided a value of .781, which is a decent value considering the required minimum of .5. Additionally, Bartlett's test of sphericity was used to verify if there was any correlation between the construct items. With a p-value of less than .001 the null-hypothesis, assuming no correlations, got rejected, which allowed to get on with interpreting the factor analysis results. Assuming the eigenvalues for a factor should be above 1, in total one factor was extracted that explained 52.5% of the variance in the construct. Based on these data, the variable *attitude towards the firm* was considered a valid construct.

Subsequently, this procedure was conducted for the control variable *environmental concern*, which had a total of 11 items and for which KMO (.854) and Bartlett's test of sphericity ( $p < .001$ ) provided both adequate results. Although the items ideally would have loaded on one factor, there were two factors with an eigenvalue above 1. Consequently, item 5 was removed, because it loaded on both of the constructs. A new analysis was conducted, which again extracted two factors. Therefore, item 6 and 7 were removed, since they were the only items loading on the second factor, and a new analysis was conducted. The results of this final analysis for *environmental concern* had adequate results in terms of KMO (.877) and Bartlett's test of sphericity ( $p < .001$ ) and had only 1 factor extracted, explaining 52.3% of variance, on which the remaining items loaded appropriately. Based on these data, three out of the 11 items will be excluded for the main analysis.

Afterwards, this analysis was executed for the control variable *general advertising skepticism*. The KMO (.587) and Bartlett's test of sphericity ( $p < .001$ ) again provided adequate results and with the factor analysis only 1 factor was extracted, explaining 46.8% of variance. Therefore, no items were deleted for this construct.

The final construct that was submitted to a factor analysis, was the manipulation check, which had a little different properties than the foregoing constructs, since the construct

measures for both inclusive language manipulation and exclusive language manipulation with different items. Therefore, the results should be interpreted differently. As expected, with the factor analysis, two factors were extracted. However, item MC1 (measuring inclusive language), appeared to load on both factors. Therefore, this item was removed from the analysis. Again, two factors were extracted, but this time MC2 (measuring exclusive language), appeared to load on two factors. Subsequently, this item was removed and the analysis was conducted once again. This final factor analysis for the manipulation check resulted in a KMO of .612 and the significance level of Barlett's test of sphericity was less than .001. Surprisingly, now only one factor was extracted, which explained 48% of total variance. The matrix showed both the items measuring exclusive language, loaded positively on this factor, whereas both the items measuring inclusive language, loaded negatively on this factor. Since the construct contains items which are supposed to have opposite results, no further changes were made regarding the manipulation check construct.

	<b>Original number of items</b>	<b>Number of items after items deleted</b>	<b>EigenValue</b>	<b>Percentage variance explained</b>
<b>Attitude towards the firm</b>	6	6	3.152	52.5
<b>Environmental concern</b>	11	8	4.186	52.3
<b>General advertising skepticism</b>	4	4	1.874	46.8
<b>Manipulation check</b>	6	4	1.922	48.0

Table 4.3. Factor Analysis Results

To test for discriminant validity, all metrically scaled items that were relevant for the main analysis, were included in one factor analysis. This factor analysis was thus based on the items of *attitude towards the firm*, *environmental concern* (except for the items that were deleted in

the previous analyses) and *general advertising skepticism*. The manipulation check was not included because it was not included in the main analysis (ANCOVA) and its only purpose was to check whether the manipulation was successfully conducted.

The factor analysis results provided adequate values for KMO (.763) and Bartlett's test of sphericity ( $p < .001$ ). Although three constructs were included, four factors were extracted, together explaining 59% of variance. Because the first item of *general advertising skepticism* did not load on any of those factors, it was removed from the analysis. New results showed broadly the same thing, only this time the third item of *general advertising skepticism* did not load on any of the factors. It was removed and a new analysis was conducted, in which the fourth *Attitude towards the firm* item appeared to double load, for which it was removed as well. The analysis following, resulted in double loadings for the second item of *attitude towards the firm*. After this item was deleted, the final factor analysis was conducted. The KMO (.793) value was adequate as well as Bartlett's test of sphericity ( $p < .001$ ). Only three factors were extracted this time, together explaining 60.3% of the variance. All the construct items that were left, loaded only on one factor and did so with the other items left out of the same construct, which means the discriminant validity assumption has been met.

Items	Rotated factor loadings		
	Environmental Concern	Attitude towards the firm	General Advertising skepticism
EnvironConcern_10	.869		
EnvironConcern_9	.795		
EnvironConcern_11	.782		
EnvironConcern_3	.717		
EnvironConcern_4	.700		
EnvironConcern_8	.699		
EnvironConcern_1	.606		
EnvironConcern_2	.508		

<b>Attitude_6</b>		.894	
<b>Attitude_3</b>		.818	
<b>Attitude_1</b>		.801	
<b>Attitude_5</b>		.719	
<b>GenAdSkept_2</b>			.888
<b>GenAdSkept_4</b>			.772
<b>Eigenvalue</b>	4.471	2.677	1.296
<b>Percentage of variance</b>	31.9	19.1	9.3

Table 4.4. Factor Analysis Results

#### 4.4 Manipulation check

To verify whether the manipulation was successful, first a new variable had to be generated. It was called *LanguageType* and had as sole purpose to indicate whether a respondent was allocated to condition 1 (i.e., inclusive language) or to condition 2 (i.e., exclusive language), for which a condition 1 was indicated with ‘0’ and a condition 2 with ‘1’.

For the manipulation check, an independent samples t-test was executed to see if the respondents with different type of language allocations scored differently on the manipulation check items. The results (table 4.5) indicated there were statistically significant differences between the means of all the manipulation check items for the different levels of *LanguageType*. In other words, the respondents appeared to score differently on the manipulation check dependent on which experimental condition they were allocated to. Table 4.5 shows that the t-score was positive for the inclusive language manipulation and negative for the exclusive language manipulation. These results are in accordance with what the manipulation was intended to do. Having said that, the manipulation of *type of language* was conducted successfully.

Item	Condition	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
<b>Inclusive2</b>	1 (inclusive)	4.00	.720	3.913	.000	.68000	.17100
	2 (exclusive)	3.32	1.019				
<b>Inclusive3</b>	1 (inclusive)	4.40	.627	4.794	.000	-.17103	.47952
	2 (exclusive)	3.58	1.052				
<b>Exclusive2</b>	1 (inclusive)	2.64	.969	-3.853	.000	-.70364	.18260
	2 (exclusive)	3.34	.895				
<b>Exclusive3</b>	1 (inclusive)	2.80	.931	-2.157	.033	-.40000	.18547
	2 (exclusive)	3.20	.969				

Table 4.5. Manipulation Check

#### 4.5 ANCOVA - Assumptions

To test the hypotheses and appropriately answer the research question, an analysis of variance was used as measure to compare the two groups in their attitude towards the firm. Since the analysis is not only supposed to measure the effect of type of language, but the effect of a moderator (i.e., *construal level*) and control variables (i.e., *environmental concern, general advertising skepticism, gender, age, level of education and employment status*) as well and since most of these extra variables are metrically scaled, ANCOVA is the appropriate measure to test for variances. However, before an ANCOVA could be conducted, several assumptions needed to be checked.

The first assumption being normality of sampling distribution of means. Usually, no problems arise if the sample size of each level of the fixed factor is at least 30. In this case the sample size of both levels is at least 50, so no problems should arise. The second assumption is independence of errors, which means that the error terms should be normally distributed and uncorrelated. The observations in the dependent variable would have to be normally distributed for each level of the independent variable. Therefore, the Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted, that should, in order to have a normal distribution, not give significant results. In this case the results were non-significant for level one of the independent variable (inclusive language) ( $P = .163$ ), but unfortunately, they were for level two ( $p = .001$ ). The histogram did look somewhat normally distributed though. So, to conclude, the data is not ideal in terms of normality, which means that caution should be taken while interpreting the results, but it is still appropriate to move on, considering ANCOVA is robust to violations of normality. The third assumption is there should be a linear relationship between the covariate and the dependent variable for each level of the independent variable. This test is done through visual assessments of scatterplots and the plot should display an elliptical shaped combination of dots, which it only partly does. Hence, the assumption is only halfway met. Finally, the assumptions require to have homogeneity of variance, meaning that the sample has equal variances across groups. To assess this assumption, the Levene's test was used, which tests the null-hypothesis that the variance of the dependent variable is the same for every group. The Levene's test results were not significant  $F(1, 103) = .038, p = .845$ , which means the assumption of homogeneity of variance is fully met.

#### 4.5.1 Control variables

In order to actually use the earlier proposed control variables (i.e., *environmental concern*, *general advertising skepticism* and the demographic variables), they first need to be checked on correlations with the main variables in the model. Hair et al. (2014) suggest control variables should only be incorporated as covariates when they highly correlate with the dependent variables, but not correlate with the treatment. For that reason, a correlation matrix was conducted with Pearson correlation coefficients. Since the Pearson correlation test does not allow for nominal scaled variables, the demographics *gender* and *current employment* were not included. As it appeared, none of the control variables showed any sign of correlation with *attitude towards the firm*. Additionally, eta squared data were used to check the correlation for the nominal variables. *Gender* had an eta squared value of .040 and *current employment* of .052,

which both indicate very low levels of correlations with the dependent variable, most likely not even significant. Hence, including the control variables in the ANCOVA would probably deteriorate the model instead of improving it. Therefore, these were not included as covariates.

