Instagram consumer engagement: does the language matter?

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Submitted to Dr. Marion Garaus

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AFFIDAVIT

I hereby affirm that this Master's Thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed.

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ABSTRACT

The global interconnectedness of people and economies is currently growing from day to day, letting businesses expand not only in the country of origin but also beyond. Hence, in this contemporary "cosmopolite" world, English is considered to be the most well-known language of mass-media and international communication, especially when it comes to international advertising. That is why, the degree of digital consumers' exposure and contact with different languages, especially English, simultaneously grows with globalization. Nevertheless, when brands decide on expanding abroad, they face the "standardization vs. localization dilemma": even though English is considered to be "international", the local language use is sometimes considered to be a better strategy for brand communication.

Given the constant increase in popularity of Social Media usage in the society due to its global reach and low implementation costs, there is no wonder that those platforms are also being actively employed by businesses for marketing purposes. Despite this, to be able to fully benefit from all pros of this marketing tool, the proper content strategy is the first and the most important action to take. In order to measure the success of the online advertising strategies, the existing research in the topic focused on different criteria of advertising postings: vividness, interactivity, informativeness, entertainment, novelty, consistency, and the position of the post in the feed.

Hence, considering the aforementioned language dilemma, where the language of brand communication is, undoubtedly, a crucial element to consider, this study aims to empirically investigate the linguistic part of brands' social media content strategy. Namely, it examines the extent to which the engagement with social media posts in English and German differ for the case of Vienna, while also trying to find an association between the language and engagement and identify the possible reasons for that.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

x

LIST OF FIGURES

1. INTRODUCTION

The interconnectedness of people, economies, businesses, and policies that define a notion of globalization is currently growing from day to day, and in this contemporary "cosmopolite" world, English is considered to be the most well-known language of mass-media and international communication (Westjohn, 2016). According to the report of the EF English Proficiency Index, as of 2019 "more than a billion people speak English as a first or second language, and hundreds of millions more as a third or fourth" (p.4). Apart from this, linguistic research already confirmed the special role of English as a language, that not only brings the feeling of prestige, modernity, cosmopolitanism and sophistication (Alm, 2003; Gerritsen, Korzilius, van Meurs, & Gijsbers, 2000; Hsu, 2008) but also makes people "switch codes" (switch and mix languages while speaking) in order to "belong" to either their understanding of the upper-class community (Kelly-Holmes, 2014) or the community of so-called "world-citizens".

In advertising, a special rise of bilingualism and multilingualism was enabled by constantly evolving new media forms, that are capable of keeping people from all over the world interconnected, able to spread information around in a few seconds and give access to a huge amount of content coming from anywhere possible. That is why, the degree of digital consumers' exposure and contact with different languages, especially English, is rapidly and constantly rising (Bhatia & Kathpalia, 2019). "English represents the common core of global advertising as advertisers nurture and view English, either explicitly or implicitly, as the most suitable linguistic vehicle of the globalized world" (Bhatia & Kathpalia, 2019, p. 348). A large number of scientific studies have already researched the use of English in advertising in a non-English linguistic landscape: the cases of specific countries in Africa (Kachoub & Hilgendorf, 2019; Kasanga, 2019), Asia (Hiramoto, 2019; Hsu, 2019), and Europe (Amos, 2019; Martin, 2019; Vettorel & Francesci, 2019; Petery, 2011; Garcia-Yeste, 2013). Nevertheless, even though the existing knowledge in the topic is already large, the amount of studies in the context of German-speaking countries, especially Austria, is missing.

In the aforementioned report of the EF English Proficiency Index, Austria is scored 8th among the 100 selected world countries and its capital city Vienna is considered to be the city with 6th highest level of English proficiency (EF EPI Report 2019).

Indeed, apart from being a popular tourist destination, and one of the four headquarters of the United Nations (Vienna International Center), which already hints on high knowledge of English, Vienna is considered to be a truly international city, with a big number of current citizens originating from other countries: as of 2019, according to the last statistics of the local government of Vienna, more than 40% of the citizens have a non-Austrian origin (Stadt Wien, 2019).

This high level of international migration, exposure to other countries and cultures, as well as the rising popularity of social media and international tourism made some consumers "expand their horizons" and become more open-minded to things, "other" than their native. In marketing and consumer behavior research this phenomenon is known as consumer "world-mindedness", i.e. "openness" (Njissen & Douglas, 2011). World-minded consumers are extremely eager to try products originating from foreign countries and tend to be ultimately curious about different cultures. Nevertheless, there are also consumers, certain about the opposite: everyone should buy local products to prevent any economic threats and unemployment in their native country (Njissen & Douglas, 2011). These are the ethnocentric consumers, that do not accept the "other" and affirm about the importance and "superiority" of local products versus imported from anywhere in the world (Zeugner-Roth et. al., 2015)

Hence, considering the rise of cosmopolitanism and English "language fetishism" among consumers, when one part of them is "world-minded" and the other share the ethnocentric "go local" mindset, marketers and international advertisers are facing the dilemma of whether to "globalize" or "localize" their brand: to stay consistent in their brand communication all over the world, or account for national interests and appeals (in linguistic matters and besides them). This debate is still staying in the list of significant issues in scientific research (Bhatia & Kathpalia, 2019; Declercq, 2012; Kanso & Nelson, 2002; Kaufmann & Eroglu, 1999) where the studies aim to understand the perceptions of both strategies for regular and digital advertising from a consumer perspective. However, considering the already big input of the existing research in a thorough understanding of the topic, the amount of scientific knowledge focusing primarily on social media advertising is very limited.

Since the emergence, Social Media platforms are functioning perfectly when it comes to communication and interconnection: users are constantly sharing their experiences, exchange views and opinions, communicate with peers or simply seek inquiry about different items (Indu et.al., 2018). Due to this, the number of the then "users" who are now called "digital consumers" is large, and still constantly grows. Instagram, for instance, counts 1 billion active users and Facebook almost 3 billion active users (Statista, 2019). When the reach is that large, there is obviously no wonder that these platforms are being actively and largely employed by businesses for marketing purposes. Now, "social media outlets constitute excellent vehicles for fostering relationships with customers" (Vries et.al., 2012, p. 83), and serve as a tool for digital consumers to pre-research products and services: the most recent survey claimed that around 81% of Instagram users currently use the platform for this kind of research (Facebook, 2019). Despite the high popularity of social media channels and large numbers of active users, in order to benefit from all pros of this marketing tool, the proper content strategy is the first and the most important action to take (Tafesse, 2014).

