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Swear words in advertising: A study on the differences
between swear words in L1 and L2

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Abstract

Reaching audience as advertisers is becoming increasingly more difficult due to people being exposed to large numbers of advertisements. A possible solution is to employ shockvertising tactics, such as profanity use in advertising. Furthermore, emotionality can be different between L1 and L2 swear words. As of now, there no research has been done on the differences between L1 and L2 swear words in an advertising context. As such, the present study investigated the effects of swear words in an advertising context, while accounting for the language of the advertisements (L1 or English as L2). In an experiment, 136 German and 129 Dutch participants evaluated three different advertisements with or without swear words in the participants' L1 or L2 in terms of attitude towards the ad and product, purchase intention, emotional response, and brand and product recall. Findings indicated that swear words did not impact the evaluation, except for emotional response, which was higher in the no swear word condition. Language of the advertisement across ads with swear words had no effect. German participants recalled the product better if the advertisement contained swear words in L1 compared to advertisements in L2, but the non-swear word version still led to better recall. It can be concluded that the use of profanity in shockvertising may not have its desired positive effects.

Introduction

Shock advertising (shockvertising) has been studied thoroughly and can be an effective tool for reaching audiences (Baker and Broadus, 2014; Dahl et al., 2003; Urwin and Venter, 2014). One type of shockvertising is the use of swear words in advertisements. Research has shown that swearing could have a positive effect on perceived credibility and persuasiveness (Jay, 1992; Rassin & van der Heijden, 2005; Scherer and Sagarin, 2006). Therefore, the use of swear words in advertising could potentially be a valid strategy for advertisers aiming to shock their audience. However, little research has been done on swearing as shockvertising and no research has been conducted on the differences between a speaker's first or second language and how they perceive swear words in advertisements. Swear words in the L1 of an individual have higher emotional force than swear words in the L2 (Dewaele, 2004), but this has not been investigated for an advertising context. As such, the present study aims to research the effects on consumers' responses by using swear words in an advertisement context and whether the swear words in the L1 or L2 of the consumer show any differences.

Theoretical framework

Shock advertising

The advertising market has been roughly growing annually with 5% since 2010 (Statista; see Figure 1). As a result, it becomes necessary to stand out. A potential solution is the use of shock advertising (shockvertising). Shockvertising is a way to deliberately startle and sometimes offend the audience in order to stand out (Dahl et al., 2003, p. 268). An example of shockvertising is an advertisement made by Caribu Bitter, a company that sells chocolate. In their ad they promote the 'dark side of sweetness' by having a sweet girl grinding a bird into meat (see Figure 2).

Nowadays, Millennials have become moderately resistant to shockvertising (Urwin & Venter, 2014). However, Urwin and Venter did not account for profanity use. Profanity is the use of swear words as a form of shockvertising. Consequently, swear words could possibly still be effective as a way to shock its audience in order to stand out.

Effects of swearing

Swearing has been researched before in various different contexts and findings indicated that swearing generally results in positive effects. An example of this is that swear words can serve as an outlet to release stress and to extra emphasize the swearers' feelings (Fine & Johnson, 1984). Instead of just 'very good' pizza it becomes 'damn good' pizza. The extra emphasis on 'damn good', helps the slogan stand out, which might attract the attention of a consumer and lead to the consumer purchasing the pizza.

Swear words can also affect persuasion and credibility (Jay, 1992; Rassin & van der Heijden, 2005; Scherer and Sagarin, 2006). For example the findings of Jay (1992) indicated that swearing at an inappropriate time can reduce persuasiveness and credibility, while Rassin and van der Heijden (2005) found that swearing during testimonies can greatly boost credibility of the speaker. Furthermore, Scherer and Sagarin (2006) reported that swearing could increase the persuasiveness of the speech and intensity of the speaker, but not the credibility. Scherer and Sagarin (2006) performed an experiment with three different speeches about lowering tuition fee. One speech with a swear word at the beginning of the speech, the other speech had a swear word at the end of the speech and the last speech had no swear words. The results revealed that the speeches with swear words were more persuasive and had higher speaker intensity than speeches without swear words. There was no difference between the swear words being featured at the beginning or the end of a speech. Consequently, swearing can have positive effects on persuasion and credibility, given the fact that the act of swearing happens during appropriate times.

Moreover, swearing at the work place promotes in-group identification, due to swear words having the effect of creating an informal and more relaxed working place (Baruch & Jenkins, 2007). It seems that, while swearing is perceived as informal it is not always viewed as negative. Swearing may lead to positive evaluations, which could be applied to an advertising context.

Swearing has also been studied in a political context by Cavazza and Guidetti (2014). They researched swearing behaviour by politicians and found that politicians who use swear words, leave a better impression behind than politicians who do not use swear words. The act of swearing makes politicians appear more informal and this informality increases the politicians' relatability. Again due to the informality which is associated with swearing, speakers are perceived as more relatable and thus, perceived more positively than non-swearing speakers.

As stated earlier, swearing can have positive or negative effects and the effect depends on the valence of the message (Hair & Ozcan, 2018). They researched the use of swear words in online reviews and concluded that swearing in positive reviews is perceived as more useful than swearing in a negative review. Thus, in the context of advertising, the advertisement should contain a positive message rather than a negative message.

The severity of the swear words and context plays a critical role (Kapoor 2014). Kapoor compared mild and moderate swear words with severe ones in abusive and casual settings and found that milder and moderate swear words were preferred in both scenarios. This entails that although, swearing can be perceived as positive, the severity of the swear word must be accounted for and in general milder swear words would work best.

In conclusion, previous research has shown that swearing may result in better credibility, persuasion and impressions of the speaker. Consequently, there is reason to believe that using swear words in an advertisement context could yield positive results, especially when looking at persuasive strength.

Swearing as shockvertising

As mentioned above, swearing in advertisements is a form of shockvertising. The usage of taboo or offensive words such as ‘fuck’ and ‘damn’ will naturally stand out more than regular intensifiers such as ‘very’ and ‘incredible’. Swearing may shock people, because swearing in advertisements is unexpected.

Little research has been done on swearing in advertising and one of the few studies is one by Baker and Broadus (2014), where they researched the possible application of swear words in print advertising. They stated that the usefulness of the swear word in an advertisement is dependent on the type of product. Certain products simply evoke stronger emotion than others. Having a product that evokes more emotion, results in a stronger resonance with the swear word. Pairing a fitting product type with a swear word is because the advertiser has a certain goal in mind, five possible goals in fact (see Figure 3) (Mortimer, 2007). The first goal is intimacy. With intimacy the advertiser aims to communicate with the audience on a personal level. The second goal is personality, where the aim is to reinforce the personality of the brand or product. The third goal is to have a positive surprise meant to emphasize the qualities of the product. The fourth goal is to have positive surprise aimed at humouring its audience. The fifth goal is to shock its audience, which could offend them.

Besides these five goals, there is a myriad number of variables that could also impact the outcome of the goal according to Mortimer (2007), such as type of product, medium and severity of the swear word. However, there is a lack of research on swearing in advertising and as a result, the conceptual framework by Mortimer (2007) has not been used by other studies yet. The framework could be used for any potential research aiming to investigate swearing in advertising, with respect to creating advertisements with swear words. The swear word advertisement could for instance have the fifth goal of shocking its readers, such as the advertisements in the present study.