#### 4.6 ANCOVA

A one-way ANCOVA was used for the main analysis, because it calculates mean differences in the dependent variable while accounting for covariates that are allowed to be metrically scaled. The analysis was conducted with *attitude towards the firm* as dependent variable, *type of language* as fixed factor and *construal level* as covariate.

Table 4.6 shows the results of the analysis. The R squared value indicated the model explained only 1.3% of the variance. This low result for explaining power was extra reflected by the partial eta squared values, which was .012 for *type of language* with *construal level* as moderator. Without the moderating influences of *construal level* though, the partial eta squared declined to .011. The effect of *construal level* was not significant,  $F(1, 102) = .240, p = .625$ , neither was there a significant main effect of *type of language*,  $F(1, 102) = 1.233, p = .269$ . So, none of the results were significant. Hence, all of the hypotheses had to be rejected.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	.653	2	.326	.677	.510	.013
Intercept	83.651	1	83.651	173.608	.000	.630
BIFE (construal level)	.116	1	.116	.240	.625	.002
LanguageType	.594	1	.594	1.233	.269	.012
Error	49.147	102	.482			
Total	1299.563	105				
Corrected Total	49.800	104	1			

Note: R squared = .013 (Adjusted R Squared = -.006).

Table 4.6. ANCOVA

In conclusion, the results of the ANCOVA were surprisingly low. Apparently, all of the variables included in the model did not have enough effect on consumers attitude towards the firm. Although the manipulation check gave hopeful results, as the respondents seemed to react differently on inclusive language as opposed to exclusive language, these differences did not account for any difference in attitude towards the firm.

## 5. Conclusion and discussion

In this chapter the research question was answered in order to formulate a general conclusion. Additionally, the results were discussed in the discussion part, after which the theoretical and practical implications of this research were explained. Finally, this chapter provides this study's limitations and suggestions for further research.

### 5.1 Conclusion

The research question that was proposed in the introduction, was formulated as: 'What is the effect of type of language used in sustainability claims on consumer's attitude towards the firm?' Three hypotheses were formulated in order to answer the research question, as demonstrated in table 5.1.

<b>H1</b>	Consumer attitude towards the firm is more positive for firms that use exclusive language than for those using inclusive language.
<b>H2a</b>	Low levels of construal result in a deteriorated effect on consumer's attitude towards the firm.
<b>H2b</b>	High levels of construal result in an enhanced effect on consumer's attitude towards the firm.

Table 5.1. Hypotheses

The experiment, with the inclusive and exclusive stimuli of Pennebaker & King (1999) and Crilly et al. (2016), was successfully conducted as the two experimental groups showed different results for the manipulation check. As such, the respondents were able to distinct inclusive language from exclusive language.

However, the results of the main analysis were found non-significant. The data showed no support for the first hypothesis, as there was found no significant difference in consumer attitude towards the firm between the two experimental groups. The considerably low r-squared value suggested the variables included in the model did not explain as much of the variance as was expected. Consequently, it must be concluded there is no evidence consumers have different attitudes towards the firm dependent on which type of language companies use to claim their sustainable characteristics. Hence, the first hypothesis is rejected.

On top of that, construal level appeared to lack any significant power as a moderator and therefore, its effect had to be interpreted as non-significant as well. In other words, it is not proven the level of construal that is applicable to a consumer does affect the relationship

between type of language used and attitude towards the firm. Yet again, also this relationship is not even proven to exist.

With regard to the control variables, they were on an earlier stage excluded from the analysis, because they showed almost no correlation with the dependent variable and would probably harm the model rather than improve it.

All things considered, none of the hypotheses could be accepted.

## **5.2 Discussion**

As this study failed to provide support for any of the hypotheses, it could be inferred there are some contradictories with the previous discussed literature. For instance, regarding the rejection of the first hypothesis, a possible explanation could be that consumers do not change their attitude based on a firm's sustainable activities. That would be in direct conflict with the findings of Eagly & Chaiken (1993), who state that a company's participation in socially responsible activities will improve the behavioral aspects of brand attitude, in the form of purchase intentions. Accordingly, it contradicts the findings of Bhattacharya & Sen (2003), as they explain that actions with regard to corporate sustainability enable consumers to identify themselves with the firm. Even more, there seems to be at all no support in this study for the statements of Olsen, Slotegraaf & Chandukula (2014), suggesting the affective part of consumer attitude gets heavily damaged when it appears firms are lying about their sustainability efforts.

However, all these conflicts with prior literature would only be existent if the assumption was made that the respondents understood the stimuli and interpreted it correctly. Because, although the results of the manipulation check suggested the respondents did comprehend the difference between inclusive and exclusive language, that would not necessarily mean they similarly perceived that difference to be indicating the distinction between implementors and decouplers of sustainability policies. Therefore, the underlying reason why there was no difference in attitude between the two experimental groups is more likely to lie in the fact that consumers are not capable of distinguishing between implementors and decouplers based on the type of language that is used in promotion activities.

Beside the probable explanation that consumers might just not see the difference between implementors and decouplers, the insignificance of results could also be caused by insufficient clarity in the fictitious, self-developed advertisements. Out of the advertisement evaluation included in the questionnaire, it appeared just under 40 percent of the respondents

thought the advertisement was a little hard to process to very hard to process. In total, just over 20 percent of the respondents thought the advertisement was very hard to process. Additionally, it is good to know that the ANCOVA descriptives suggested there was a minor difference between the mean values of the dependent variable for the two experimental groups. As expected, the exclusive language group scored a higher mean on attitude towards the firm compared to the inclusive group. The differences were, however, so small that no conclusions could be made upon them. But, this, combined with the fact that 20 percent of the respondents perceived the advertisement as hard to process, does raise the notion the results perhaps would have been different with an advertisement that was easier to understand. Meanwhile, it is not clear to what extent the respondents that found the advertisement hard to process, did really not understand the full advertisement or just had to put some extra effort in understanding it.

Considering the absence of a relationship between type of language used and attitude towards the firm, it is not surprising the proposed moderator did not improve the model. It was expected that consumers who fear the consequences of climate change, have low construal levels, which in turn forces them to change their attitude towards the firm more rapidly as it appears companies are greenwashing (Leiserowitz, 2006). Conversely, climate skeptics were expected to have rather high levels of construal, which would less likely lead them to change their attitude (Lorenzoni et al., 2007). As the expectations to an effect of construal level on attitude towards the firm were largely based on this theory of climate activists versus climate skeptics with their respective levels of construal, its explaining power would totally vanish as the independent variable does not appear to have an effect. In other words, when it appears consumers are not able to link type of language used to the sincerity of a company's sustainability statement, it does not matter whether they perceive climate change to be a close or distinct object, it will not change their attitude towards the firm, since they are not aware of any deceiving activities.

### ***5.3 Implications***

Although the findings were non-significant and none of the hypotheses got accepted, this study does give base to some implications that could be used in theory or practice.

#### ***5.3.1 Managerial implications***

With the results implying that it cannot be proven consumers distinct between implementors and decouplers of sustainability policies on the basis of linguistical differences, there are several

conclusions managers should draw. Main thing is, it can be perceived difficult, as an implementor of sustainability policies, to be distinctive of all those other companies who claim to be sustainable. As conducting environmental friendly activities used to deliver competitive advantages (Chen & Chai, 2010), it probably does so not anymore, since all companies can easily claim they are sustainable, while they are actually not. It has become needless to say that large companies have put some thoughts over the environmental part of their identity statement and therefore, implementors must put additional effort in communicating their sustainable pretensions.

Having said that, one of the main elements of the cognitive linguistic perspective as discussed in the literature section, is that cognitive processes are not to influence (Crilly et al., 2016). In fact, decoupler messages are not even always deceptive on purpose. Managers sometimes are just not aware of how they should achieve their commitments. It is possible their vague language is rather a reflection of their own confusion than it is an attempt to deceive consumers. Weick (1976) states that the characteristics of inclusive language can indeed be due to a lack of understanding how different activities are related.

### *5.3.2 Theoretical implications*

With the topic of climate change becoming more and more urgent, an increasing number of consumers starts to realize their behavior should at some aspects change. To limit the negative environmental consequences of climate change, consumers are encouraged to behave in a more sustainable way (Arvai et al., 2012). Therefore, the demand for environmentally sustainable goods increased and many firms stepped into that business. Having said that, claiming to be sustainable has nowadays become such a natural part of firm policy's, that not all of it is genuinely true, raising the call for research into ways to distinct implementors from decouplers, on which the cognitive linguistic perspective is a considerable response.

This study contributes to this theory by adding new insights into the behavior of consumers. Crilly et al. (2016) had already recognized that expertise to evaluate practices had a role in explaining why stakeholders interpret firms sustainability performance differently. As such, they concluded specialist stakeholders have higher potential to notice the difference between a firm's policy and actual practices, because they can rely on empirical observations and their own experience in the field. In contrast, this study showed the majority of the consumers group does not have all these advantages and apparently, consumers do not make the distinctions between statements and practices as easy.

This study further demonstrated that an experimental manipulation of type of language used can be successfully conducted by including words that were found to belong to either inclusive or exclusive language. However, the experiment has also lead to the conclusion that consumers do not necessarily know how to change their attitude or behavior based on these linguistical differences.