Every brand that is aiming to promote itself using any social media platform has its own very distinct set of goals and possibilities, as well as a particular set of items to promote and communicate, that is why it is rather troublesome to come up with a one-size-fits-all formula that will show the proper way how and what to publish content in social media (Sabate et.al., 2014). Despite this, researchers are constantly trying to come up with suggestions about which kind of content provide more engagement and are generally more appealing to digital consumers: where do they put the most likes and comments or which are good enough to be shared. Existing studies in the topic have mostly focused on such content attributes as pictures, videos, links, etc. to measure the success of the brand postings and aimed attention on the post vividness, interactivity, informativeness, entertainment, novelty, consistency and the position of the post (Sabate et.al., 2014; Tafesse, 2014; Viglia et. al., 2018; Vries et. al., 2012). However, in the current age of globalization, when brands actively expand abroad and face the "standardization vs. localization dilemma", the language of brand communication is also a crucial element to consider. Nevertheless, in the area of social media the linguistic appeals were never (or very rarely) put under investigation as associated with larger (or lower) willingness to engage with brand content.

Thus, to broaden the existing knowledge of the topic, this study will empirically investigate the linguistic part of brands' content strategy, and put it in the context of social media brand advertising. Namely it will examine the difference in organic engagement (i.e. engagement that is not obtained from paid targeted social media advertising) in Instagram (in terms of likes, comments, and shares) of English and German. Furthermore, this research paper will attempt to review and validate the possible reasoning for these differences.

The main aim of this study is to run experiments on the engagement with brand posts in English and German in Instagram and to understand whether sticking to a specific language also has any significant effect on "liking", "commenting" and "sharing behavior" of digital consumers apart from other content appeals. Moreover, the author attempts to investigate the level of world-mindedness and ethnocentrism of the Instagram users, located in Vienna, as well as their overall perceptions of English as a language, thus trying to understand whether the aforementioned items influence the differences in posts engagement in any way. Brand marketers find post engagement extremely important as only using likes, comments or shares consumers can assess how appealing the brand social media post is, which is actually the only hard data that is possible to retrieve and examine (Indu et.al., 2018).

Indeed, currently, social media opens new doors for businesses to communicate with their target audiences. Thus, in recent years with a big boom in "digitalizing", social media channels are being widely used by brands for digital marketing purposes as they take minimum cost and can reach way more people (Confetto & Siano, 2018). According to existing studies, using English in advertising serves as a sign of cosmopolitanism and global reach (Zhou et.al, 2008). However does this necessarily mean that digital consumers would prefer the English social media content over the one in the local language? Will such advertising actually reach more people? Get more engagement? This study makes an attempt to help Viennese local social media marketers understand which language they have to use in their Instagram postings to achieve more "likes", "comments" and "shares": English or German. Moreover, it aims to provide some insights about the general perception of English advertising among digital consumers located in Vienna as well as the influence of their level of consumer world-

mindedness, ethnocentrism or perceptions of English on overall advertising appeals. Thus, the research questions of this study are constructed as follows:

RQ1: To what extent is the specific language of brand-created promotional Instagram posts associated with the overall engagement (in terms of likes, comments, or shares)?

RQ2: How does the level of world-mindedness, consumer ethnocentrism, and English language perceptions influence the effectiveness of language appeals in Instagram advertising?

The thesis begins with the review of scientific research in the field as well as theories and concepts related to the topic, followed with the presentation of research hypotheses and the research model. Further, the empirical part of this research consists of the description of two experiment designs conducted in the thesis, pilot tests, sampling procedure, and the approaches of further data analysis. Next, the data deriving from both online and real-world Instagram experiments will be analyzed and the final results will be presented and discussed. Last, but not least, the author presents conclusions based on the empirical findings of the study and develops managerial implications, acquaints readers with the existing limitations of the study, and gives suggestions for future research.

2. Literature review

The sources used for the literature review mainly derive from scientific articles and books that interpret the following notions: the concept of brand standardization and localization, foreign language use in advertising and consumer perceptions of foreign language use in advertising, consumer world-mindedness vs. consumer ethnocentrism, as well as overall consumer engagement behavior. Thus, the analysis of theories that are necessary to accomplish the main aim of this study consists of four parts, respective to the aforementioned concepts.

The first part of the section outlines the main concept of *brand standardization and brand localization* (section 2.1), how the advertising perceptions of the end-user differ between the two, and what those differences depend on. Next part will develop the general understanding of *content engagement theory* (section 2.2.): what consumer engagement is, what creates the biggest engagement, and how the consumer content engagement can be measured. Further, the review is aiming to break down the main theories and ideas that are related to the moderating effects considered in this study: *foreign language use in advertising* (section 2.3.), as the preliminary item of the brand standardization and localization, followed with the description of *the role of English in today's world*: both digital marketplace and real. In this section, the starting point is to describe the concept of foreign language usage in advertising, divided into three subsections. Firstly, the review explains the general *Consumer Culture theory* (section 2.3.1.) and then goes more specific to the *concepts of local, foreign, and global consumers* as describes the difference between them. Secondly, *the perceptions of English as a language* are characterized (section 2.3.2.) according to foreign vs. global vision. Following, *code-switching and language fetishism concepts* are defined (section 2.3.3.) and the match between different types of consumer culture and triggers to committing to code-switching is presented. The fourth and last part of the review focuses on the concepts of *consumer world-mindedness and consumer ethnocentrism* (section 2.4.), and how being either type of consumer influences the overall behavior of his.

Overall, this section of the Master thesis will discuss and summarize the previous research findings that can be relevant to the key concepts of the research question of this study, present the hypotheses and research model.

2.1. Brand Standardization vs. Brand Localization

Together with ever-growing economic globalization as well as the development of international franchise activities, more and more multinational businesses face the question of whether to standardize or localize (adapt) their advertising (Liu et.al., 2014). As mentioned above, before choosing a brand consumers seek the value and the meaning that one or another brand will bring them. Thus, they are more likely to choose "original and genuine" ones, no matter which country they originate from (Morhart et.al., 2015). Even though the basic ideas and rules of franchising are focused on this "originality" uniformity, and standardization, it is important to keep in mind that "the context of different local markets in which the franchisee initiates requires some flexibility to meet market needs and create innovation opportunities" (Joharianzadeh et.al., 2015, p. 1279). Thus, the question of the importance and necessity of so-called "local flavor" in advertising messages of international companies is still of utmost interest of scientific research and is extensively debated (Joharianzadeh et.al., 2015; Kanso & Nelson, 2002; Kaufmann & Eroglu, 1999; Szymanski et.al., 1993)

All of the following studies were focused on bringing suggestions or arguing about what works better in the context of international advertising: localization or standardization, and the majority of them met at the point that there is no winner in this battle: the mixed or "compromised" strategy would serve the best (Joharianzadeh et.al., 2015; Kanso & Nelson, 2002; Kaufmann & Eroglu, 1999). Apart from this, they mention the challenge, which franchisors constantly face: "defining the appropriate boundaries of their format" (Kaufmann & Eroglu, 1999, p.69), which means to keep uniformity to some extent to be able to benefit from the economies of scale, while killing the opportunities given by local market adaptation, or "acting local", going outside of the boundaries set up by the brand (Kaufmann & Eroglu, 1999). This first decision about the general strategic orientation of a business is a vital point for every marketer to consider (Szymanski et.al., 1993).