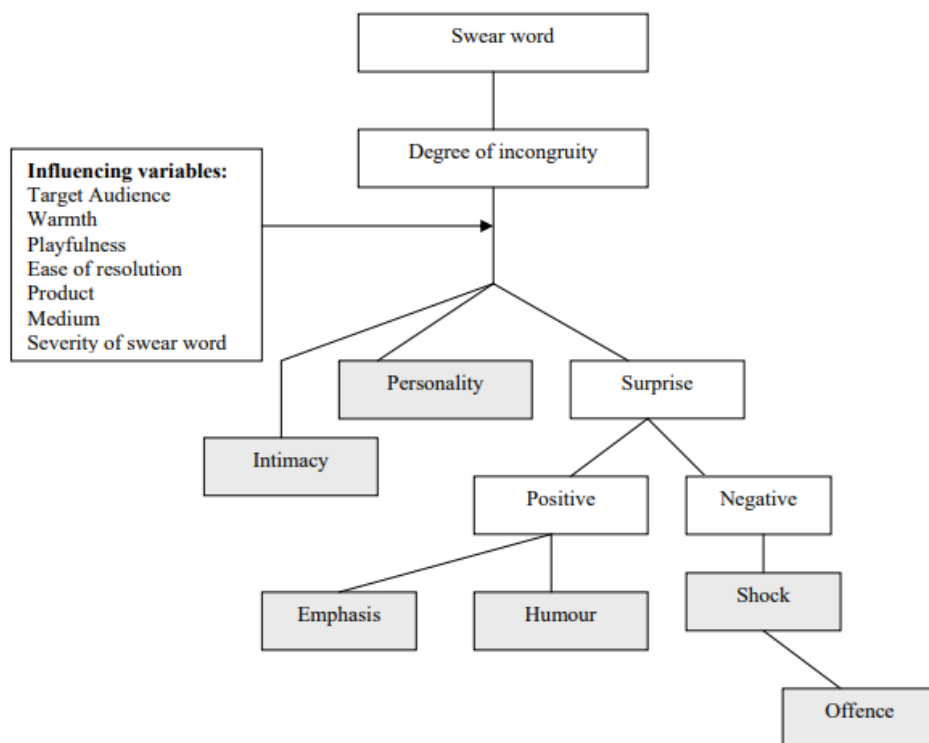


Figure 3: Conceptual framework of effects of swear words in advertising by Mortimer (2007, p. 1595)

Swear words in L1 and L2

One of the features of language is that it can be experienced differently by speakers, depending on whether it is their native tongue or a foreign language. Swear words are no exception to this statement. Hearing a swear word for example in the native language (L1) could be significantly different than hearing the swear word in the second foreign language (L2). An example of this is how multilinguals experienced a stronger emotional force of swear words in their L1 than in their L2. So, according to Dewaele (2004), a L1 Dutch speaker hearing the Dutch swear word ‘godverdomme’ has a stronger impact than when that person hears the English equivalent ‘goddamn’. However, this study was not conducted in an advertisement context.

A similar experiment was carried out by Dewaele (2016). Dewaele compared English L1 with L2 English speakers with regard to their perception of swear words. L1 English speakers use more severe swear words than L2 English speakers, however L2 English speakers in general rated swear words as more offensive than L1 native speakers.

It seems that while, swear words in the speaker’s L1 tend to be perceived as more emotional than swear words in L2, the L2 speakers can perceive swear words in the foreign language as more offensive than native L1 speakers. This raises the question as to whether these findings by Dewaele (2004 and 2016) hold true in an advertising context.

Research question

There is currently a lack of research on the use of swear words in advertising and there are no existing studies on swear words in advertising in native and foreign languages. Previous research by Dewaele (2004) has shown that swear words in the L1 are perceived as more emotional than swear words in the L2. This raises the question as to whether these findings would apply to an advertising context. The advertisement in the L1 could be experienced as too vulgar and offensive, leading to the advertisement being rejected. At the same time the advertisement in the L2 could be seen as less vulgar and offensive, resulting in an acceptance of the advertisement.

Therefore, the main purpose of the present study is to investigate the potential effects swear words can have on the individual in an advertisement context and more importantly whether there is a difference in evaluation between the L1 and L2 of the individual. The present study focuses on how Dutch and German subjects evaluated three different advertisements with or without swear words, with regard to attitude towards the advertisement

and product, purchase intention, emotional response, and brand and product recall. The current study will focus on the following research question.

RQ1. To what extent do German and Dutch subjects respond differently to swear words and no swear words in the L1 or L2 of the subject in advertisements in terms of:.

1A. Attitude towards the advertisement

1B. Attitude towards the product

1C. Purchase intention

1D. Emotional response

1E. Brand and product recall

Germany and the Netherlands are neighbouring countries, but they differ in their overall English proficiency according to Education First (EF). EF's English Proficiency Index (EPI) has ranked all countries over the world with regard to their overall English proficiency and the Netherlands are ranked first worldwide, while Germany is ranked 10th (Education First, 2019). Therefore, an investigation as to whether Germans and Dutch subjects would differ in their evaluation based on L1 or L2 could prove to be interesting.

Findings of the present study could potentially reveal the usefulness of swearing in advertising and whether the L1 or L2 would be better suited for the advertising. As a result, advertisers could utilise this form of shockvertising to attract more consumers and create more effective advertisements.

Method

In an experiment Dutch and German participants evaluated three advertisements via an online questionnaire. The advertisements featured bubble gum, coffee and beer as products.

A pre-test was conducted with non-Dutch and non-German participants in order to find the ideal length of the questionnaire.

Materials

The present study had three independent variables: presence of swear word (two levels: swear word and no swear word), language of the advertisement (two levels: native L1 and English as L2) and mother tongue of the participants (two levels: German and Dutch).

Three different base advertisements about bubble gum, coffee and beer were created with the three independent variables (see Table 1).

Table 1. Table showing the eight possible gum, coffee and beer slogans.

	Swear word	No swear word
Gum		
L1 (Ger)	Frisch deinen Atem auf, Arschloch!	Frisch deinen Atem auf!
L1 (NL)	Verfris je adem, klootzak!	Verfris je adem!
L2	Freshen up your breath, asshole!	Freshen up your breath!
Coffee		
L1 (Ger)	Trinke deine <i>verdammte</i> Morgenlaune weg	Trinke deine Morgenlaune weg
L1 (NL)	Drink je <i>verdomde</i> ochtendhumeur weg	Drink je ochtendhumeur weg
L2	Drink your damn morning mood away	Drink your morning mood away
Beer		
L1 (Ger)	Sei kein <i>Idiot</i> der mit leeren Händen erscheint!	Sei nicht die Person die mit leeren Händen erscheint!
L1 (NL)	Wees niet de <i>idioot</i> die met lege handen aankomt!	Wees niet degene die met lege handen aankomt!
L2	Don't be the <i>idiot</i> who shows up empty handed!	Don't be the person who shows up empty handed!

The actual advertisements can be found in the appendix. Furthermore, a secondary line that was consistently in Dutch or German was added to each advertisement to indicate that the advertised product was supposed to launch in the Netherlands or in Germany. For instance, the bubble gum ad's second line read: De nieuwe muntfrisse kauwgum van Airmint, while the German version read: Der neue erfrischend minzige Kauwgummi von Airmint.

The swear words 'asshole', 'damn' and 'idiot' were chosen for this experiment, because they have similar counterparts in German, Dutch and English.

Subjects

There were a total of 136 German participants (mean age: 28.14, $SD = 11.83$, range = 18 – 66, 58.1% female) and 129 Dutch participants (mean age: 29.26, $SD = 14.42$, range = 18 – 72, 56.6% female).

German participants' educational level ranged from secondary education = 21.3%, vocational training = 17.6%, Bachelor's degree = 39.7%, Master's degree = 19.9% to Doctoral degree = 1.5%, with Bachelor's degree (39.7%) being the most frequent level. Dutch participants' educational level ranged from secondary education = 6.2%, vocational training = 12.4%, Bachelor's degree = 61.2% to Master's degree = 19.4%, with Bachelor's degree (61.2%) being the most frequent level.