#### ***5.4 Limitations***

Even though this study has been conducted with care, still the results should be interpreted with caution due to some limitations.

First, to conduct the experiment, an online questionnaire was used. According to Wester, Renckstorf and Scheepers (2013), that is not the most ideal way, since it does not allow the researcher to control the environment during the experiment. That means, the respondents are exposed to all kinds of external factors that could distract and influence them. Even more, these kind of online experiments enable respondents to fill out the questionnaire in a rush, when they for instance do not have much time or simply do not feel like putting much effort in it. As a result, not all questions might be answered adequately.

Second, due to the chosen sampling method (i.e., convenience sampling), the respondents were all linked to the personal environment of the researcher. For that reason, not all demographic groups were proportionately accounted for in the sample. That is especially true for the age categories, as almost 62 percent of the respondents belonged to the each group of 21 to 30 years and people aged above 60 were at all not represented. Similarly, among the respondents were considerably more higher educated people compared to lower educated people, as over 86 percent had completed at least HAVO at high school. Having said that, a more equally representation of these demographic groups would probably not have changed the results much in this case.

Third, there were some imperfections in testing the ANCOVA assumptions as described in the fourth chapter. One of the assumptions that was not met, was that there should be independence of errors. Unfortunately, the dependent variable observations for the exclusive language stimulus were not entirely normally distributed. In similar way, the relationship between the covariate and the dependent variable was not entirely linear for each type of language.

The fourth and final limitation is about the stimuli development. As there were no adequate stimuli available in prior literature, they had to be self-developed. Although, the

manipulation check results were satisfactory, which means that the respondents did largely respond to the advertisements as they were supposed to, still some respondents indicated the advertisements were hard to process and that could have impacted the results negatively. Additionally, during the stimuli development process, it was decided to use a fictitious company, because that would have been the only way to keep respondents biases due to prior experiences with the company out of the analysis. However, the fact that the respondents were not questioned about a company they were familiar with, might have led them to think and respond in a highly theoretical way, as it was perhaps harder to imagine a real situation.

### ***5.5 Suggestions for further research***

Some of these limitations give direct room for some further research. For instance, this study could be repeated in the same fashion, but with more respondents and more care for equally divided demographical categories like age and level of education. An increased number of datapoints would probably also prevent the analysis for problems with assumption testing.

Additionally, because this study provided no significant results, it could be helpful to redo this study with different variables. Future researchers could replace the dependent variable attitude towards the firm by a variable that is more directly focused on measuring respondent's evaluation of the company's sustainability policy. In that way, respondents might have a better idea of what is expected from them and that would perhaps give different results.

As this study was focused entirely on the response of consumers, there is still a gap in knowledge with regard to the abilities of businesses to detect whether their suppliers really are as sustainable as they say. Clients in the business-to-business market probably have much more knowledge and experience in the field and would possibly belong to the group that Crilly et al. (2016) call specialist stakeholders. Therefore, businesses would probably draw more realistic conclusions on basis of different types of language.

Since consumers do not only evaluate firms on their sustainability statements, it is still relatively unclear what other factors are of influence. Is there perhaps an influence of price levels? For instance, do firms with deceiving sustainability statements, but with low price levels get evaluated higher on attitude towards the firm as companies that are deceiving and apply high price levels? In the same fashion, does it matter whether firms are locally operating compared to large, international companies in how their sustainability statements get evaluated? In other words, lots of variables have been unresearched that may influence the relationship between type of language used and attitude towards the firm.

## 6. References

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# Appendices

## *Appendix A: Stimuli advertisements*

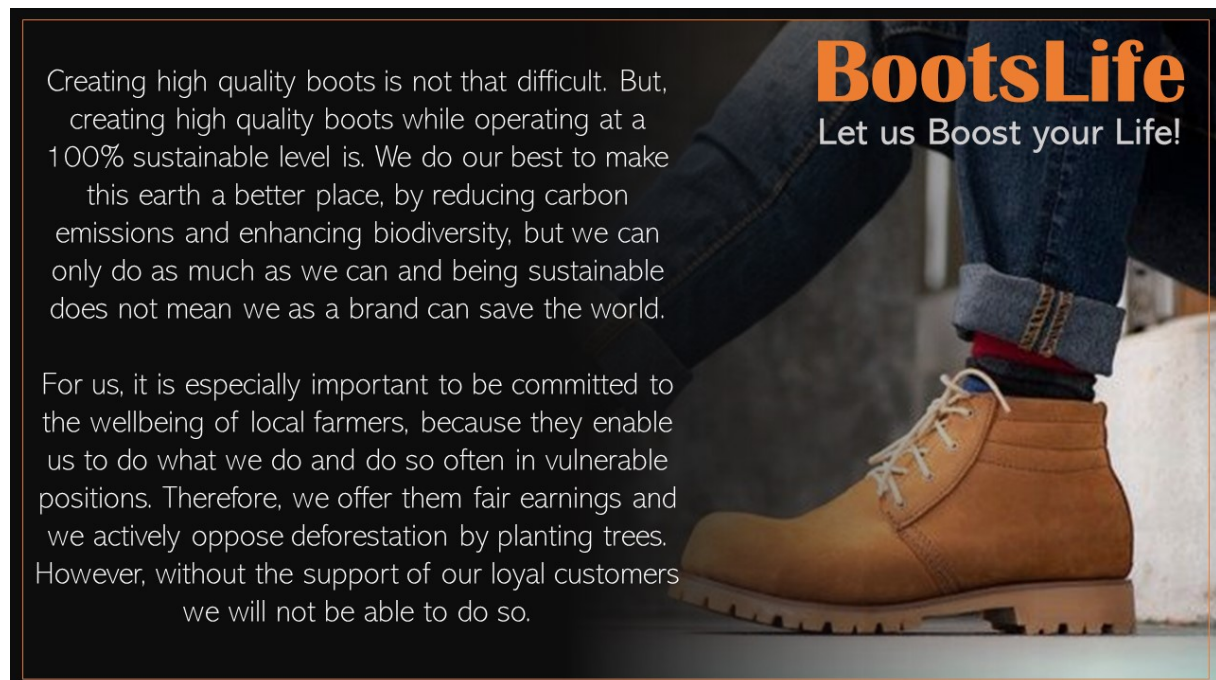


Creating high quality boots is our core business. We also recognize the responsibility we have as a company to protect our society. Therefore, we create high quality boots while operating at a 100% sustainable level. We go beyond limiting our environmental impact, as we believe we can leave this earth as a better place than we found it.

That is why we do several things, which includes reducing carbon emissions, enhancing biodiversity and improving the local water quality. Additionally, we think it is important to show commitment to the wellbeing of local farmers by offering them fair earnings and actively opposing local deforestation, because they enable us to do what we do and do so often in vulnerable positions.

**BootsLife**  
Let us Boost your Life!

*BootsLife ad condition 1: inclusive*



Creating high quality boots is not that difficult. But, creating high quality boots while operating at a 100% sustainable level is. We do our best to make this earth a better place, by reducing carbon emissions and enhancing biodiversity, but we can only do as much as we can and being sustainable does not mean we as a brand can save the world.

For us, it is especially important to be committed to the wellbeing of local farmers, because they enable us to do what we do and do so often in vulnerable positions. Therefore, we offer them fair earnings and we actively oppose deforestation by planting trees. However, without the support of our loyal customers we will not be able to do so.

**BootsLife**  
Let us Boost your Life!

*BootsLife ad condition 2: exclusive*

**Appendix B: Construal level measurement items with answer options**

<b>1. Washing clothes</b> a) Removing odours b) Putting clothes in the machine	<b>12. Using canvas bags for shopping</b> a) Reusing bags b) Reducing waste
<b>2. Buying local products</b> a) Shopping at a farmer's market b) Reducing food miles and carbon footprint	<b>13. Voting</b> a) Influencing the election b) Marking a ballot
<b>3. Littering</b> a) Dropping rubbish on the ground b) Spoiling the environment	<b>14. Composting</b> a) Decomposing food scraps b) Gardening organically
<b>4. Measuring a room for carpeting</b> a) Getting ready to remodel b) Using a tape measure	<b>15. Taking a test</b> a) Answering questions b) Demonstrating one's knowledge
<b>5. Installing solar panels</b> a) Generating your own electricity b) Producing clean energy	<b>16. Carpooling</b> a) Sharing transportation with others b) Reducing the numbers of cars on the road
<b>6. Turning off lights in empty rooms</b> a) Remembering to turn off switches b) Reducing energy use	<b>17. Recycling</b> a) Placing materials in a bin for re-use b) preventing waste
<b>7. Cleaning the house</b> a) Showing one's cleanliness b) Vacuuming the floor	<b>18. Greeting someone</b> a) Saying hello b) Showing friendliness
<b>8. Painting a room</b> a) Applying brush strokes b) Making the room look fresh	<b>19. Resisting temptation</b> a) Saying "no" b) Showing moral courage
<b>9. Taking public transport</b> a) Catching a bus or train b) Travelling in an energy efficient way	<b>20. Eating</b> a) Getting nutrition b) Chewing and swallowing
<b>10. Caring for houseplants</b> a) Watering plants b) Making the room look nice	<b>21. Having a cavity filled</b> a) Protecting your teeth b) Going to the dentist
<b>11. Growing a garden</b> a) Planting seeds	<b>22. Using a shower timer</b> a) Reducing water use b) Having shorter showers

b) Getting fresh vegetables

## *Appendix C: Questionnaire*

*(English version)*

Dear sir/madam,

First, I would like to thank you for your cooperation in this research. I am a master student at the Radboud University for the Business Administration master specialization Marketing and am currently working on my master thesis, which is aimed at generating an understanding of consumer attitudes and beliefs in response to corporate advertising.