To give a short overview of *standardization* as a concept, it is a uniformed strategy that follows the same messages and offers the same product mix in all parts of the world where franchisees are located (Levitt, 1983). The supporters of this approach assert about the diminishing of cultural borders between the countries, where people already have similar beliefs about what is good or bad, what is love, joy, happiness, fear, envy, etc. (Levitt, 1983). Levitt brings up the success cases of McDonald's, Coca Cola and Pepsi, that follow the same advertising approach everywhere, but still stay very much liked and powerful on the marketplace. Levitt (1983) claims they "exemplify

a general drift toward the homogenization of the world and how companies distribute, finance, and price products". Given all the advantages of standardization claimed in the research (Zou, Cavusgil, 1996) (Okazaki et.al., 2006), a constant debate about benefits that standardization can bring is not over yet, and due to unclearness of the outcomes of existing studies, the general conclusion whether to implement it or not is not yet finalized (Liu et.al., 2014).

On the contrary, *localization* or *adaptation* concept representatives claim that even in the world with such huge similarities, the unavoidable lines and differences between countries still exist (Taylor et.al., 1996). "Such barriers include (1) differences in culture, taste, media infrastructure, and economic development, and (2) consumers' resentment of international corporations' attempts to homogenize their differing tastes and cultures" (Kanso & Nelson, 2002, p. 80). That is why this chase for minimization of costs, economy of scale, uniformity in all respects "comes with hidden costs to the system" (Kaufmann & Eroglu, 1999, p. 70). Thus it is necessary that local marketers design advertising programs more specific for the local market to bring more value and understanding to a customer (Tai, 1997). However, 100% adaptation is not healthy for a franchised brand as well, as it would lose the main message the headquarters want it to deliver and would weaken the franchise power itself. Hence, the best way for franchisees to deal with their local market to achieve the win-win situation for both themselves and franchisors is to observe and adapt standardized points to the local taste of the market, which means finding a compromise between the two (Kaufmann & Eroglu, 1999).

Liu et.al. (2006, p.5) claims "the *combination strategy* tries to avoid the inefficiency due to both standardization and localization so that the efficacy can be maximized". Zou and Cacusgil (1996), for instance, whilst supporting the idea of advertising standardization and claiming in favor of it, still mention that for better efficiency some local customer cultural preferences and advertising regulations must be also considered. Wei & Jiang (2005) with a thorough overview of the creative and execution strategy of advertising assert that "a creative strategy can be standardized, while execution formats are usually adapted to the unique environment of different local markets" (p. 839).

The following sections of this literature review would focus on one of the most important items to consider while standardizing or localizing products as well as their communication messages abroad, namely the language usage in advertising and what are the main perceptions of foreign vs. local languages in advertising. The biggest focus

if made on the English language as the one that went beyond and became the language of international use.

2.2. Digital Advertising and Consumer Content Engagement

Currently, social media is the place that can connect a big number of people from all over the globe, serving as a means of connecting people on the international level. This capability of digital platforms like Instagram or Facebook makes them get popularity, especially in marketing, as it takes almost no or little upfront costs, and provides a constantly growing number of users (Heinonen, 2011; Tafesse, 2014). Thus, communication and advertising via SM has already become the preferred tool for creating and enhancing contacts between businesses and customers as well as fostering the popularity of the brand. In order to do so, marketers are sharing various SM content, thus getting acknowledgment by enlarging the number of fans (followers) that like the brand posts, and comment them, simultaneously sharing it with their own "community" (Svani et.al., 2017). Brands currently create their profiles in social networking sites in order to create bigger overall brand awareness, word of mouth, and consumer engagement (Nisar & Whitehead, 2016; Sabate et.al., 2014). Therefore, "today, many marketers are optimistic about social media and view them as an integral part of their marketing mix plan" (Tafesse, 2014, p. 929). However, like other regular advertisements, any brand post on SM needs to meet particular advertising appeals in order to be successful and pay off as a marketing tool. That is why marketers are always in seek for new creative ways to create more value for a consumer (Martínez-López et.al., 2017). This question also created a huge academic interest: researchers are constantly trying to investigate what the main triggers, that make SM users engage with the post are and how the content strategy of a business should look like to be more appealing (Sabate et.al., 2014; Svani et.al., 2017; Viglia et.al., 2018; Vries et.al., 2012).

Breaking down the notion of customer engagement, Brodie et al. (2011, p. 260) defined it as "a psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, co-creative customer experiences with a brand". However, the question that guided the research is how this engagement can be brought into a numeric measurement. "Social media tools typically measure different engagement levels based on the type of social interactions" (Viglia et.al., 2018, p. 407). Indeed, companies and businesses get value from "fans" depending on their level of engagement with brand page posts: the more the followers like, share and leave comments on brand posts, the broader they will si-

multaneously promote the brand content within their own friends' network (Svani et.al., 2017). Thus, the research in content strategies has mainly been focused on finding out how the proper strategy would trigger more followers' responses to the brand's posts in terms of liking, commenting, and sharing. Viglia et.al. (2018) in their study considered such kinds of engagement: mild engagement (compliant engagement) as likes on the post and active engagement (interactive engagement) as comments and shares. Hence, those can be considered as appropriate measures for brand post popularity (Svani et. al., 2017) as this is the most common way to measure the success of the brand post and the level of its appeal to a digital consumer.

All of the aforementioned researchers while studying the influence of different appeals on social media engagement considered such criteria as content vividness, interactivity, entertainment, number of profile followers and the timing of the post, however, the language of the post was rarely or never a point to consider in any of the existing research studies.

Thus, given that the current study is aiming to research the linguistic appeal for social media content, the main hypothesis can be derived:

H1: There is an association between the language of the post and digital customer engagement with social media posts in terms of a) likes/b) comments/c) shares

2.3. Foreign Languages in Advertising

From a point of view of linguistics theory, a foreign language is defined as the one that is not learned from birth (so it cannot be considered the person's mother tongue) (Hornikx et.al., 2019). Even though the level of mother tongue knowledge and foreign language fluency can rarely be put on the same scale, as the general knowledge of the former is unarguably higher, some companies and businesses implement foreign languages into their advertising communication. The level of acceptation of using a non-native language in advertising was developing over time a lot: from no acceptation at all (as mentioned in the early research) to bringing the notion of international advertising as a means of a bigger reach (Alm, 2003; Akaka & Alden, 2010; Piller, 2003). The only thing that stays unchanged until now is the interest of academics why would businesses employ foreign languages into their advertising at all. Which role does it play? What are they trying to highlight with it? Whom are they trying to reach?