Participants were asked to indicate in which type of context they acquired their English language skills: naturalistic, instructed or mixed. Of the German participants 64% indicated that they acquired their English language skills via a mixed context, while 32.4% indicated it was via an instructed context and only 3.7% said naturalistic. Dutch participants indicated that the instructed context was most prevalent (58.1%) followed by mixed (35.7%) and naturalistic (6.2%).

Participants were asked at which age intervals they learnt English: 0-12, 12-18 and 18+. German participants mostly learnt English between age 0-12 (58.8%) followed by 12-18 (36.8%) and 18+ (4.4%). Dutch participants mostly learnt English between the ages of 12-18 (53.5%) followed by 0-12 (45%) and 18+ (1.6%).

The participants were asked to indicate their self-assessed proficiency in their L1 (German or Dutch) and in their L2 (English) based on speaking, writing reading and listening (7-point Likert). German participants scored high on their self-assessed German skills ($M = 6.47$, $SD = .68$) and their self-assessed English skills were also good ($M = 5.36$, $SD = 1.04$). Dutch participants also scored high on their self-assessed L1 skills ($M = 5.93$, $SD = .75$), but

slightly lower on their self-assessed English skills ($M = 5.34$, $SD = .77$). Reliability scale analyses were performed on self-assessed L1 ($\alpha = .89$) and self-assessed L2 ($\alpha = .90$) and both were good.

Participants were asked how often they swear and German participants indicated that they swear sometimes ($M = 4.02$, $SD = 1.36$) and they find the use of swear words slightly inappropriate/neutral ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 1.16$). Dutch participants answered similarly, they sometimes swear ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 1.47$) and find the usage of swear words to be slightly inappropriate/neutral ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.42$).

Distribution background variables

Presence of swear words condition (swear words, no swear words)

Age ($t(263) = 0.65$, $p = .517$), Educational level ($\chi^2(5) = 2.54$, $p = .770$), L1 assessment ($t(263) = 0.25$, $p = .802$), L2 assessment ($t(263) = 0.26$, $p = .793$), context English acquired ($\chi^2(2) = 0.99$, $p = .610$), age English learnt ($\chi^2(2) = 0.38$, $p = .829$), frequency swearing ($t(263) = 0.41$, $p = .682$) and appropriateness of swearing ($t(263) = 0.09$, $p = .932$) were evenly distributed across the presence of swear words (swear words, no swear words) condition.

Language of the advertisement condition (L1, English as L2)

Age ($t(263) = 0.16$, $p = .873$), Educational level ($\chi^2(5) = 4.92$, $p = .425$), L1 assessment ($t(263) = 1.26$, $p = .208$), L2 assessment ($t(263) = 1.52$, $p = .131$), context English acquired ($\chi^2(2) = 0.09$, $p = .956$), age English learnt ($\chi^2(2) = 1.98$, $p = .372$), frequency swearing ($t(263) = 0.65$, $p = .514$) and appropriateness of swearing ($t(263) = 0.26$, $p = .792$) were evenly distributed across the language of the advertisement condition (L1, English as L2).

Mother tongue condition (Dutch, German)

Age ($t(247.80) = 0.69$, $p = .491$), gender ($\chi^2(3) = 2.06$, $p = .560$), L2 self-assessment ($t(248,35) = 0.19$, $p = .852$), frequency swearing ($t(263) = 0.32$, $p = .75$) and appropriateness swearing ($t(247.79) = 1.47$, $p = .143$) were evenly distributed across the mother tongue (Dutch, German) condition.

Educational level ($\chi^2(5) = 21.13$, $p = .001$), context English acquired ($\chi^2(2) = 21.24$, $p < .001$), age English learnt ($\chi^2(2) = 8.63$, $p = .015$) and L1 self-assessment ($t(263) = 6.07$, $p < .001$), were all unevenly distributed across mother tongue conditions.

The secondary educational level was followed more frequently by German participants (78.4%) than Dutch participants (21.6%) and the Bachelor educational level was followed more frequently by Dutch participants (59.4%) than German participants (40.6%).

There were more Dutch participants (63%) who had acquired English in an instructed context than German participants (37%) and more German participants (65.4%) had acquired English in a mixed context than Dutch participants (34.6%).

There were more German participants (58%) who learnt English between the ages 0-12 than Dutch participants (42%) and more Dutch participants (58%) learnt English at the ages 12-18 than German participants (42%).

German participants ($M = 6.47$, $SD = .69$) had higher self-assessed L1 proficiency than Dutch participants ($M = 5.93$, $SD = .75$).

Design

The experiment had a 2 (presence of swear word: swear word, no swear word) \times 2 (language of the advertisement: L1, L2) \times 2 (mother tongue: German, Dutch) design. Presence of swear words, language of the ad and mother tongue were between-subjects factors. The participants were randomly assigned to one questionnaire out of eight. Each questionnaire either had only ads with swear words in L1, ads without swear words in L1, ads with swear words in L2 (German or Dutch) or ads without swear words in L2 (German or Dutch).

Instruments

Participants filled in an online questionnaire in which they evaluated the attitude towards the advertisement, attitude towards the product, purchase intention, perceived offensiveness, emotional response, and brand and product recall.

Attitude towards the advertisement was measured with eight 7-point Likert scales: 'I like this ad', 'This ad is entertaining', 'This ad is useful', 'This ad is important', 'This ad is interesting', 'This ad is informative', 'I would like to see this ad again' and 'This ad is good' anchored by (strongly disagree – strongly agree) ($\alpha = .92$) (based on Villegas, 2002, p. 101).

Attitude towards the product was measured with five 7-point Likert scales: 'I like this product', 'This product is useful', 'This product is interesting', 'This product is good' and 'I would like to use this product' anchored by (strongly disagree – strongly agree) ($\alpha = .92$) (based on Villegas, 2002, p. 101).

Purchase intention was measured with four 7-point Likert scales: 'My willingness to buy this product is high', 'I am likely to buy this product', 'I would intent to buy this product' and 'I have a high intention to buy this product' anchored by (strongly disagree – strongly agree) ($\alpha = .92$) (based on In & Ahmad, 2018, p. 4).

Perceived offensiveness was measured with one 7-point Likert scale: 'I consider this ad...' anchored by (not at all offensive – extremely offensive) (based on Timothy et al., 2008)

Emotional response was measured with seven 7-point Likert scales: 'This ad makes me happy', 'This ad makes me excited', 'This ad makes me angry', 'This ad irritates me', 'This ad makes me feel guilty', 'This ad makes me feel ashamed' and 'This ad makes me sad' anchored by (strongly disagree – strongly agree) ($\alpha = .86$) (based on Erickson & Ritter, 2001, p. 155).

Brand and product recall were measured with two open questions: 'Please indicate which brands you remember from the three ads that you saw' and 'Also, do you remember which three products were featured? The open questions were given a score between 0 and 4. A score of 0 meant the participant did not recall anything and a score of 4 meant the participant recalled everything. Coding was performed by two individuals who worked on the questionnaire of this thesis (brand recall $\kappa = .92$, brand product $\kappa = .91$) (based on Singh et al., 1988).

Self-assessed proficiency in Dutch or German was measured with four 7-point Likert scales and were introduced by the statement: 'Please indicate how you would assess your German or Dutch for the following skills'. The statement was anchored by (completely disagree – completely agree). Self-assessed proficiency in German or Dutch was measured with four items: 'speaking', 'writing', 'reading' and 'listening' ($\alpha = .89$) (based on Krishna & Alhuwalia, 2008).

Self-assessed proficiency in English was similarly measured with four 7-point Likert scales and were introduced by the statement: 'Please indicate how you would assess your English for the following skills'. The statement was anchored by (completely disagree – completely agree). Self-assessed proficiency in English was measured with four items: 'speaking', 'writing', 'reading' and 'listening' ($\alpha = .90$) (based on Krishna & Alhuwalia, 2008).