This questionnaire consists of 4 segments. Every segment will be preceded by a brief explanation. In the final segment some general questions are asked. This questionnaire will take approximately ten minutes of your time.

Because your privacy is valued at the highest possible level, your response to this questionnaire is absolutely anonymous. The data generated will exclusively be used for executing this research and participation is of course on a voluntary basis. No right or wrong answers can be given, it is solemnly about your feeling in response to the question.

Again, thank you so much!

Arend Pors

Student Radboud University

---page break---

On the following page you will see an advertisement of the brand BootsLife. BootsLife is a manufacturer of shoes and is mainly focused on creating and selling boots. Please read the text included in the ad before you respond to the statements that are displayed below. You can indicate for every statement to what extent you agree.

--- page break ---

Creating high quality boots is our core business. We also recognize the responsibility we have as a company to protect our society. Therefore, we create high quality boots while operating at a 100% sustainable level. We go beyond limiting our environmental impact, as we believe we can leave this earth as a better place than we found it.

That is why we do several things, which includes reducing carbon emissions, enhancing biodiversity and improving the local water quality. Additionally, we think it is important to show commitment to the wellbeing of local farmers by offering them fair earnings and actively opposing local deforestation, because they enable us to do what we do and do so often in vulnerable positions.

**BootsLife**  
Let us Boost your Life!



Please indicate for the following statements the extent to which you agree.

		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>1</b>	I get the impression that this brand delivers what it promises.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>2</b>	I get the impression this brand's product claims are believable.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>3</b>	I get the impression this brand has a name you can trust.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>4</b>	I get the impression this brand does not pretend to be something it is not.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>5</b>	I get the impression this brand is committed to delivering on its claims, no more and no less.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>6</b>	I get the impression this brand has the ability to deliver on what it promises.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>

- 7 I get the impression BootsLife joins different sustainability categories in its policy.
- 8 I get the impression BootsLife focuses its sustainability actions.
- 9 I get the impression BootsLife makes broad commitments with regard to its sustainability practices
- 10 I get the impression BootsLife's sustainability policy only includes things that are achievable.
- 11 I get the impression BootsLife intends to include as much sustainability practices as possible in its policy.
- 12 I get the impression BootsLife is sufficiently nuanced in describing its sustainability policy.

Please indicate your opinion with regard to the advertisement. To my opinion, the advertisement is:

- 1 not at all attractive        very attractive
- 2 not at all eye-catching        very eye-catching
- 3 difficult to process        easy to process

--- page break ---

In this section you can find 22 different behaviors that are not related to the advertisement in the previous section. For every behavior, two descriptions are provided. Please chose the description you prefer. For instance, when the behavior *driving a car* is displayed, you chose either the explanation *transporting myself from A to B* or *experiencing a sense of freedom* according to which you think is more appropriate to your situation.

- 1 Washing clothes        Removing odours        Putting clothes in the machine

2	Buying local products	Shopping at a farmer's market	Reducing food miles and carbon footprint
3	Littering	Dropping rubbish on the ground	Spoiling the environment
4	Measuring a room for carpeting	Getting ready to remodel	Using a tape measure
5	Installing solar panels	Generating your own electricity	Producing clean energy
6	Turning off lights in empty rooms	Remembering to turn off switches	Reducing energy use
7	Cleaning the house	Showing one's cleanliness	Vacuuming the floor
8	Painting a room	Applying brush strokes	Making the room look fresh
9	Taking public transport	Catching a bus or train	Travelling in an energy efficient way
10	Caring for houseplants	Watering plants	Making the room look nice
11	Growing a garden	Planting seeds	Getting fresh vegetables
12	Using canvas bags for shopping	Reusing bags	Reducing waste
13	Voting	Influencing the election	Marking a ballot
14	Composting	Decomposing food scraps	Gardening organically
15	Taking a test	Answering questions	Demonstrating one's knowledge
16	Carpooling	Sharing the transportation with others	Reducing the numbers of cars on the road
17	Recycling	Placing materials in a bin for re-use	preventing waste
18	Greeting someone	Saying hello	Showing friendliness
19	Resisting temptation	Saying "no"	Showing moral courage
20	Eating	Getting nutrition	Chewing and swallowing
21	Having a cavity filled	Protecting your teeth	Going to the dentist
22	Using a shower timer	Reducing water use	Having shorter showers

---page break---

In this section a total of 15 statements will follow about your personal preferences with regard to environmental issues and advertising in general. Please indicate to which extent these are applicable.

		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>1</b>	I am concerned about the environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>2</b>	The condition of the environment affects the quality of my life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>3</b>	I am willing to make sacrifices to protect the environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>4</b>	I like green products	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>5</b>	I feel positive toward green products.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>6</b>	Green products are good for the environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>7</b>	I feel proud when I buy/use green products.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>8</b>	I make a special effort to buy products in biodegradable packages.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>9</b>	I would switch from my usual brands and buy environmentally safe cleaning products, even if I had to give up some cleaning effectiveness.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>10</b>	I have switched products for ecological reasons.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>11</b>	When I have a choice between two equal products, I purchase the one less harmful to the environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>12</b>	Most advertising is annoying.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>13</b>	Most advertising make false claims.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>14</b>	If most advertising were eliminated, consumers would be better off.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>15</b>	Most advertising is intended to deceive rather than inform.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---page break---

This final section is meant to collect some demographic information.

What is your gender? Male Female Other/would rather not say

What is your age?

What is the highest degree or level of education you have succeeded? Elementary education VMBO MBO HAVO VWO WO-bachelor's degree WO-master's degree

What is your current status of employment? Full-time Part-time Out of work Retired Student

---page break---

This is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you very much for participating. In order to prevent response biases, you were not informed on the exact objective of this study before. The goal of this research is to find out whether consumers perceive the difference between companies that implement and companies that decouple their sustainability claims. To explain, some organizations are really engaged with global warmth and other sustainability issues and try to contribute to a better environment, whereas other organizations are only allegedly sustainable and use sustainability claims as a marketing strategy to attract customers. Prior research has proven these different type of companies use different grammatical styles to operate their claims and you were asked to evaluate these language styles in the shape of a fictitious advertisement campaign by indicating your attitude towards this fictitious firm. Therefore you were randomly allocated to one of two conditions representing the two language styles firms use to state their green ambitions.

*(Dutch version)*

Beste deelnemer,

Hartelijk bedankt dat u deel wilt nemen aan dit onderzoek. Ik ben een student aan de Radboud Universiteit en ik volg de masterspecialisatie Marketing van de opleiding Bedrijfskunde. Op dit moment ben ik bezig aan mijn masterscriptie met als doel om beter te begrijpen hoe consumenten reclamecampagnes ervaren.

Deze vragenlijst bestaat uit 4 onderdelen. Aan elk onderdeel gaat een korte uitleg vooraf. In het laatste onderdeel worden een paar algemene vragen gesteld. Het beantwoorden van deze vragen zal ongeveer 5 minuten duren.

Omdat uw privacy zeer belangrijk is, is het invullen van deze enquête volledig anoniem. De data die aan de hand van uw participatie in dit onderzoek gegenereerd wordt, zal exclusief gebruikt worden voor het uitvoeren van dit onderzoek en uw deelname is op vrijwillige basis. Er zijn geen goede of foute antwoorden, het gaat erom wat u denkt dat het beste bij u past.

Nogmaals bedankt voor uw deelname.

Arend Pors

Student Radboud University

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Op de pagina hierna volgt een advertentie van het merk BootsLife. BootsLife is een bedrijf dat schoenen produceert en verkoopt. Ik wil u vragen eerst de advertentie te bekijken en de tekst te lezen die erin staat om daarna pas op de stellingen te reageren die eronder staan. U mag voor elke stelling aangeven in welke mate u het ermee eens bent.

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Creating high quality boots is our core business. We also recognize the responsibility we have as a company to protect our society. Therefore, we create high quality boots while operating at a 100% sustainable level. We go beyond limiting our environmental impact, as we believe we can leave this earth as a better place than we found it.

That is why we do several things, which includes reducing carbon emissions, enhancing biodiversity and improving the local water quality. Additionally, we think it is important to show commitment to the wellbeing of local farmers by offering them fair earnings and actively opposing local deforestation, because they enable us to do what we do and do so often in vulnerable positions.

**BootsLife**  
Let us Boost your Life!



Geef voor de volgende stellingen aan in welke mate u het ermee eens bent.

		Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Neutraal	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
1	Ik heb de indruk dat dit bedrijf doet wat het belooft.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Ik heb de indruk dat de beweringen die het merk doet over haar producten geloofwaardig zijn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Ik heb de indruk dat dit merk is betrouwbaar.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Ik heb de indruk dat dit merk zich niet voordoet als iets wat het niet is.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Ik heb de indruk dat dit merk toegewijd is om haar beloftes in te lossen, niet meer en niet minder.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Ik heb de indruk dat dit merk in staat is om haar beloftes in te lossen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

		Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Neutraal	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
7	Ik heb de indruk dat BootsLife zich in haar beleid aansluit bij verschillende duurzaamheidsdoelen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Ik heb de indruk dat BootsLife's duurzaamheidsbeleid gefocust is.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Ik heb de indruk dat BootsLife grote beloftes met betrekking tot haar duurzaamheidsactiviteiten doet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	Ik heb de indruk dat BootsLife's duurzaamheidsbeleid alleen haalbare zaken inhoudt.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	Ik heb de indruk dat BootsLife probeert zo veel mogelijk duurzaamheidsactiviteiten te noemen in haar beleid.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	Ik heb de indruk dat BootsLife voldoende genuanceerd is in het beschrijven van haar duurzaamheidsbeleid.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Geef nu aan wat uw mening over de advertentie is.

Ik vind de BootsLife advertentie...

- |   |                           |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                         |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Totaal niet aantrekkelijk | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Heel aantrekkelijk      |
| 2 | Totaal niet opvallend     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Heel opvallend          |
| 3 | Moeilijk te bevatten      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Gemakkelijk te bevatten |

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In dit onderdeel volgt een opsomming van 22 verschillende gedragsuitingen. Deze zijn niet gerelateerd aan de advertentie uit het vorige onderdeel. Elk van deze gedragingen worden vervolgens op twee manieren beschreven en u mag één van die beschrijvingen kiezen. Bijvoorbeeld, wanneer er staat 'autorijden', dan kiest u 'vervoeren van A naar B' of 'een gevoel van vrijheid ervaren' afhankelijk van wat u denkt dat het beste bij u past.

Kiest u de beschrijving die uw voorkeur heeft.

1	Kleding wassen	Het verwijderen van geuren	Kleding in de wasmachine stoppen
2	Lokale producten kopen	Boodschappen doen op een boerenmarkt	Het verminderen van Co2 uitstoot en het verlagen van de ecologische voetafdruk
3	Rommel maken	Afval op de grond gooien	De omgeving vervuilen
4	Een kamer opmeten voor nieuwe vloerbedekking	Vorbereiden op een verbouwing	Het gebruik van een rolmaat
5	Zonnepanelen installeren	Het opwekken van eigen elektriciteit	Het produceren van groene energie
6	Lampen uitschakelen in lege kamers	Herinneren om knopjes uit te zetten	Energieverbruik verlagen
7	Het huis schoonmaken	Laten zien hoe opgeruimd je bent	De vloer stofzuigen
8	Een kamer verven	Het gebruik van verfkwasten	De kamer een frisse look geven
9	Met het openbaar vervoer reizen	Een bus of trein halen	Reizen in een energie efficiënte wijze
10	Voor huisplanten zorgen	De planten water geven	De kamer er goed uit laten zien
11	Een tuin laten groeien	Zaadjes planten	Verse groenten kweken
12	Katoenen tassen gebruiken tijdens het winkelen	Hergebruik van tassen	Reduceren van afval
13	Stemmen	Invloed uitoefenen op de verkiezingen	Het markeren van een stembiljet
14	Composteren	Etenresten laten ontbinden	Biologisch tuinieren
15	Een toets maken	Vragen beantwoorden	Je kennis laten zien
16	Carpoolen	Samen reizen met anderen	Het aantal auto's op straat verminderen
17	Recyclen	Materialen in de container plaatsen voor hergebruik	Verspilling voorkomen
18	Iemand groeten	Hallo zeggen	Vriendelijkheid tonen
19	Verleidingen weerstaan	'nee' zeggen	Morele moed tonen
20	Eten	Voeding binnenkrijgen	Kauwen en slikken
21	Een gaatje laten vullen	Je tanden beschermen	Naar de tandarts gaan
22	Een douchetimer gebruiken	Minder water gebruiken	Korter douchen

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In dit onderdeel volgt een totaal van 15 stellingen over uw persoonlijke voorkeur met betrekking tot milieuproblematiek en adverteren in het algemeen.

Geef voor de volgende stellingen aan in welke mate u het ermee eens bent.

		<b>Helemaal mee oneens</b>	<b>Mee oneens</b>	<b>Neutraal</b>	<b>Mee eens</b>	<b>Helemaal mee eens</b>
<b>1</b>	Ik ben bezorgd over het milieu.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>2</b>	De staat van het milieu beïnvloedt de kwaliteit van mijn leven.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>3</b>	Ik ben bereid offers te doen om het milieu te beschermen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>4</b>	Ik houd van groene producten.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>5</b>	Ik heb positieve gevoelens ten opzichte van groene producten.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>6</b>	Groene producten zijn goed voor het milieu.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>7</b>	Ik voel trots wanneer ik groene producten koop/gebruik.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>8</b>	Ik doe extra moeite om producten te kopen die biologisch afbreekbaar verpakt zijn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>9</b>	Ik zou duurzame schoonmaakmiddelen kopen in plaats van de traditionele, zelfs als de schoonmaakkwaliteit daar wat minder van werd.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>10</b>	Ik heb gewisseld van producten voor duurzaamheidsredenen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>11</b>	Wanneer ik de keuze heb tussen twee producten, koop ik het product die de minst slechte invloed heeft op het milieu.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<b>Helemaal mee oneens</b>	<b>Mee oneens</b>	<b>Neutraal</b>	<b>Mee eens</b>	<b>Helemaal mee eens</b>
<b>12</b>	De meeste advertenties zijn vervelend.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>13</b>	De meeste advertenties beweren onjuiste zaken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14 Als de meeste advertenties zouden verdwijnen, zouden consumenten beter af zijn.

15 De meeste advertenties zijn meer bedoeld om te bedriegen dan om te informeren.

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Dit laatste onderdeel is bedoeld voor wat algemene informatie.

Wat is uw geslacht? Mannelijk  Vrouwelijk  Anders/zeg ik liever niet

Wat is uw leeftijd?

Wat is de hoogste opleiding die u afgerond heeft? Basisonderwijs  VMBO  MBO  HAVO  VWO  WO-bachelor  WO-master

Wat is uw huidige arbeidsstatus? Fulltime  Parttime  Zonder werk  Met pensioen  Student

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Dit is het einde van de vragenlijst. Uw antwoorden zijn opgeslagen. Om te voorkomen dat voorkennis uw antwoorden zou beïnvloeden, bent u van tevoren niet volledig geïnformeerd over het doel van dit onderzoek. Het onderzoeksdoel is uit te vinden hoe consumenten taalgebruik van bedrijven ervaren en of ze een onderscheid kunnen maken tussen organisaties die zich werkelijk inzetten voor hun duurzaamheidsdoeleinden en organisaties die duurzaamheidsclaims slechts gebruiken voor marketingdoeleinden. Onderzoek wijst namelijk uit dat dit onderscheid wordt gereflecteerd in onbewuste grammaticakeuzes en om te zien of consumenten het verschil zien tussen oprechte en misleidende promotieteksten, werd u willekeurig toegewezen aan één van twee advertenties (waarvan één oprecht en de ander misleidend van aard) en gevraagd uw houding ten opzichte van de bijbehorende fictieve organisatie aan te duiden.

Hartelijk dank voor uw deelname.

**Appendix D: Descriptive statistics**

<b>Statistics</b>					
		<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Level of education</b>	<b>Current employment</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>Valid</b>	105	105	105	105
	<b>Missing</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Mean</b>		1.62	-	5.50	3.14
<b>Median</b>		2.00	-	6.00	3.00
<b>Mode</b>		2	-	6	5
<b>Skewness</b>		-.497	-	-.181	-.066
<b>Std. Error of Skewness</b>		.236	-	.236	.236
<b>Kurtosis</b>		-1.787	-	-.638	-1.913
<b>Std. Error of Kurtosis</b>		.467	-	.467	.467
<b>Minimum</b>		1	16	1	1
<b>Maximum</b>		2	60	8	5

<b>Frequencies: gender</b>				
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>Male</b>	40	38.1	38.1	38.1
<b>Female</b>	65	61.9	61.9	100
<b>Other</b>	0	0	0	
<b>Total</b>	105	100	100	

<b>Frequencies: age</b>				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
<b>≤ 20</b>	18	17.1	17.1	17.1
<b>21-30</b>	65	61.9	61.9	79.0
<b>31-40</b>	7	6.7	6.7	85.7
<b>41-50</b>	4	3.8	3.8	89.5
<b>51-60</b>	11	10.5	10.5	100
<b>≥ 60</b>	0	0	0	
	105	100	100	

<b>Frequencies: level of education</b>				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Elementary School</b>	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
<b>VMBO</b>	2	1.9	1.9	2.9
<b>MBO</b>	11	10.5	10.5	13.3
<b>HAVO</b>	16	15.2	15.2	28.6
<b>HBO</b>	22	21.0	21.0	49.5
<b>VWO</b>	23	21.9	21.9	71.4
<b>WO - Bachelor's Degree</b>	13	12.4	12.4	83.8
<b>WO - Master's Degree</b>	17	16.2	16.2	100
	105	100	100	