Getting back to the definition of a foreign language and looking at it from an advertising perspective, it appears rather broad. Why? Simply because it mentions the fact of "not being brought up with this knowledge", but does not consider the level of "foreignness": the latter depends on how consumers (in this case, advertising receivers) "can identify and comprehend the language" (Hornikx et.al., 2019, p. 29). So, the evaluation of any ad by a consumer will highly depend not only on the general status of the language (mother tongue/foreign) but on the level of "foreignness" of the language as well. Hornikx et.al. (2019) in their book suggested the following levels of "foreignness" for consideration of advertisers (p. 29):

- "unidentifiable and incomprehensible (e.g. Swahili in advertising in Italy)

- identifiable but incomprehensible (e.g. Chinese in advertising in France)

- identifiable and partly comprehensible (e.g. Spanish in advertising in Germany)

- identifiable and fully comprehensible (e.g. English in advertising in Sweden)

- official language but not in the consumer's part of the country, with varying degrees of comprehensibility (e.g. French in advertising in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium)

- one of the languages fully mastered and used daily by bilinguals (e.g. English in advertising for Hispanics in the USA)" (p. 29).

2.3.1. Local/Foreign/Global consumers

A general marketing theory claims: when designing any strategy, in order to deliver the message properly, it is necessary that every marketer understands who his consumers are, and what language of communication will suit them the most (Tadajewski, 2008). Due to this, a crucial point to pay extra attention to is the *consumer culture theory*. In a study of Arnould and Thompson (2005), consumer culture theory is defined as a "social arrangement in which the relations between lived culture and social resources, and between meaningful ways of life and the symbolic and material resources on which they depend, are mediated through markets" (p.869). According to Steenkamp (2019), consumer culture means "consumption" of any product (both tangible or intangible) while searching for personal meaning and sense in this process. Content-wise, in earlier years, consumer culture was very much local in nature (same

as foreign language perceptions, mentioned above), but currently, the world is going into the direction of becoming more international and cosmopolite, while still having a decent part of "authentic" inputs (Alden, 1999; Njissen & Douglas, 2011; Steenkamp, 2019). Thus, it becomes more complex for brands to match a consumer culture that their target market follows and, primarily, to understand which strategy is the "best fit". The way to overcome this complexity is, ultimately, the proper positioning of the brand that is not only unique among the competitors but also that corresponds to local, foreign, or global consumers' kind of mindset. These three kinds of positioning Alden (1999) and Steenkamp (2019) describe as follows:

- Local Consumer Culture Positioning (LCCP) "associates the brand with local cultural meanings, reflects local culture norms/identities, portrays the brand as consumed by local people in the national culture, and/or depicts the brand as locally produced for local people" (Alden, 1999, p. 77).

- Foreign Consumer Culture Positioning (FCCP) a notion that delineates "a strategy that positions the brand as symbolic of specific foreign consumer culture; that is, a brand whose personality, use occasion, and/or user group is associated with a foreign culture" (same as above).

- Global Consumer Culture Positioning (GCCP) a strategy that defines the "brand with global cultural meanings, reflects global culture norms and identifiers, portrays the brand as consumed by people around the world in a setting that is deterritorialized" (Steenkamp, 2019, p.12)

Due to the emergence of the Internet, development of international tourism, and global media access, globalization is claimed to be constantly growing together with the number of so-called "global customers" or "cosmopolitans" (Njissen & Douglas, 2011). That is why a lot of businesses started switching towards the "global" strategy because they believe that a consumer would like the brand with the global image more (Njissen & Douglas, 2011; Zhou et.al., 2008). However, the researchers took this point critically and asked whether it is really the case. Thus, they scientifically examined how digital consumers actually perceive the global culture, which role that "globalism" plays for them, and how willing would they be to go for the product of foreign origin versus its local substitute (Njissen & Douglas, 2011; Steenkamp, 2019; Westjohn et.al., 2016; Zhou et.al., 2008), etc. Even though it may somewhat differ between the countries with different economic development level, the most general conclusion among the existing research claims that consumers would more likely choose a global/foreign brand over the local competitor due to an image of higher quality, modernity, higher status or will-

ingness to "belong" (Njissen & Douglas, 2011; Zhou et.al, 2008). The most common way brands communicate and underline their "foreignness" with the target audience is using the language of the country of origin (Hornikx et.al., 2019).

2.3.2. English language perceptions: foreign or global?

A big number of American or British companies that are doing their international branding are currently using English, their local language, to underline the origin of the brand. For example, Budweiser or "American Bud" how it is usually called abroad, uses the non-translatable slogan "This Bud's for you" (see Figure 1: the example of the USA vs. Ukraine); Burberry, the British fashion brand while introducing new fragrance "Her" in a commercial, used the song "I'm a Londoner" in the background (Youtube, 2018).

Figure 1. The non-translatable slogan of American Bud in Ukraine (left) and Budweiser in the US (right)
Source: Youtube (2016)

However, now researchers argue that English has already moved way beyond the foreign language category and now is rarely used for indicating the origin, but mostly considered to be a sign of "globality" (Amos, 2019; Hornikx et. al., 2019; Piller, 2003). The study of English advertisements in Spain and the Netherlands by Hornikx, van Meurs, van den Heuvel, and Janssen (2019) proved, that only in 5% of all cases, English was used by brands as a COO indicator, while in 95% of observations it was implemented to highlight that a brand is global. Kelly-Holmes (2000) while also claiming that brands from the English-speaking countries indeed use their language to express "Britishness" or "Americanness", supported the same idea, suggesting that "the use of English in intercultural advertising is quite a unique case" because this language is the only one that is capable of transmitting the meaning of words no matter which country it is. Hence, she sees English "as a symbol of national identity, of globalism, of youth, of progress and modernity; at the same time, it can bear the properties of pan European-ness/Americanness/globalism" (Kelly-Holmes, 2000).

Piller (2001) in her study discussed the issue of English language in German advertising and came up with the conclusion that English is primarily used as an "attention catcher" and a tool to deliver the most important message: brand philosophy, headlines, etc., while German stays to provide "boring details": contacts, venues, disclaimers. Acknowledging the fact that fluency might be lacking, she mentions that "English has become thoroughly associated with a certain segment of German society as it appears through advertising discourse: the young, cosmopolitan business elite" (Piller, 2001, p. 180). Besides, she differentiated five concepts of associations with "globality": "(1) international orientation, (2) future orientation, (3) success orientation, (4) sophistication, and (5) fun orientation" (Piller, 2001, p. 163).