Procedure

The online survey tool Qualtrics was used to distribute the questionnaire. Participants were introduced on the first page and their consent to have their results be processed was asked. Without their consent, participants could not proceed with the questionnaire. They were notified that the questionnaire consisted of two parts. In part one they would read three advertisements and answer questions, while in the second part they would be questioned about their background information. Moreover, participants were told that participation was entirely voluntarily and they were able to withdraw at any time without consequences. Their answers would be confidential and be processed anonymously and would only be used for this study. Participants were not debriefed at the end and the questionnaire took about ten to fifteen minutes to complete. Participants were recruited via the ten students who set-up the present study.

Statistical treatment

Paired samples t-tests with the gum, coffee and beer ads as factors were carried out to investigate whether the three ads differed from each other in terms of attitude towards the advertisement, attitude towards the product, purchase intention and emotional response.

A three-way ANOVA with presence of swear word, language of the advertisement and mother tongue of the participants as factors was carried out for perceived offensiveness.

Three-way MANOVAs with presence of swear word, language of the advertisement and mother tongue of the participants as factors were carried out to investigate attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product, purchase intention, emotional response, perceived offensiveness and brand and product recall.

Results

Manipulation check of the gum, coffee and beer ads

The three different advertisements could theoretically have been evaluated differently from each other. This section will test whether this assumption is true or not. According to a paired samples t-test, attitude towards the advertisement was evaluated significantly different between the gum and coffee ad ($t(264) = 10.04, p < .001$) and between the gum and beer ads ($t(264) = 7.85, p < .001$), but not between the coffee and beer ads ($t(264) = 1.82, p = .070$). Attitude towards the advertisement for the coffee ad ($M = 3.53, SD = 1.14$) and beer ad ($M = 3.38, SD = 1.27$) was shown to be more positive than for the gum ad ($M = 2.74, SD = 1.01$;

see Table 2).

The second paired samples t-test revealed that attitude towards the product was evaluated significantly different between the gum and coffee ads ($t(264) = 2.20, p = .029$), but gum and beer ($t(264) = 1.35, p = .179$), and coffee and beer ($t(264) = .80, p = .424$) were not. Attitude towards the product for the coffee ad ($M = 4.11, SD = 1.33$) was shown to be more positive than for the gum ad ($M = 3.90, SD = 1.24$; see Table 2).

The third paired samples t-test revealed that purchase intention was evaluated significantly different between the gum and beer ads ($t(264) = 6.18, p < .001$) and between coffee and beer ads ($t(264) = 6.18, p < .001$), but not between gum and coffee ads, since they had the same mean and standard deviation. Purchase intention for the beer ad ($M = 3.44, SD = 1.69$) was shown to be more positive than for both the gum ($M = 2.78, SD = 1.36$) and coffee ads ($M = 2.78, SD = 1.36$; see Table 2).

The fourth paired samples t-test revealed that emotional response was evaluated significantly different between gum and coffee ads ($t(264) = 14.53, p < .001$) and between gum and beer ads ($t(264) = 13.54, p < .001$), but not between coffee and beer ads ($t(264) = .71, p = .481$). Emotional response for the gum ad ($M = 4.31, SD = .96$) was shown to be lower than both coffee ($M = 5.25, SD = .80$) and beer ads ($M = 5.21, SD = .99$; see Table 2).

It can be concluded that the gum advertisement was in most cases evaluated more negatively than the coffee and beer advertisements. This means that the advertisements as a whole should not be grouped together. However, due to practical reasons the present study decided to still group the three ads together.

Table 2. Means, standard deviations and n for attitude ad, attitude product, purchase intention and emotional response in function of type of advertisement (gum, coffee, beer) (1 = very low, 7 = very high).

	Gum		Coffee		Beer	
	$M (SD)$	n	$M (SD)$	n	$M (SD)$	n
Attitude ad	2.74 (1.01)	265	3.53 (1.14)	265	3.38 (1.27)	265
Attitude product	3.90 (1.24)	265	4.11 (1.33)	265	4.04 (1.54)	265
Purchase intention	2.78 (1.36)	265	2.78 (1.36)	265	3.44 (1.69)	265
Emotional response	4.31 (0.96)	265	5.25 (0.80)	265	5.21 (0.99)	265

Manipulation check of perceived offensiveness

It is expected that the advertisements with swear words would be perceived as more offensive than advertisements without swear words. This section checks whether this is the case or not. A three-way ANOVA has shown that only presence of swear words had a significant main effect on perceived offensiveness ($F(1, 264) = 24.25, p < .001$).

Advertisements with swear words ($M = 4.33, SD = 1.35$) were considered significantly more offensive than advertisements without swear words ($M = 3.43, SD = 1.55$; see Table 3).

Table 3. Means, standard deviations and n for perceived offensiveness in function of presence of swear word (1 = not offensive at all, 7 = very offensive)

	$M (SD)$	n
Swear word	4.33 (1.35)	128
No swear word	3.43 (1.55)	137
Total	3.87 (1.53)	265

MANOVA

A three-way multivariate ANOVA was conducted for attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product, purchase intention, emotional response, brand recall and product recall, with presence of swear word, language of the ad and mother tongue as factors.

Three-way interaction

The MANOVA with presence of swear words, language of the ad and mother tongue as factors, revealed a significant three-way interaction on product recall ($F(1, 263) = 6.68, p = .010$), but not on attitude ad ($F(1, 264) = 1.73, p = .190$), attitude product ($F(1, 264) < 1$), purchase intention ($F(1, 264) = 2.05, p = .154$), emotional response ($F(1, 264) < 1$) and brand recall ($F(1, 264) = 1.46, p = .227$).

After the file was split on presence of swear word, an additional two-way ANOVA for product recall with language of ad and mother tongue as factors showed a significant interaction effect for advertisements with swear words ($F(1, 127) = 5.81, p = .017$), but not for advertisements with no swear words ($F(1, 136) = 1.62, p = .206$). There were no reported significant main effects for the swear word condition on language of the ad ($F(1, 127) = 1.76, p = .187$) and mother tongue ($F(1, 127) = 2.01, p = .159$) and for the no swear word condition on language of the ad ($F(1, 136) = 2.29, p = .133$) and mother tongue ($F(1, 136) < 1$).

Dutch participants who read the advertisement with swear word in English (L2), were able to better recall the product ($M = 3.61, SD = 1.07$) than German participants ($M = 2.81, SD = 1.47$, Bonferroni correction $p = .010$). However Dutch ($M = 3.38, SD = 1.18$) and German participants ($M = 3.59, SD = 0.89$, Bonferroni correction $p = .470$) recalled the product equally for advertisements with swear words in L1. Moreover, German participants ($M = 3.66, SD = 0.94$) recalled product better in the non-swear word L2 condition than in the swear word L2 condition ($M = 2.81, SD = 1.47$, Bonferroni correction $p = .004$). There were no differences between the swear word L1 condition and non-swear word L1 condition ($p = .079$).

German participants recalled the product better when they read the advertisement with swear word in their L1 ($M = 3.59, SD = 0.89$) than advertisements with swear words in English (L2) ($M = 2.81, SD = 1.47$, Bonferroni correction $p = .008$). However, Dutch participants did not recall the product in the L1 swear word ad ($M = 3.38, SD = 1.18$) differently from the English (L2) swear word ad ($M = 3.61, SD = 1.07$; see Table 4).