<b>Frequencies: current employment</b>				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Full-time</b>	35	33.3	33.3	33.3
<b>Part-time</b>	17	16.2	16.2	49.5
<b>Out of work</b>	2	1.9	1.9	51.4
<b>Student</b>	51	48.6	48.6	100
<b>Total</b>	105	100	100	

**Appendix E: Reliability analysis statistics**

	<i>Attitude towards the firm</i>	<i>Manipulation check 1 (inclusive language)</i>	<i>Manipulation check 2 (exclusive language)</i>	<i>Environmental concern</i>	<i>General advertising skepticism</i>
<i>Number of valid results</i>	<b>105</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>105</b>
<i>Mean</i>	<b>20.74</b>	<b>11.63</b>	<b>9.70</b>	<b>36.68</b>	<b>12.18</b>
<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<b>3.749</b>	<b>1.867</b>	<b>2.189</b>	<b>7.186</b>	<b>2.468</b>
<i>Number of construct items</i>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<b>.810</b>	<b>.542</b>	<b>.632</b>	<b>.881</b>	<b>.611</b>
<i>Cronbach's Alpha if item deleted:</i>					
<i>Item 1</i>	<b>.756</b>	<b>.555</b>	<b>.667</b>	<b>.872</b>	<b>.621</b>
<i>Item 2</i>	<b>.802</b>	<b>.206</b>	<b>.447</b>	<b>.880</b>	<b>.530</b>
<i>Item 3</i>	<b>.758</b>	<b>.483</b>	<b>.455</b>	<b>.868</b>	<b>.548</b>
<i>Item 4</i>	<b>.811</b>			<b>.866</b>	<b>.451</b>
<i>Item 5</i>	<b>.785</b>			<b>.865</b>	
<i>Item 6</i>	<b>.763</b>			<b>.879</b>	
<i>Item 7</i>				<b>.876</b>	
<i>Item 8</i>				<b>.870</b>	
<i>Item 9</i>				<b>.866</b>	
<i>Item 10</i>				<b>.858</b>	
<i>Item 11</i>				<b>.870</b>	

*Appendix F: Convergent Validity statistics*

*Factor analysis: Attitude towards the firm*

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy</b>		.781
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	<i>Approximated Chi-Square</i>	207.317
	<i>Df</i>	15
	<i>Sig.</i>	.000

<b>Communalities</b>		
	Initial	Extraction
<b>Attitude_1</b>	1.000	.669
<b>Attitude_2</b>	1.000	.404
<b>Attitude_3</b>	1.000	.655
<b>Attitude_4</b>	1.000	.324
<b>Attitude_5</b>	1.000	.475
<b>Attitude_6</b>	1.000	.625

<b>Total Variance Explained</b>						
<b>Component</b>	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
<b>1</b>	3.152	52.537	52.537	3.152	52.537	52.537
<b>2</b>	.852	14.192	66.728			
<b>3</b>	.741	12.353	79.081			
<b>4</b>	.569	9.490	88.571			
<b>5</b>	.405	6.745	95.316			
<b>6</b>	.281	4.684	100.000			

<b>Component Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>	
	<b>Component 1</b>
<b>Attitude_1</b>	.818
<b>Attitude_3</b>	.809
<b>Attitude_6</b>	.791
<b>Attitude_5</b>	.689
<b>Attitude_2</b>	.636
<b>Attitude_4</b>	.569
<b>Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.</b>	
<b>a. 1 components extracted.</b>	

*Factor analysis: Environmental Concern (initial)*

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</b>		.854
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	<i>Approx. Chi-Square</i>	509.399
	<i>df</i>	55
	<i>Sig.</i>	.000

<b>Communalities</b>		
	<b>Initial</b>	<b>Extraction</b>
<b>EnvironConcern1</b>	1.000	.439
<b>EnvironConcern2</b>	1.000	.436
<b>EnvironConcern3</b>	1.000	.612
<b>EnvironConcern4</b>	1.000	.563
<b>EnvironConcern5</b>	1.000	.712
<b>EnvironConcern6</b>	1.000	.733
<b>EnvironConcern7</b>	1.000	.631
<b>EnvironConcern8</b>	1.000	.486
<b>EnvironConcern9</b>	1.000	.582
<b>EnvironConcern10</b>	1.000	.685

<b>EnvironConcern11</b>	1.000	.499
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<b>Total Variance Explained</b>							
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings <sup>a</sup>
<b>Component</b>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>1</b>	5.158	46.893	46.893	5.158	46.893	46.893	4.782
<b>2</b>	1.219	11.081	57.973	1.219	11.081	57.973	3.052
<b>3</b>	.889	8.079	66.052				
<b>4</b>	.792	7.203	73.254				
<b>5</b>	.693	6.298	79.553				
<b>6</b>	.585	5.319	84.871				
<b>7</b>	.441	4.013	88.884				
<b>8</b>	.418	3.801	92.685				
<b>9</b>	.320	2.910	95.596				
<b>10</b>	.290	2.637	98.232				
<b>11</b>	.194	1.768	100.000				

<b>Pattern Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>		
	Component 1	Component 2
<b>EnvironConcern3</b>	.802	
<b>EnvironConcern10</b>	.772	
<b>EnvironConcern9</b>	.768	
<b>EnvironConcern2</b>	.722	-.217
<b>EnvironConcern8</b>	.670	
<b>EnvironConcern11</b>	.665	
<b>EnvironConcern4</b>	.595	.271
<b>EnvironConcern1</b>	.563	

<b>EnvironConcern6</b>		.889
<b>EnvironConcern7</b>		.753
<b>EnvironConcern5</b>	.349	.635
<i>Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.</i>		
<i>Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.<sup>a</sup></i>		
<i>a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.</i>		

**Factor analysis: Environmental Concern (final)**

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</b>		.877
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	<i>Approx. Chi-Square</i>	325.923
	<i>df</i>	28
	<i>Sig.</i>	.000

<b>Communalities</b>		
	Initial	Extraction
<b>EnvironConcern1</b>	1.000	.433
<b>EnvironConcern2</b>	1.000	.347
<b>EnvironConcern3</b>	1.000	.593
<b>EnvironConcern4</b>	1.000	.532
<b>EnvironConcern8</b>	1.000	.485
<b>EnvironConcern9</b>	1.000	.588
<b>EnvironConcern10</b>	1.000	.689
<b>EnvironConcern11</b>	1.000	.519

<b>Total Variance Explained</b>			
	Initial Eigenvalues	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings <sup>a</sup>

<b>Component</b>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>1</b>	4.186	52.323	52.323	4.186	52.323	52.323	4.782
<b>2</b>	.878	10.976	63.299				3.052
<b>3</b>	.725	9.068	72.367				
<b>4</b>	.584	7.302	79.669				
<b>5</b>	.540	6.744	86.413				
<b>6</b>	.426	5.324	91.737				
<b>7</b>	.343	4.288	96.025				
<b>8</b>	.318	3.975	100.000				

<b>Component Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>	
	Component 1
<b>EnvironConcern10</b>	.830
<b>EnvironConcern3</b>	.770
<b>EnvironConcern9</b>	.767
<b>EnvironConcern4</b>	.729
<b>EnvironConcern11</b>	.720
<b>EnvironConcern8</b>	.696
<b>EnvironConcern1</b>	.658
<b>EnvironConcern2</b>	.589
<i>Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.</i>	
<i>a. 1 components extracted.</i>	

**Factor analysis: General Advertising Skepticism**

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</b>		.587
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	<i>Approx. Chi-Square</i>	54.971
	<i>df</i>	6
	<i>Sig.</i>	.000

<b>Communalities</b>		
	Initial	Extraction
<b>GenAdSkept1</b>	1.000	.274
<b>GenAdSkept2</b>	1.000	.516
<b>GenAdSkept3</b>	1.000	.438
<b>GenAdSkept4</b>	1.000	.646

<b>Total Variance Explained</b>							
<b>Component</b>	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings <sup>a</sup>
	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>1</b>	1.874	46.849	46.849	1.874	46.849	46.849	4.782
<b>2</b>	.895	22.377	69.226				3.052
<b>3</b>	.792	19.812	89.038				
<b>4</b>	.438	10.962	100.000				

<b>Component Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>	
	Component 1
<b>GenAdSkept4</b>	.804
<b>GenAdSkept2</b>	.719
<b>GenAdSkept3</b>	.662
<b>GenAdSkept1</b>	.523

*Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.*

*a. 1 components extracted.*

**Factor analysis: Manipulation Check (initial)**

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</b>		.611
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	<i>Approx. Chi-Square</i>	97.784
	<i>df</i>	15
	<i>Sig.</i>	.000

<b>Communalities</b>		
	Initial	Extraction
<b>inclusive1</b>	1.000	.660
<b>exclusive1</b>	1.000	.498
<b>inclusive2</b>	1.000	.660
<b>exclusive2</b>	1.000	.619
<b>inclusive3</b>	1.000	.462
<b>exclusive3</b>	1.000	.652

<b>Total Variance Explained</b>							
<b>Component</b>	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings <sup>a</sup>
	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>1</b>	2.050	34.170	34.170	2.050	34.170	34.170	1.852
<b>2</b>	1.501	25.012	59.181	1.501	25.012	59.181	1.748
<b>3</b>	.811	13.518	72.699				
<b>4</b>	.704	11.728	84.427				
<b>5</b>	.508	8.461	92.888				
<b>6</b>	.427	7.112	100.000				