Hornikx and van Meurs (2019) followed this research and after reviewing other similar studies (Alm, 2003; Hsu, 2008), narrowed these concepts down to three:

- Modernity (future, progress, youth);

- Success (elitism, prestige, sophistication);

- Internationalness (cosmopolitan, global).

Alm (2003) in the survey for her study of the English language in advertising in Equador, asked her respondents what the main projects or concepts they associate with using English are (see Figure 2). The results indicated that "the most frequent answers were *Internationality* (92%), *Technology* (84%), *Modern life* (80%), *Coolness* (80%) and *Development* (71%), while the five least frequent answers were *Equadorian Patriotism* (0%), *Colonialism* (21%), *Sports* (25%), *Ambition* (32%) and *Pretentiousness* (44%)" (p. 145).
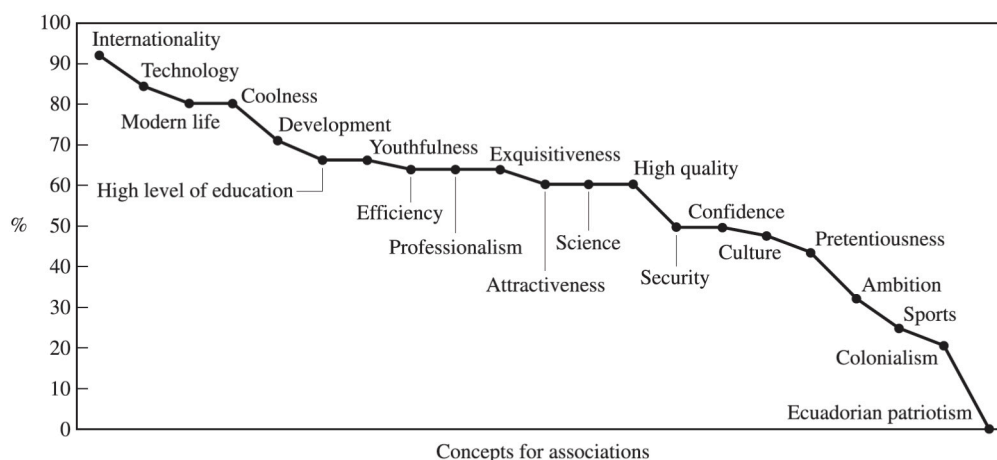

Figure 2: Main concepts associated with the English language

Source: Alm (2003, p. 145)

Hsu (2008), while researching the English use in Taiwanese advertising copy and the language associations, came up the similar results as Alm (2003): the biggest share of answers supported *Internationalism and Standardization* (21,8%) and *Future and Innovation* (17,2%), however still taking it as something representing the *American and English culture* (20,1%). On the contrary, Gerritsen et. al. (2010), while studying the perceptions of English standardization vs local language usage did not manage to confirm the respective hypothesis. They were aiming to prove that "products presented in advertisements with English are associated more with modernity than the same products presented in advertisements in a local language" (p. 353), however, the result was not significant for their case. Even though "English is the most frequently used language in advertising messages in non-English-speaking countries (besides the local language)" (Piller, 2003, p.175). Zhiganova (2016) in her study of English advertising in Germany came up with the conclusion, that due to that huge spreading of English, her respondents while accepting the fact that advertising seems more international, claim that they do not see it as a novelty or something creative and original in advertising anymore. Indeed, some of the languages already adopted words from English into vocabularies, and speakers are already feeling those as equal to existing local synonyms (Hornikx & van Meurs, 2019; Hsu, 2008).

To bring all aforementioned to the conclusion, currently, English is considered to be the most preferred non-native language while mixed up with local languages in advertising and commercials because of its attraction and "global" image (Kasanga, 2019). The latter leads to bringing modern nature to the product as well as to international recognition and understanding (Kasanga, 2019). Moreover, it is sometimes being used to express desire or state of "belonging" to some specific culture (in this case, cosmopolite) (Kelly-Holmes, 2000). The concepts of motivation to mix foreign languages with local ones will be described further.

2.3.3. Code-switching/language fetishism

The habit of switching (or mixing) languages has been a long time among the interests of sociolinguists and is currently known as *"code-switching"* or *"code-mixing"* (Kelly-Holmes, 2000). This concept has been defined as the process of using two different languages or dialects within one spoken or written conversation (Benson, 2001), where "one of the two languages is referred to as the non-dominant, "embedded" language, which is integrated into the receiving language (the primary, dominant, 'matrix' language)" (Hornikx & van Meurs, 2019, p. 30).

From a consumer perspective, code-switching is known as *linguistic fetishism*, the concept developed by Kelly-Holmes (2000; 2014), and was granted a big interest in scientific research (García Vizcaíno, 2011; Hornikx & van Meurs, 2019; Kelly-Holmes, 2000 & 2005, etc.). Kelly-Holmes (2014) defined it as a process of "using languages for symbolic (fetishized) rather than utilitarian (instrumental-communicative) purposes in commercial texts" (p. 135). There are specific triggers for consumers to employ and appeal to code-switching in advertising, which marketers actively use in promoting their brands. The main findings in this topic are described below.

Hornikx and van Meurs (2019), differentiated these motivations according to the consumer types, described in section 2.2. of this thesis: local, foreign, or global consumers. In the case of referring to *local consumer culture positioning*, the motivation to do code-switching will be to evoke *the feeling of "belongingness"*: the desire to highlight or imitate some regional or cultural identity (Kelly-Holmes, 2000). This willingness to "belong" or highlight being a part of some regional group Myers-Scotton (1993) conceptualized under the name of the "Markedness Model". He described the concept as "making code choices to negotiate interpersonal relationships, and by extension to signal their perceptions or desires about group membership" (Hornikx & van Meurs, 2019). An example can be advertising messages of an Austrian company "Da komm' ich her" that employ Austrian dialects in consumer communication strategy to underline their "locality" (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Local consumer culture positioning by Austrian company "Da komm' ich her"
Source: Da komm' ich her website (2016)

In *foreign consumer culture positioning*, code-switching is implemented to draw attention and cause the *Country of Origin (COO) effect* due to the foreign language being used. COO effect can be explained as an influence of the origin on the overall per-

ception of any product, being an "extrinsic product attribute, just like price or brand" (Hornikx & van Meurs, 2019, p.60). Past scientific studies have confirmed the effect of origin on the overall product evaluation, especially on the perceived quality (Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999). As claimed by Hornikx and van Meurs (2019), the COO effect can be approached from different perspectives. Firstly, consumers may assess the quality of the product considering the economic status of the country, for example, cars from Germany are sometimes considered of better quality than from India. Secondly, the COO effect may arise when a customer would prefer the product that originates from his own country over the foreign one (the notion of consumer ethnocentrism): "I am from Austria, so I will rather buy a bottle of local wine, than French". The concept of consumer ethnocentrism is explained in section 2.3. of this review. Last, but not least, consumers may take the so-called "product congruence" into consideration: Italy is known for high-quality shoes and America is the Motherland of the best burgers, so when it comes to choosing any kind of products, they will follow those "unwritten rules" or rather "stereotypes".