Table 4. Means, standard deviations and n for product recall in function of presence of swear words, attitude ad and mother tongue (1 = nothing recalled, 4 = everything recalled)

	Swear word $n = 128$ $M (SD)$	No swear word $n = 137$ $M (SD)$	Total $n = 265$ $M (SD)$
<hr/>			
<i>English as L2</i>			
German	2.81 (1.47)	3.66 (0.94)	3.27 (1.27)
Dutch	3.61 (1.07)	3.29 (1.29)	3.44 (1.20)
Total	3.18 (1.35)	3.49 (1.13)	3.35 (1.24)
<i>Native L1</i>			
German	3.59 (0.89)	3.06 (1.46)	3.33 (1.22)
Dutch	3.38 (1.18)	3.24 (1.30)	3.31 (1.23)
Total	3.49 (1.04)	3.15 (1.37)	3.32 (1.22)
<i>Total</i>			
German	3.21 (1.26)	3.39 (1.23)	3.30 (1.24)
Dutch	3.48 (1.13)	3.27 (1.29)	3.37 (1.21)
Total	3.34 (1.20)	3.33 (1.26)	3.34 (1.23)

Two-way interactions

A two-way ANOVA with presence of swear words and language of the ad as factors showed no significant interaction effect between presence of swear words and language of the ad on attitude ad, attitude product, purchase intention, emotional response and brand recall (All ($F(1, 264) < 1$)).

A two-way ANOVA with presence of swear words and mother tongue as factors showed no significant interaction effect between presence of swear word and mother tongue on attitude ad ($F(1, 264) = 1.37, p = .242$), attitude product ($F(1, 264) < 1$), purchase intention ($F(1, 264) < 1$), emotional response ($F(1, 264) < 1$) and brand recall ($F(1, 264) = 7.04, p = .054$).

A two-way ANOVA with language of the ad and mother tongue as factors showed no significant interaction effect between language of the ad and mother tongue on attitude ad,

attitude product, purchase intention, emotional response and brand recall (All ($F(1, 264) < 1$)).

Main effects presence of swear word

A one-way ANOVA with presence of swear word as factor revealed a significant main effect of presence of swear word on emotional response ($F(1, 263) = 6.181, p = .014$), but not on attitude ad, attitude product, purchase intention and brand recall (All ($F(1, 264) < 1$)).

Participants found that advertisement with swear words evoke less emotional response ($M = 4.81, SD = 0.65$) than advertisements with no swear words ($M = 5.03, SD = 0.75$; see Table 5).

Main effects language of the ad

A one-way ANOVA with language of the ad as factor revealed no significant main effect of language of the ad on attitude ad ($F(1, 264) < 1$), attitude product ($F(1, 264) < 1$), purchase intention ($F(1, 264) = 1.12, p > .292$), emotional response ($F(1, 264) < 1$) and brand recall ($F(1, 264) < 1$).

Main effects mother tongue

A one-way ANOVA with mother tongue as factor revealed a significant main effect of mother tongue on emotional response ($F(1, 263) = 11.16, p = .001$), but not on attitude ad ($F(1, 264) < 1$), attitude product ($F(1, 264) = 2.05, p = .154$), purchase intention ($F(1, 264) = 1.82, p = .178$) and brand recall ($F(1, 264) < 1$).

Dutch participants had a higher emotional response ($M = 5.06, SD = 0.72$) than German participants ($M = 4.78, SD = 0.66$; see Table 5).

Table 5. Means, standard deviations and n for emotional response in function of presence of swear words, attitude ad and mother tongue (1 = nothing recalled, 4 = everything recalled)

	Swear word $n = 128$ $M (SD)$	No swear word $n = 137$ $M (SD)$	Total $n = 265$ $M (SD)$
<i>English as L2</i>			
German	4.67 (0.63)	4.89 (0.68)	4.79 (0.66)
Dutch	5.09 (0.59)	5.20 (0.69)	5.15 (0.64)
Total	4.87 (0.64)	5.03 (0.70)	4.96 (0.67)
<i>Native L1</i>			
German	4.71 (0.61)	4.85 (0.74)	4.78 (0.67)
Dutch	4.80 (0.70)	5.18 (0.84)	4.99 (0.79)
Total	4.76 (0.65)	5.02 (0.81)	4.88 (0.74)
<i>Total</i>			
German	4.69 (0.62)	4.87 (0.70)	4.78 (0.66)
Dutch	4.93 (0.66)	5.19 (0.76)	5.06 (0.79)
Total	4.81 (0.65)	5.03 (0.75)	4.92 (0.71)

A table that shows the means, standards deviations and n for attitude ad, attitude product, purchase intention and brand recall can be found in the appendix (see Table 6).

Conclusion/discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of swear words in the L1 or L2 of Dutch and German subjects in an advertising context, with regard to attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product, purchase intention, and brand and product recall.

Findings of the present study indicate that in general the advertisements containing swear words were not evaluated differently from advertisements that contained no swear words, except for emotional response. The findings imply that participants experience less emotional response when exposed to an ad with swear words than when they are exposed to ads without swear words. The presence of swear words in the advertisements did not have an effect on attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product, purchase intention or brand recall.

Language of the advertisement (L1 vs L2) on its own had no effect on attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product, purchase intention, brand or product recall.

Dutch participants in general experienced a stronger emotional response than German participants. The present study does not offer an explanation to this finding unfortunately.

Dutch participants were able to better recall the products than German participants if the advertisement contained swear words in English (L2), but the products were equally recallable in the L1 condition. It seems as if the Dutch participants were more comfortable with English slogans in advertisements than the German participants, which could be explained by the fact that Dutch people are more proficient overall in English than Germans, as stated earlier with the English Proficiency Index. Being more proficient in English could lead to the Dutch being able to better understand the English slogan than the Germans.

Moreover, German participants recalled the product better if the advertisement contained swear words in L1 than an advertisement containing swear words in English (L2). However, Dutch participants did not differ in their ability to recall the product based on the L1 or L2 of the advertisement with swear words. This difference between the Dutch and German participants could be explained by the fact that German participants had higher self-assessed L1 proficiency than Dutch participants. The Germans could be more comfortable with their native L1 language than in English, which could explain why German participants recalled the product better if the ad was in their own language. However, the advertisements without swear words still led to a higher product recall than the ads with swear words.

In conclusion, advertisements with swear words may not result in more positive evaluations than advertisements without swear words.

Comparison with literature

Findings in the present study, that the presence of swear words in advertisements yield no significant differences, except for emotional response are congruent with previous research (Urwin & Venter, 2014). Urwin and Venter (2014) argued that millennials have become resistant to shockvertising and that also appears to be the situation in the current study. The ads with swear words were found to have no positive effects on the evaluations by the participants. Furthermore, a large part of the participants of the current study were also millennials.

Swearing in the present study did not lead to increased persuasiveness, which is not in line with previous research (Scherer and Sagarin, 2006). Scherer and Sagarin found that swearing may lead to increased persuasiveness, but the current study found that advertisements with swear words did not persuade the participants to purchase the product, compared to the ads without swear words. Perhaps in an advertisement context, swear words alone are not enough to persuade the customer, because according to Ahmed and Ashfaq (2013), the advertisement has to be creative, well executed and have a good price. These elements were lacking in the advertisements used for the present study.

Findings in the present study indicate that the language of the advertisements containing swear words (native or English as L2) has no effect on the emotional response of the participants. This is not in line with previous research (Dewaele, 2004), because the subjects in Dewaele (2004) had higher emotional response for swear words in L1 than swear words in L2. This could be explained by the fact that both the Dutch and German participants had very high self-assessed L1 and L2 skills. This could mean that they were proficient enough in the foreign language, to the point that the differences in emotional response with regard to swear words or no swear words, was negligible.

Contribution to theory

Overall, the findings of the present study have contributed to an unexplored field of study with swear words in L1 or L2 in advertising contexts. The current study confirms that Millennials have indeed become resistant to the use of swear words as shockvertising (Urwin & Venter, 2014). Nonetheless, the present study also offers new insights, namely that Dutch people might react more favourable towards English advertisements than German people. Furthermore, German people may prefer advertisements in their native language over advertisements in English.