<b>Pattern Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>		
	Component 1	Component 2
<b>exclusive3</b>	.784	
<b>exclusive1</b>	.703	
<b>exclusive2</b>	.653	-.382
<b>inclusive2</b>		.797
<b>inclusive1</b>	.485	.698
<b>inclusive3</b>		.634

*Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.*  
*a. 1 components extracted.*

**Factor analysis: Manipulation Check (final)**

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</b>		.612
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	<i>Approx. Chi-Square</i>	59.341
	<i>df</i>	6
	<i>Sig.</i>	.000

<b>Communalities</b>		
	Initial	Extraction
<b>inclusive2</b>	1.000	.423
<b>exclusive2</b>	1.000	.578
<b>inclusive3</b>	1.000	.423
<b>exclusive3</b>	1.000	.498

<b>Total Variance Explained</b>							
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings <sup>a</sup>
<b>Component</b>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>1</b>	1.922	48.044	48.044	1.922	48.044	48.044	1.852
<b>2</b>	.968	24.197	72.240				1.748
<b>3</b>	.645	16.121	88.361				
<b>4</b>	.466	11.639	100.000				

<b>Component Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>	
	Component 1
<b>exclusive2</b>	.760
<b>exclusive3</b>	.706
<b>inclusive2</b>	-.651
<b>inclusive3</b>	-.650

*Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.  
a. 1 components extracted.*

*Appendix G: Discriminant Validity statistics*

*Factor analysis (initial)*

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</b>		.763
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	Approx. Chi-Square	713.953
	df	153
	Sig.	.000

<b>Communalities</b>		
	Initial	Extraction
<b>EnvironConcern1</b>	1.000	.432
<b>EnvironConcern2</b>	1.000	.503
<b>EnvironConcern3</b>	1.000	.579
<b>EnvironConcern4</b>	1.000	.551
<b>EnvironConcern8</b>	1.000	.527
<b>EnvironConcern9</b>	1.000	.625
<b>EnvironConcern10</b>	1.000	.737
<b>EnvironConcern11</b>	1.000	.714
<b>GenAdSkept1</b>	1.000	.359
<b>GenAdSkept2</b>	1.000	.731
<b>GenAdSkept3</b>	1.000	.555
<b>GenAdSkept4</b>	1.000	.602
<b>Attitude_1</b>	1.000	.674
<b>Attitude_2</b>	1.000	.651
<b>Attitude_3</b>	1.000	.676
<b>Attitude_4</b>	1.000	.476
<b>Attitude_5</b>	1.000	.598
<b>Attitude_6</b>	1.000	.642

<b>Total Variance Explained</b>							
<b>Component</b>	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings <sup>a</sup>
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
<b>1</b>	4.684	26.020	26.020	4.684	26.020	26.020	4.483
<b>2</b>	3.228	17.936	43.956	3.228	17.936	43.956	3.220
<b>3</b>	1.597	8.871	52.827	1.597	8.871	52.827	1.827
<b>4</b>	1.123	6.241	59.069	1.123	6.241	59.069	1.681
<b>5</b>	.983	5.460	64.528				
<b>6</b>	.936	5.201	69.729				
<b>7</b>	.790	4.392	74.121				
<b>8</b>	.710	3.946	78.067				

9	.614	3.410	81.477				
10	.561	3.119	84.596				
11	.538	2.990	87.586				
12	.456	2.533	90.119				
13	.411	2.284	92.403				
14	.349	1.938	94.340				
15	.325	1.807	96.147				
16	.287	1.593	97.740				
17	.230	1.278	99.018				
18	.177	.982	100.000				

<b>Pattern Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>				
	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4
<b>EnvironConcern10</b>	.860			
<b>EnvironConcern9</b>	.788			
<b>EnvironConcern4</b>	.733			
<b>EnvironConcern8</b>	.712			
<b>EnvironConcern3</b>	.705			
<b>EnvironConcern11</b>	.647		-.225	-.462
<b>EnvironConcern1</b>	.593			
<b>EnvironConcern2</b>	.591		.262	.264
<b>Attitude_3</b>		.822		
<b>Attitude_1</b>		.816		
<b>Attitude_6</b>		.773		
<b>Attitude_5</b>		.664		-.324
<b>Attitude_2</b>	.304	.645		.453
<b>Attitude_4</b>		.595	.371	
<b>GenAdSkept2</b>			.829	
<b>GenAdSkept4</b>	.252		.640	
<b>GenAdSkept3</b>				-.674
<b>GenAdSkept1</b>			.224	-.527

*Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.  
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.<sup>a</sup>  
a. Rotation converged in 12 iterations.*

**Factor analysis (initial)**

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</b>		.793
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	Approx. Chi-Square	565.185
	df	91
	Sig.	.000

<b>Communalities</b>		
	Initial	Extraction
<b>EnvironConcern1</b>	1.000	.443

<b>EnvironConcern2</b>	1.000	.383
<b>EnvironConcern3</b>	1.000	.601
<b>EnvironConcern4</b>	1.000	.535
<b>EnvironConcern8</b>	1.000	.519
<b>EnvironConcern9</b>	1.000	.612
<b>EnvironConcern10</b>	1.000	.716
<b>EnvironConcern11</b>	1.000	.599
<b>GenAdSkept2</b>	1.000	.762
<b>GenAdSkept4</b>	1.000	.685
<b>Attitude_1</b>	1.000	.652
<b>Attitude_3</b>	1.000	.664
<b>Attitude_5</b>	1.000	.539
<b>Attitude_6</b>	1.000	.733

<b>Total Variance Explained</b>							
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings <sup>a</sup>
<b>Component</b>	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
<b>1</b>	2.677	19.122	51.058	2.677	19.122	51.058	2.689
<b>2</b>	1.296	9.256	60.314	1.296	9.256	60.314	1.965
<b>3</b>	.895	6.393	66.707				
<b>4</b>	.804	5.741	72.448				
<b>5</b>	.662	4.730	77.177				
<b>6</b>	.597	4.261	81.439				
<b>7</b>	.512	3.654	85.093				
<b>8</b>	.471	3.365	88.458				
<b>9</b>	.447	3.191	91.649				
<b>10</b>	.366	2.617	94.266				
<b>11</b>	.302	2.161	96.426				
<b>12</b>	.286	2.046	98.472				
<b>13</b>	.214	1.528	100.000				
<b>14</b>	.349	1.938	94.340				

<b>Pattern Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>			
	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
<b>EnvironConcern10</b>	.869		
<b>EnvironConcern9</b>	.795		
<b>EnvironConcern11</b>	.782		
<b>EnvironConcern3</b>	.717		
<b>EnvironConcern4</b>	.700		
<b>EnvironConcern8</b>	.699		
<b>EnvironConcern1</b>	.606		
<b>EnvironConcern2</b>	.508		
<b>Attitude_6</b>		.849	

<b>Attitude_3</b>		.818	
<b>Attitude_1</b>		.801	
<b>Attitude_5</b>		.719	
<b>GenAdSkept2</b>			.888
<b>GenAdSkept4</b>			.772

*Appendix H: Manipulation Check statistics*

<b>Group Statistics</b>					
	0=inclusive, 1=exclusive	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
<b>inclusive2</b>	0	55	4.0000	.72008	.09710
	1	50	3.3200	1.01900	.14411
<b>exclusive2</b>	0	55	2.6364	.96922	.13069
	1	50	3.3400	.89466	.12652
<b>inclusive3</b>	0	55	4.4000	.62657	.08449
	1	50	3.5800	1.05153	.14871
<b>exclusive3</b>	0	55	2.8000	.93095	.12553
	1	50	3.2000	.96890	.13702

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
<b>inclusive2</b>	Equal variances assumed	14.599	.000	3.977	103	.000	.68000	.17100	.34086	1.01914
	Equal variances not assumed			3.913	87.267	.000	.68000	.17377	.33463	1.02537
<b>exclusive2</b>	Equal variances assumed	.661	.418	-3.853	103	.000	-.70364	.18260	-1.06578	-.34149
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.868	102.973	.000	-.70364	.18190	-1.06440	-.34288
<b>inclusive3</b>	Equal variances assumed	14.999	.000	4.905	103	.000	.82000	.16716	.48847	1.15153
	Equal variances not assumed			4.794	78.332	.000	.82000	.17103	.47952	1.16048
<b>exclusive3</b>	Equal variances assumed	.007	.936	-2.157	103	.033	-.40000	.18547	-.76784	-.03216
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.152	101.127	.034	-.40000	.18583	-.76863	-.03137