A number of studies on the influence of COO effect on the perceptions and interpretations of advertising exist. For instance, Verlegh et.al. (2005) were aiming to examine whether this effect influences the good or bad perception of the product when presented together with an advertising claim. The result of their study confirmed the superiority of COO effect over other informational cues given in the ad, as consumers are using it as a "cognitive shortcut", "a strategy that is relied upon when consumers seek to minimize cognitive efforts" (p. 136). While studying the COO effect in advertising, Bennett et.al. (2017), for instance, took the fact of a country being in economic crisis (or not). The findings reported a bigger appeal for the ads that originate from less economically challenged countries, thus suggesting to omit mentioning the country of origin when being aware of the widely known difficulties it might experience, or on the contrary, when any country has positive image, bringing up the origin might help create a better appeal for the product or brand (Bennett et.al., 2017).

An example of the COO effect communication could be the billboard message from Swiss chocolate wafer company Kägi, presented in Austria. The main language in Switzerland is German, the same as in Austria and Germany, thus it will not make any big difference in written advertising communication or show the country of origin very clear. So Kägi, to underline that the company is Swiss, used the very Swiss dialect word "Grüezi" in their advertising message (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. COO effect advertising by Swiss chocolate wafer company Kägi
Source: BIMM Themenplatform.

Indeed, as claimed by Haarmann (1984), a country of origin can be also easily identified while promoting a product by using the local language, however, referring to section 2.2.2. of this study, English is the only language that is used not only to show country of origin but also to underline the "prestige, image and internationality of the product being advertised" (Kasanga, 2019, p. 564). The wide use of English in advertising goes in line with *global consumer culture positioning*, where the main aim is to create a general brand image of *"modernity and internationalism"* (Hornikx & van Meurs, 2019). As claimed by Kelly-Holmes (2000), such consumers would prefer foreign words over their native to create some effect or image, rather than deliver informational or contextual inputs.

Following this idea, García Vizcaíno (2011) while researching the use of English in Spanish local advertising confirmed that English is also implemented by brands just for the sake of "symbolism" rather than its contextual meaning and bigger reach (i.e. to "belong"). Birner (2005) tries to explain this "symbolism" with a claim that the USA, as an English-speaking nation was created by immigration, hence, represents a lot of different countries at once (i.e. is a global country), as well as American technological breakthroughs add this country some value of modernism (Birner, 2005).

However, according to Birner (2005), the preference for English in advertising might lie not only in the status of the language: while researching the use of English in the advertisement in Germany, he confirms that former can be also preferred over the latter just because of the way it sounds. He highlights, that English words are shorter, contain fewer syllables, and can deliver the main idea more concisely, as English "ex-

pressions are easier to perceive and keep in mind" (Birner, 2005, p.15). Indeed, Austrian Airlines, for instance, together with advertising in German, and showing "belongingness" by saying "Servus" on the bottom part of their airplanes, use English in their main brand message: "We fly for your smile" as well as do it sometimes in destination flights printed advertising: "Tel Avivienna", "Malediving", "YOUrope", etc.

All of the scientific studies mentioned above were describing the effect English creates in regular outdoor or printed advertising. However, given that the study that focuses on merely social media advertising, as well as consumer perceptions of it, is still missing, the H2(a;b) of this thesis are formed as follows:

H2(a): The effect of English (vs. German) advertising on consumer social media engagement (likes/comments/shares) is moderated by the associations with English in advertising, so that more favorable associations towards English increase the engagement with social media content in English versus German.

H2(b): The effect of English (vs. German) advertising on consumer social media engagement (likes/comments/shares) is moderated by the feelings towards English in advertising, so that more favorable feelings towards English increase the engagement with social media content in English versus German.

2.4. Consumer Ethnocentrism vs. World-Mindedness.

The openness of the countries' borders, as well as huge exposure to the world via international tourism, have undeniably expanded the horizons of consumer knowledgeableness and created the notion of so-called *consumer "world-mindedness"* (Nijssen & Douglas, 2011). World-minded consumers are the ones who are attracted and genuinely curious to try products and brands coming from other countries and "are more likely than other consumers to experiment with products from other cultures" (Nijssen & Douglas, 2011, p.113-114). This notion also corroborates the concept of *consumer cosmopolitanism*, which, according to Riefler, Diamantopoulos, and Siguaw (2012, p.287), is defined as "the extent to which a consumer (1) exhibits open-mindedness towards foreign countries and cultures, (2) appreciates the diversity brought about by the availability of products from different national and cultural origins, and (3) is positively disposed towards consuming products from different countries". They are the people who would consider themselves to be "world citizens", rather than belonging to any specific locality (Cannon & Yaprak, 2002). Being interested

in foreign consumption habits, such consumers are also proven to be curious to learn about other cultures and be keen on experiencing things originating from the country other than their own (Hannerz, 1990; Zeugner-Roth et. al., 2015). Furthermore, they tend to be concerned about international issues, eager to be actively or passively involved in international events, and also tend to have a wider social network than the people, whose minds are more locally centered (Beckmann et.al, 2001). The triggers of becoming such kind of customer, as noted by Cannon & Yaprak, (2002) can be either intrinsic (to acquire cultural capital or social status) or extrinsic (the exposure to so much diversity in their environment).

Consumer ethnocentrism is the antonymic concept that applied to consumer belief, according to which it is inappropriate and even indeed immoral to purchase the products of foreign origin (Nijssen & Douglas, 2011; Shimp & Sharma, 1987). The followers of such a mindset are sure that it might "threaten the domestic industry and cause unemployment" (Zeugner-Roth et. al, 2015, p.4). That is why, in the eyes of such consumers, the domestically produced items and services are considered to be "superior" among the others, produced outside. Ethnocentric consumers tend to reject the products and services deriving from other countries, hence this concept can serve as a reliable predictor for their general attitudes to foreign and locally produced items: negative and positive respectively (the same perceptions are also applicable for the corresponding advertisements) (Nijssen & Douglas, 2011). However, the literature suggests, that the level of consumer ethnocentrism is not the same for all customers (Jain & Jain, 2013). Here, a several influencing factors exist: "a number of socio-psychological factors (such as patriotism, conservatism, collectivism, cultural openness, animosity, and world-mindedness) and demographic factors (such as gender, age, education, and income)" (Jain & Jain, 2013, p.2).