Limitations

The advertisements were created with the objective of fitting in the swear words, rather than creating advertisements that would be a success. As such, there is certainly a difference in quality between the three advertisements. These differences in quality resulted in the gum advertisement being evaluated much more negatively than the coffee and beer advertisements. However, the present study did not account for these differences in the analyses. By leaving out the gum advertisement, the overall evaluation in terms of attitude towards the advertisement and product, purchase intention and emotional response could have been better than what it was now. The gum ad negatively skewed the overall results.

Another limitation is that the questionnaire was not interesting enough, which could have led to some participants not completing the questionnaire and a worse response rate (Jenn, 2006). The questionnaire was not interesting enough, since many participants did not complete the questionnaire and have told us in person that they found it to be too long and sometimes boring. This in turn could have had an impact on the results of the present study, which would make the data not truly representable.

Another limitation is that the beer and gum advertisements were similar in style with the swear word referring to the person, instead of an adjective. Since both advertisements essentially measured the same thing, one of them could have been left out in order to reduce the overall length of the questionnaire. So, instead of three advertisements, two would have been enough, as this would have reduced the overall length of the questionnaire, which could have improved response rate and have more people complete the questionnaire (Jenn, 2006)

There was also an absence of manipulation checks in the questionnaire with regard to presence of swear words and language of the ad. Participants were for instance not asked what language they had seen in the advertisement or whether they saw any swear words. This would mean that we cannot be absolutely certain that for example, the data by the German participants were all filled in by German participants. Something could have went wrong and a Dutch participant could have gotten German advertisements instead of the Dutch or English ads. Therefore, the present study cannot conclude that participants correctly perceived, interpreted or reacted to the stimulus and more accurate conclusions could not be drawn (Hoewe, 2017).

Suggestions for further research

For future research it could be interesting to use non-static advertisements, such as TV commercials. Previous research has shown that TV commercials are more effective in delivering a message than print advertisements (Grass & Wallace, 1974). Therefore, perhaps TV commercials with swear words could lead to more positive effects.

Subjects of the present study were mostly millennials. For future research an older age group could result in different findings. As stated earlier, millennials have become resistant to shockvertising (Urwin & Venter, 2014), but this means that shockvertising might still be effective for older generations (Machová et al., 2015). Machová et al. (2015) found that Generation X find shockvertising more controversial than Generation Y. This increased controversiality could in turn lead to them being shocked more, which could result in perhaps more positive evaluations.

Practical applications

Findings of the present study have practical applications for marketers looking to utilise swearing as a means to reach their audience. Findings revealed that swear words in general have no effect on the participants, except for emotional response, which seems to be higher for ads without swear words. This implies that advertisers would be wise not to utilise swear words in their static advertisements and instead look at alternative methods to attract consumers.

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Appendix

Figure 1. Graph of statistics on the growth of advertising spending worldwide from 2000 to 2022.

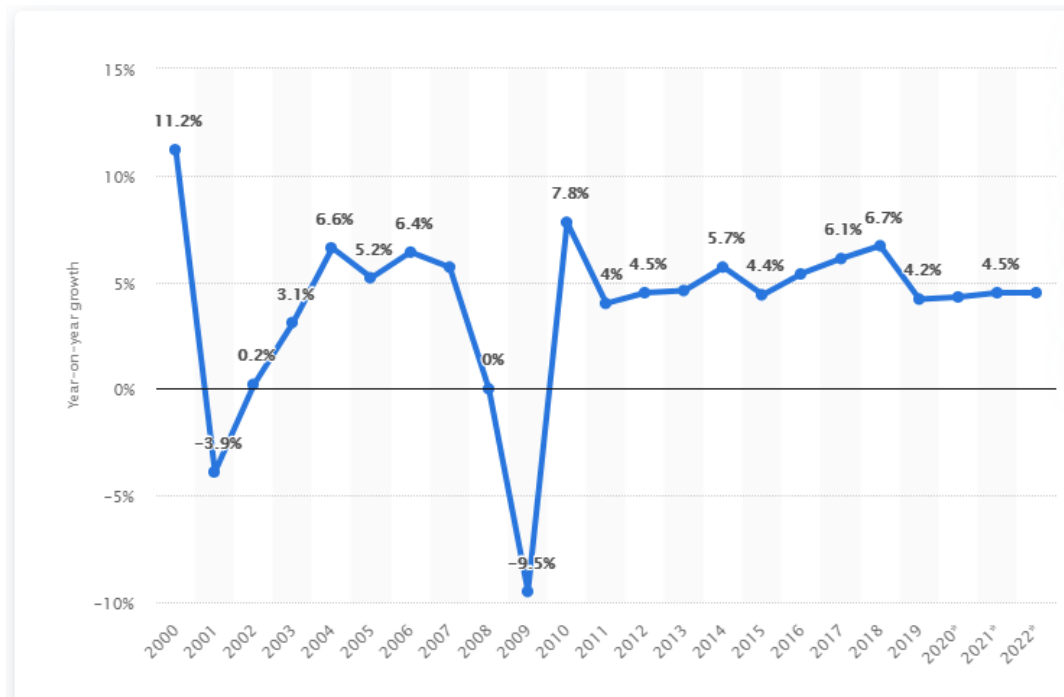


Figure 2. Shock advertisement by Caribu Sweets, where a girl grinds a chicken into meat.



Table 6. Means, standard deviations and *n* for attitude ad, attitude product, purchase intention and brand recall in function of presence of swear words, attitude ad and mother tongue (1 = very low, 7 = very high), except brand and product recall (1 = nothing recalled, 4 = everything recalled)

	Swear word <i>n</i> = 128 <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	No swear word <i>n</i> = 137 <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	Total <i>n</i> = 265 <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)
<i>Attitude ad</i>			
<i>English as L2</i>			
German	3.16 (0.82)	3.21 (0.86)	3.19 (0.84)
Dutch	3.23 (0.88)	3.25 (0.86)	3.24 (0.86)
Total	3.19 (0.84)	3.23 (0.85)	3.21 (0.85)
<i>L1</i>			
German	3.31 (0.88)	3.13 (0.80)	3.23 (0.84)
Dutch	3.03 (0.91)	3.39 (0.94)	3.21 (0.93)
Total	3.17 (0.90)	3.26 (0.88)	3.22 (0.89)
<i>Total</i>			
German	3.24 (0.85)	3.18 (0.83)	3.21 (0.84)
Dutch	3.12 (0.89)	3.32 (0.89)	3.21 (0.93)
Total	3.18 (0.87)	3.24 (0.86)	3.21 (0.86)
<i>Attitude product</i>			
<i>English as L2</i>			
German	3.81 (0.99)	3.89 (0.84)	3.85 (0.91)
Dutch	4.18 (1.05)	4.12 (1.18)	4.15 (1.11)
Total	3.98 (1.03)	4.00 (1.01)	3.99 (1.02)
<i>L1</i>			
German	3.98 (1.02)	4.03 (0.98)	4.00 (0.99)
Dutch	3.94 (1.21)	4.22 (1.25)	4.07 (1.23)
Total	3.96 (1.11)	4.13 (1.12)	4.04 (1.11)
<i>Total</i>			
German	3.89 (1.01)	3.96 (0.90)	3.93 (0.95)
Dutch	4.05 (1.14)	4.17 (1.20)	4.11 (1.17)
Total	3.97 (1.07)	4.06 (1.06)	4.02 (1.07)

Purchase intention

English as L2

German	2.84 (1.13)	3.03 (0.92)	2.94 (1.01)
Dutch	3.16 (1.21)	3.01 (1.24)	3.08 (1.22)
Total	2.99 (1.17)	3.02 (1.07)	3.01 (1.11)