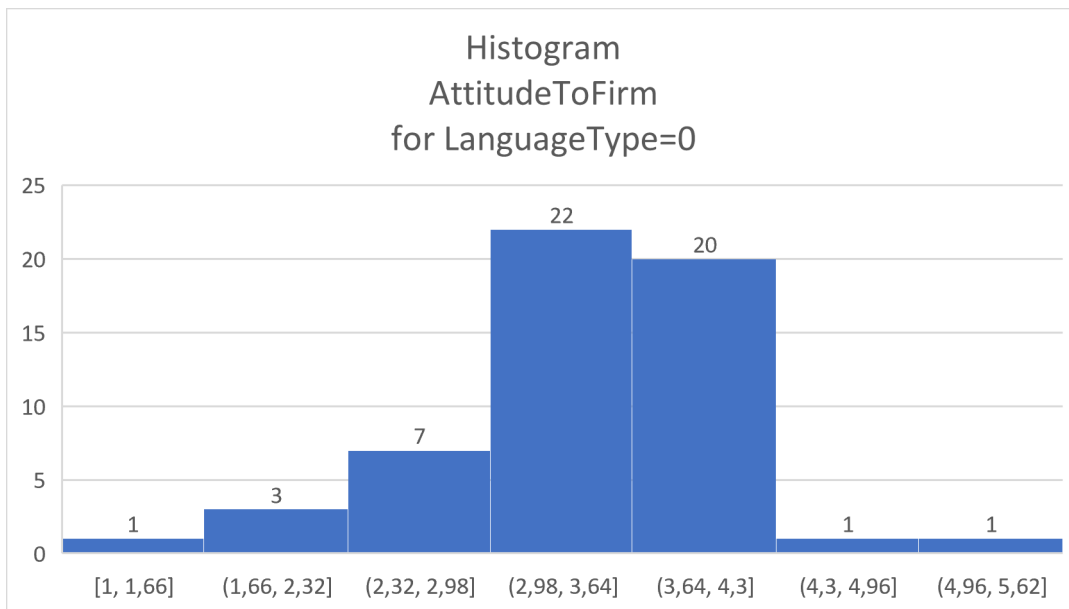
**Appendix I: ANCOVA assumptions statistics**

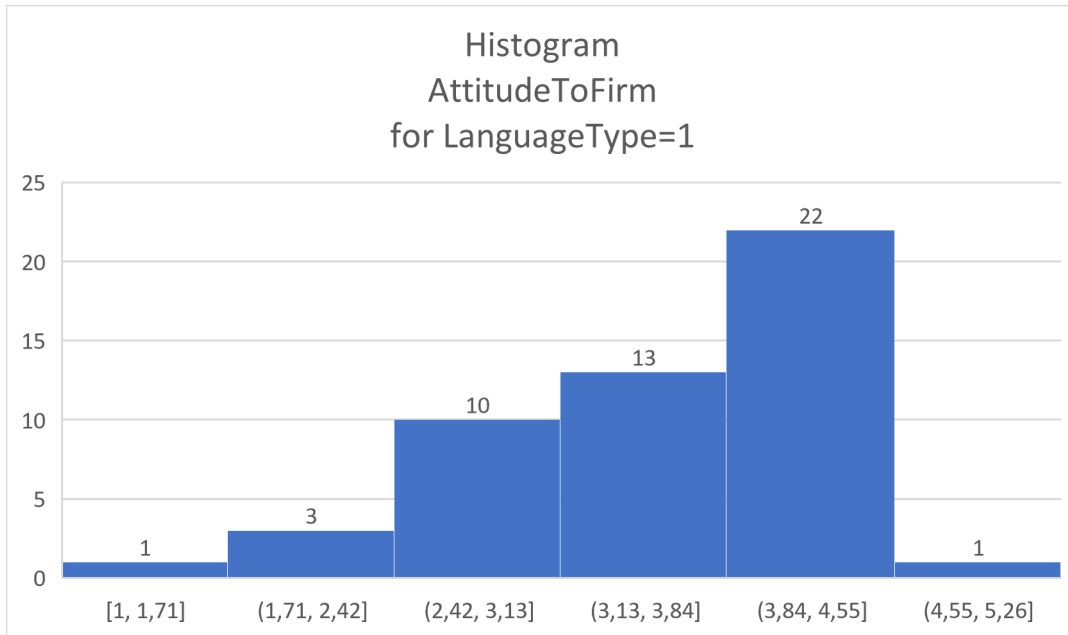
**Independence of errors**

Descriptives					
	0=inclusive, 1=exclusive		Statistic	Std. Error	
<b>AttitudeToFirm</b>	0	Mean	3.3818	09217	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.1970	
			Upper Bound	3.5666	
		5% Trimmed Mean	3.4003		
		Median	3.5000		
		Variance	.467		
		Std. Deviation	.68356		
		Minimum	1.50		
		Maximum	5.00		
		Range	3.50		
		Interquartile Range	1.00		
		Skewness	-.457	.322	
		Kurtosis	.291	.634	
	1	Mean	3.5250	.09904	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.3260	
			Upper Bound	3.7240	
		5% Trimmed Mean	3.5472		
		Median	3.7500		
		Variance	.490		
		Std. Deviation	.70031		
		Minimum	1.75		
		Maximum	4.75		
		Range	3.00		

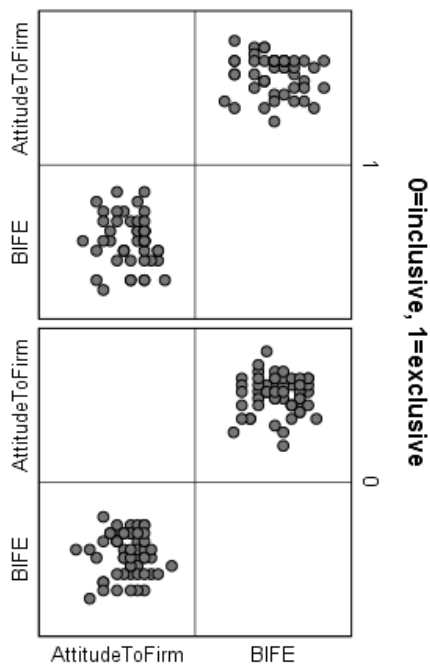
		Interquartile Range	1.00	
		Skewness	-.664	.337
		Kurtosis	-.365	.662

Tests of Normality				
		Shapiro-Wilk		
	0=inclusive, 1=exclusive	Statistic	df	Sig.
<b>AttitudeToFirm</b>	0	.969	55	.163
	1	.913	50	.001





*Linearity between covariate and dependent variable*



*Homogeneity of variance*

Descriptive Statistics			
Dependent Variable: AttitudeToFirm			
0=inclusive, 1=exclusive	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
<b>0</b>	3.3667	.62968	55
<b>1</b>	3.5567	.61039	50

<b>Total</b>	3.4571	.62491	105
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<b>Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances<sup>a</sup></b>			
<b>Dependent Variable: AttitudeToFirm</b>			
<b>F</b>	<b>df1</b>	<b>df2</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
.038	1	103	.845
<b>a. Design: Intercept + BIFE + LanguageType</b>			

**Control variable correlations**

<b>Correlations</b>								
		AttitudeToFirm	EnvironmentConcern	GeneralAdvertisingSkepticism	Age	Level of Education	BIFE	Type of Language
<b>AttitudeToFirm</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	-.038	-.094	-.049	-.123	-.034	.104
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.699	.338	.616	.213	.729	.292
	N	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
<b>EnvironmentConcern</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.038	1	.339**	.160	.208*	.303**	.140
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.699		.000	.103	.033	.002	.155
	N	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
<b>General Advertising Skepticism</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.094	.339**	1	.007	.126	-.031	-.074
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.338	.000		.941	.200	.755	.451
	N	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
<b>Age</b>	Pearson	-.049	.160	.007	1	-.141	.174	-.022

	Correlation							
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.616	.103	.941		.151	.076	.824
	N	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
<b>Level of Education</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.123	.208*	.126	-.141	.1	-.041	-.020
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.213	.033	.200	.151		.680	.840
	N	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
<b>BIFE</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.034	.303**	-.031	.174	-.041	.1	.131
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.729	.002	.755	.076	.680		.184
	N	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
<b>Type of Language</b>	Pearson Correlation	.104	.140	-.074	-.022	-.020	.131	.1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.292	.155	.451	.824	.840	.184	
	N	105	105	105	105	105	105	105

*Appendix J: ANCOVA statistics*

<b>Between-Subjects Factors</b>			
		Value Label	N
<b>LanguageType</b>	0	inclusive	55
	1	exclusive	50

<b>Statistics</b>							
		Attitude_1	Attitude_2	Attitude_3	Attitude_4	Attitude_5	Attitude_6
<b>N</b>	Valid	105	105	105	105	105	105
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Mean</b>		3.6857	3.4667	3.5905	3.4762	3.3429	3.1810

<b>Descriptive Statistics</b>			
Dependent Variable: AttitudeToFirm			
<b>LanguageType</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>inclusive</b>	3.3818	.68356	55
<b>exclusive</b>	3.5250	.70031	50
Total	3.4500	.69199	105

<b>Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances<sup>a</sup></b>			
Dependent Variable: AttitudeToFirm			
<b>F</b>	<b>df1</b>	<b>df2</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
.290	1	103	.591
Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.			
a. Design: Intercept + BIFE + LanguageType			

<b>Tests of Between-Subjects Effects</b>						
Dependent Variable: AttitudeToFirm						
<b>Source</b>	<b>Type III Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Partial Eta Squared</b>

<b>Corrected Model</b>	.653 <sup>a</sup>	2	.326	.677	.510	.013
<b>Intercept</b>	83.651	1	83.651	173.608	.000	.630
<b>BIFE</b>	.116	1	.116	.240	.625	.002
<b>LanguageType</b>	.594	1	.594	1.233	.269	.012
<b>Error</b>	49.147	102	.482			
<b>Total</b>	1299.563	105				
<b>Corrected Total</b>	49.800	104				
a. R Squared = .013 (Adjusted R Squared = -.006)						