Even though the aforementioned concepts are usually considered to be the complete opposite of one another, some existing studies consider world-mindedness or cosmopolitanism and consumer ethnocentrism to be related to each other, while still being separate and independent (Cannon & Yaprak, 2002). Some consumers while being cosmopolitan, can be either locally or globally oriented: the former belong to the local culture, while being open-minded to the world, and the latter "look more broadly for standards of excellence and become cosmopolitan as a means of acquiring cultural capital or status within their society" (Njissen & Douglas, 2011, p.117). Nevertheless, even provided that a consumer holds both beliefs at the same time, one of these "opposites" will be still outperforming another to some degree.

The growing importance of the aforementioned concepts has created a huge scientific interest in advertising and consumer behavior research. Njissen & Douglas (2011), for instance, aimed to examine consumer responses to advertisements with a global vs. foreign or local consumer culture positioning and tried to figure out what their relationship to consumer world-mindedness and consumer ethnocentrism is. The study confirmed the positive impact of *world-mindedness* on attitudes towards Foreign Consumer Culture Positioning and Global Consumer Culture Positioning and the tendency for negative perceptions of Local Consumer Culture Positioning. For *consumer ethnocentrism*, the opposite is true: negative evaluation of Global Consumer Culture Positioning and Foreign Consumer Culture Positioning while positive for Local Consumer Culture Positioning (Njissen & Douglas, 2011). The value of the aforementioned study is undeniable, however, until now very little is known about the effect of consumer world-mindedness and consumer ethnocentrism on advertising in a social media context, as well as how belonging to either type of consumer would influence the overall engagement with the promotional content.

Thus, the H3 and H4 of the current study are constructed as follows:

H3: The effect of English (vs. German) social media posts on consumer engagement (likes/comments/shares) is moderated by a higher level of consumer ethnocentrism, so that a higher level of consumer ethnocentrism decreases the engagement with social media content in English versus German.

H4: The effect of English (vs. German) social media posts on consumer engagement (likes/comments/shares) is moderated by a higher level of consumer world-mindedness, so that a higher level of consumer world-mindedness increases the engagement with social media content in English versus German.

All in all, the conceptual model that graphically describes the research process and the main concepts being measured and studied in this thesis could be derived (see Figure 5):
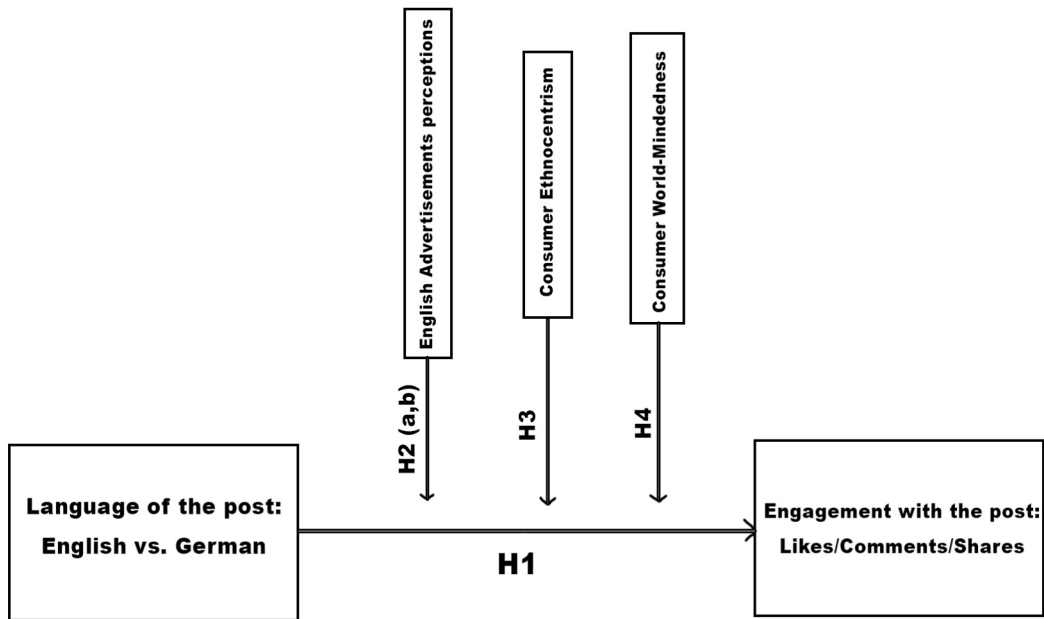
Figure 5. The Conceptual Model of the study

3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology part of this study describes the chosen research method as well as to present the data collection techniques in every detail. Also, this chapter gives the full overview of data analysis methods applied in this study as well as a description of analysis stages that led to obtaining the final results.

As mentioned earlier, this thesis aims to empirically investigate the linguistic part of companies' content strategy, while putting it in the context of social media advertising. In particular, It will examine differences in consumer responses (in terms of likes, comments, and shares) between Instagram posts made in English vs. Instagram posts made in German. Furthermore, the author will attempt to understand the possible moderating influence of different factors on the consumer engagement (in terms of likes, comments, and shares), such as overall perceptions of English, consumer world-mindedness, and consumer ethnocentrism. For the purposes of this study and answering the declared research questions, a causal research design was chosen, quantitative in nature. More specifically, the author decided to take an experimental approach in two different ways simultaneously: firstly, an online experiment that was run in a form of a survey among the target audience and, secondly, a real-world experiment to investigate the same item from a different perspective.

3.1. Justification of the chosen research approach

As stated by Mertler (2019), "quantitative research relies on the collection and analysis of numerical data to describe, explain, predict, or control variables and phenomena of interest" (p. 108). The representatives of this research are aiming to stay as much objective as possible in their studies in order to then be able to generalize the outcomes from a sample to the whole respective audience (Mertler, 2019).

The main focus of any quantitative research is to explain or describe any event or aspect that is being investigated, as stated by Mertler (2019) "researchers seek to describe current situations, establish relationships between variables, and sometimes attempt to explain causal relationships between variables" (p. 108). The extent, nature, and patterns of such relationships can be investigated by employing *causal research design,* also known as explanatory research, and *experimental design* is considered to be the most popular data collection method for such research studies (Dudovskiy, 2018). The experimental design intends to empirically investigate the impact of differ-

ent factors (stimuli) on the overall result while keeping the other influencing factors under control (Creswell, 2014).

This point is consistent with the main aim of this particular thesis, which is to understand and test the existence of causal relationships between the language of Instagram posts and the engagement of digital consumers with them (in terms of likes, comments, and shares). Also, this research will make use of moderating variables that also "play an active role in quantitative research" (Creswell, 2014, p.53) and allow testing for the potential moderating effect they might have on a dependent variable (Creswell, 2014). In this particular case, the possible moderating effects of consumer ethnocentrism, consumer world-mindedness, as well as the overall perception of English advertising on the direct influence of language on the dependent variable (digital consumer Instagram engagement) are tested.