L1

German	3.05 (1.18)	3.04 (1.07)	3.05 (1.12)
Dutch	3.04 (1.31)	3.52 (1.39)	3.28 (1.36)
Total	3.05 (1.23)	3.28 (1.26)	3.16 (1.25)

Total

German	2.95 (1.15)	3.03 (0.94)	2.99 (1.06)
Dutch	3.10 (1.26)	3.26 (1.33)	3.18 (1.29)
Total	3.02 (1.20)	3.14 (1.17)	3.09 (1.18)

Brand recall

English as L2

German	1.47 (1.48)	1.95 (1.45)	1.73 (1.47)
Dutch	2.14 (1.33)	1.56 (1.35)	1.82 (1.36)
Total	1.78 (1.44)	1.76 (1.41)	1.77 (1.42)

L1

German	1.71 (1.38)	2.03 (1.40)	1.86 (1.39)
Dutch	1.65 (1.32)	1.73 (1.21)	1.69 (1.26)
Total	1.68 (1.34)	1.88 (1.31)	1.77 (1.32)

Total

German	1.59 (1.43)	1.99 (1.42)	1.79 (1.43)
Dutch	1.87 (1.34)	1.64 (1.28)	1.75 (1.31)
Total	1.73 (1.38)	1.82 (1.36)	1.77 (1.37)

Questionnaire:

Introduction and Consent

Dear participant,

We would like to invite you to participate in a questionnaire about advertising. It will take about **10 minutes** to fill in the questionnaire. Your participation will be **anonymous** and the results will only be used for this study by the Department of Communication and Information Studies at Radboud University Nijmegen (Netherlands). Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time.

The questionnaire has **two parts**: First, you will see three different advertisements and we would like you to answer a couple of questions about these advertisements. Finally, we will ask you a couple of questions about yourself.

By clicking on the '**I Agree**' button below you indicate that:

- You have read the information above
- You agree to participate voluntarily
- You are at least 18 years of age

If you do not wish to participate in this study, please decline participation by leaving this webpage.

Thank you very much for your help!

Should you need more information on this study, please contact m.holten@student.ru.nl.

I have read the information above and agree with the conditions.

First Part of the Questionnaire

The following eight questions will ask you to indicate your opinion about this chewing gum advertisement that will be published in Germany next month

[Effects of swear words in L1 and L2 in an advertising context]

Please read the following statements carefully and indicate your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I like this ad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This ad is entertaining	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This ad is useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This ad is important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This ad is interesting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This ad is informative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to see this ad again	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This ad is good	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please read the following statements carefully and indicate your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I like this product	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This product is useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This product is interesting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This product is good	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to use this product	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please read the following statements carefully and rate them.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My willingness to buy this product is high	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am likely to buy this product	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would intend to buy this product	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a high intention to buy this product	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

[Effects of swear words in L1 and L2 in an advertising context]

Please complete the statement below.

	Not at all Offensive	Not Offensive	Not Really offensive	Neither Offensive nor Inoffensive	Somewhat Offensive	Offensive	Extremely Offensive
I consider this ad...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please rate the following statements carefully and rate them.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This ad makes me happy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This ad makes me excited	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This ad makes me angry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This ad irritates me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This ad makes me feel guilty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This ad makes me feel ashamed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This ad makes me sad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please complete the statement below.

	Difficult to Understand	Fairly Difficult to Understand	Somewhat Difficult to Understand	Neither Difficult nor Easy to Understand	Somewhat Easy to Understand	Fairly Easy to Understand	Easy to Understand
This ad is...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

[Effects of swear words in L1 and L2 in an advertising context]

Please read the following statements carefully and indicate your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The advertiser has expertise in the product advertised.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The advertiser is trustworthy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please rate the statement below carefully and indicate your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This ad is honest.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Second Part of the Questionnaire.

Please indicate your mothertongue.

- ☐ German
- ☐ Dutch
- ☐ Other

Please indicate your age.

Please fill in the gender you associate yourself with.

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Don't want to say

What is the highest level of education you have completed or are currently attending?

- ☐ Primary education
 - ☐ Secondary education
 - ☐ Vocational training
 - ☐ Bachelor's Degree
 - ☐ Master's Degree
 - ☐ Doctoral Degree
 - ☐ No finished education
-

In which type of context did you acquire your English language skills?

- ☐ Naturalistic (e.g. in your family)
 - ☐ Instructed (e.g. in school)
 - ☐ Mixed
-

At what age did you learn English?

- ☐ 0-12
- ☐ 12-18
- ☐ 18+

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Please indicate how you would assess your German/Dutch for the following skills

	Very poor	Poor	Below average	Average	Good	Very good	Excellent
Speaking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reading	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Listening	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate how you would assess your English for the following skills

	Very poor	Poor	Below average	Average	Good	Very good	Excellent
Speaking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reading	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Listening	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How often do you swear?

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Sometimes	Frequently	Usually	Very frequently
I swear...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate your opinion about the statement below.

	Absolutely Inappropriate	Slightly Inappropriate	Neither Inappropriate nor Appropriate	Slightly Appropriate	Absolutely Appropriate
In general, I find the use of swear words ...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate which brands you remember from the three ads that you saw.

Also, do you remember which four products were featured?

Page Break

How frequently do you consume/use the following product?

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Sometimes	Frequently	Usually	Very often
Chewing Gum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coffee	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Beer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What do you think the aim of this study is?

Advertisements:

Gum advertisement German English swear word



Gum advertisement German English no swear word



Gum advertisement German swear word



Gum advertisement German no swear word



Gum advertisement Dutch English swear word



Gum advertisement Dutch English no swear word



Gum advertisement Dutch swear word



Gum advertisement Dutch no swear word



Coffee ad German English swear word



Coffee ad German English no swear word



Coffee ad German swear word



Coffee ad German no swear word



Coffee ad Dutch English swear word



Coffee ad Dutch English no swear word



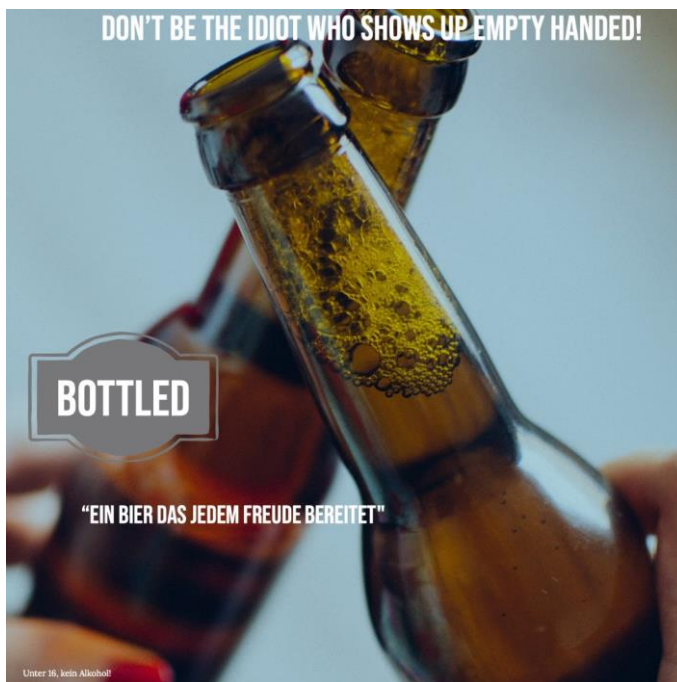
Coffee ad Dutch swear word



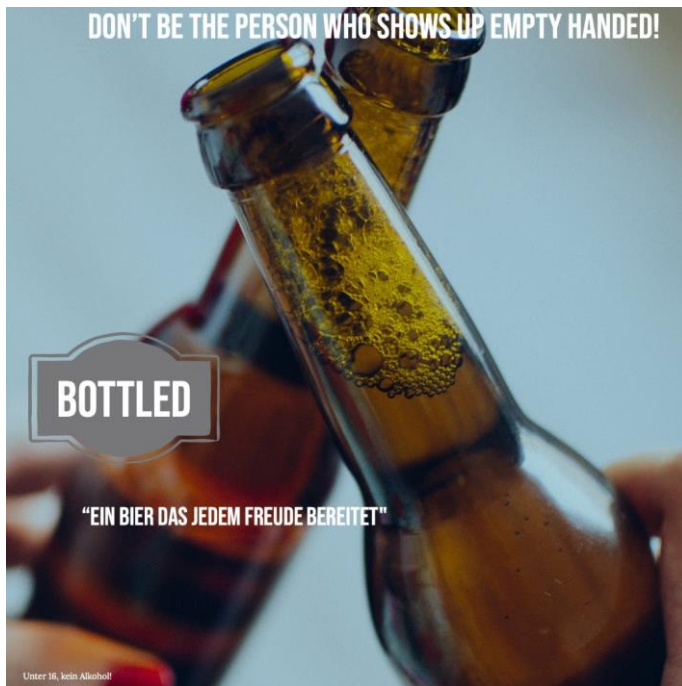
Coffee ad Dutch no swear word



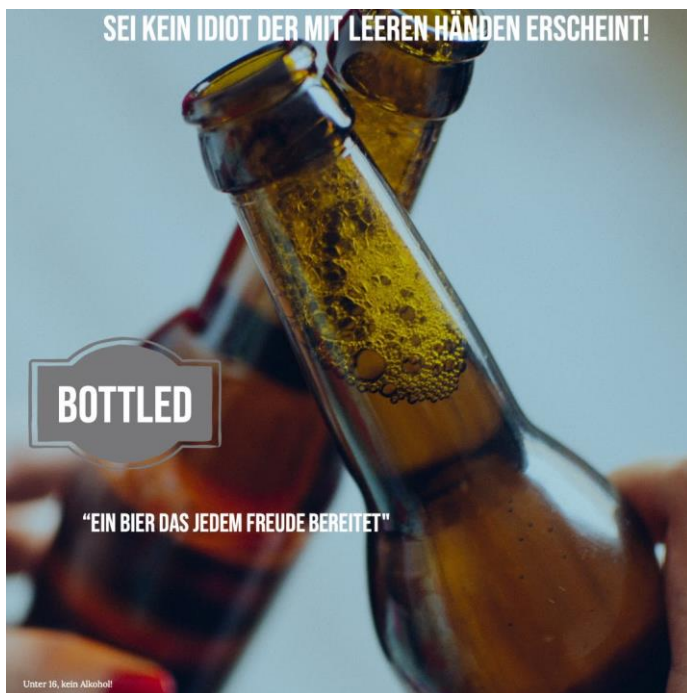
Beer ad German English swear word



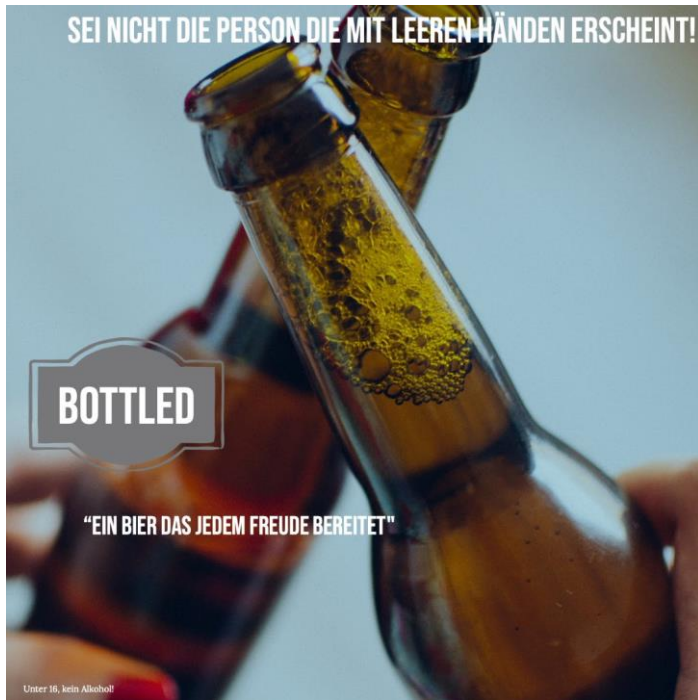
Beer ad German English no swear word



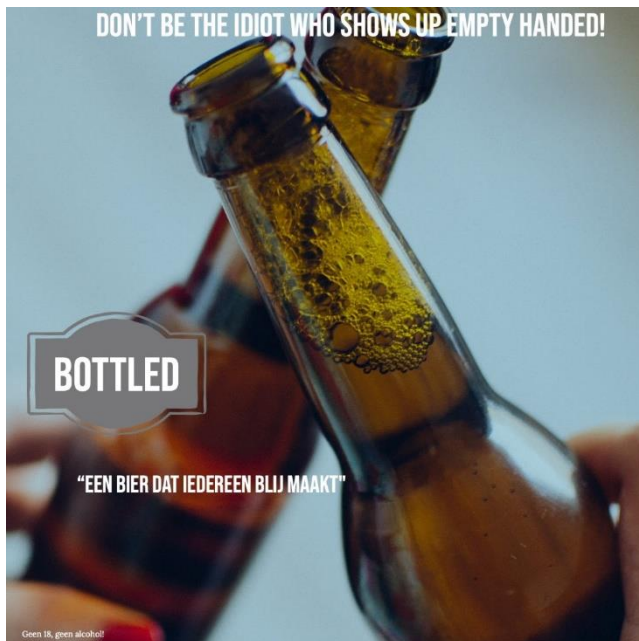
Beer ad German swear word



Beer ad German no swear word

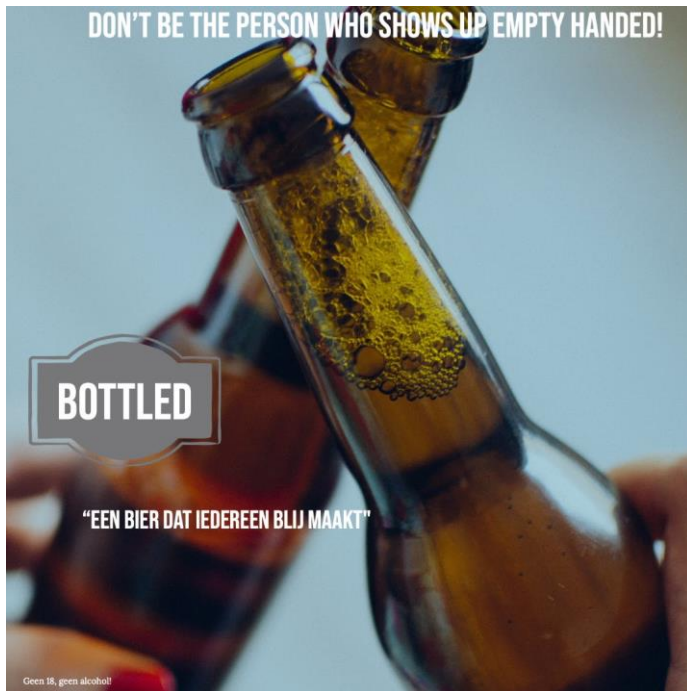


Beer ad Dutch English swear word



[Effects of swear words in L1 and L2 in an advertising context]

Beer ad Dutch English no swear word



Beer ad Dutch swear word



[Effects of swear words in L1 and L2 in an advertising context]

Beer ad Dutch no swear word