Previous research studies, related to this topic were employing quantitative research to determine relationships and dependency. While running *surveys*, Nijssen et.al. (2011) in their research aiming to test for consumer world-mindedness and consumer ethnocentrism asked their respondents to fill out a short questionnaire, the same is true for Hsu (2008), who was testing for English language perceptions in advertisements and overall. The e*xperimental design* was not used by relevant researches reviewed by the author for this study. The existing research studies were trying to investigate the influence of different factors on social media content engagement by employing case studies methods for their data collection processes (Sabate et. al., 2014; Svani et. al., 2017; Tafesse, 2015; Vries et. al., 2012, etc.).

This study will run two experiments: an online experiment and a real-world experiment. The online experiment that was designed as a survey to ease an investigation of causal relationships and measurements of moderating effects, and the real-world experiment was carried out in Instagram and focused on a single case of one of the American restaurants in Vienna. A detailed description of both study designs is given in sections 3.2 and 3.3 of the thesis.

3.2. Study 1: Online Experiment

Overall, the online experiment consisted of three parts. In the first part, the participants answered three sets of questions that aimed to measure the control variables of this study: consumer ethnocentrism, consumer world-mindedness, and perceptions

of English use in advertisements. The measurement system employed for this part is described in subsection 3.2.1.

Part two of the online-experiment presented the experiment itself. In general, the respondents were exposed to five pairs of different stimuli: each stimulus set included two fictitious simulated Instagram posts located next to each other. To eliminate the influence of any visual or textual content appeals, participants of the experiment received two absolutely identical post simulations with text, where the only difference between the two was the language (Post A - English and Post B - German) (See Figure 6 and Appendix A(a)).
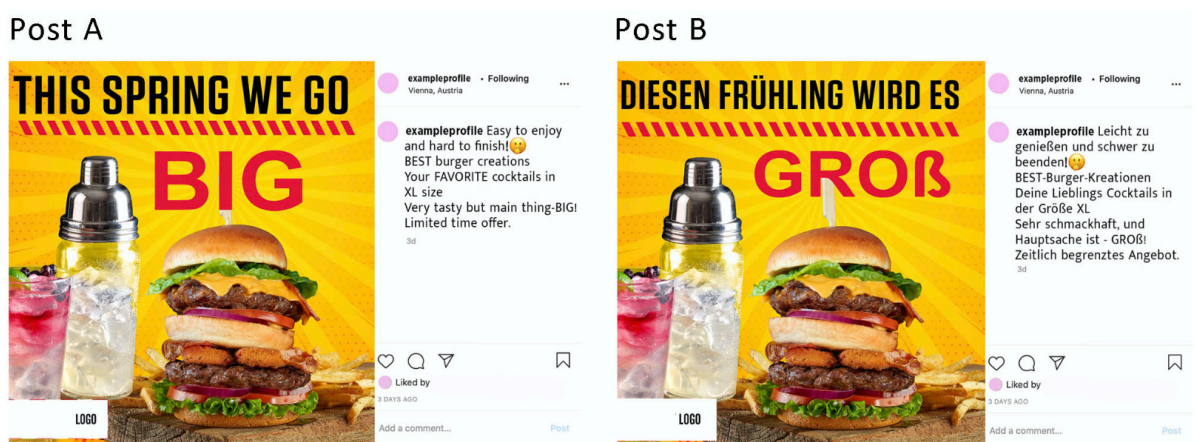

Figure 6. Post simulation example from the online experiment

The online-experiment had a randomizer feature, that allowed creating two different groups of respondents for a between-subject study design: group A got the stimuli in one language order (Post A is in English and Post B in German), for group B the opposite was true (Post A is in German, post B in English). All participants of a survey were randomly assigned to either of those groups. Also, the randomizer let for showing items (like, comment, share) with all five stimuli sets in a different order, so the respondents would pay more attention to the answer.

After having been exposed to the aforementioned stimuli, all participants answered a short set of questions. These questions aimed to capture post language preferences by asking participants to indicate which of the two posts they would rather like if they saw it in their Instagram feed. This choice question was accomplished by a seven-point horizontal preference scale (strong preference for the Post A or Post B). After that, the participants were asked to determine which language was used in each of the posts to check for comprehension. The consumers' willingness to engage with either of the posts was captured by three items: like, comment or share, and was measured by

the same seven-point horizontal preference scale (Post A vs. Post B). Last, but not least, the author was seeking for the justification of respondents' choices in the previous question. Following the preamble asking to "indicate which of the following statements is more true for post A in relation to post B", participants completed three items: "It looks better to me overall", "The message is more understandable to me", "I like the language of the post more". The measurement scale was a seven-point horizontal preference scale (Post A vs. Post B).

3.2.1. Item Measurement

The first part was designed to measure *consumer ethnocentrism* and *consumer world-mindedness*. The measuring scale for the former was the CETSCALE adapted from Shimp & Sharma (1987), and for the latter, the measurements were adapted from the world-mindedness study of Nijssen & Douglas (2011). In this section, respondents were asked to determine the level of their agreement with the provided statements by giving a single rating along a seven-point Likert scale, where 1 stood for Strongly Disagree and 7 for Strongly Agree.

The next section of the survey aimed to find out the level of respondents' *perceptions of English as a language* and *perceptions of English advertisements* in general. The participants needed to indicate the extent to which the provided associations were created to them after seeing an English ad as well as the overall feeling about such advertisements. The measurement items were adapted from Hsu (2008), but again, the ordinal seven-point Likert scale was used for measurement instead of a nominal multiple-choice.

In the last section of the survey, participants were asked about their expertise: how familiar they were with Instagram on a rating from 1 to 7; whether they understood German; whether they lived in Vienna and what were their native languages. In addition, the author wanted to go more specific with age, gender, and highest completed education level.

3.2.2. Pilot test

In order to evaluate the survey before distributing it, a pilot test was conducted. Three volunteers were asked to complete the survey and to assess some aspects: the

completion time, length, and the understanding of wording. As the survey was conducted in English and the target audience of the research was mostly non-native English speakers, it was instrumental that English was not the native language of pilot test participants, to ensure that the testing for text comprehension would have more exact results.

The main aim of the author was, naturally, to get as many full responses as possible, thus it was crucial to keep the questionnaire concise and straightforward. Given that it had been previously scientifically confirmed, that any survey should not take more than ten minutes to complete in order to have a good response rate, this time limit was taken as a goal.

After completion of the survey, one of the volunteers had some comments about the wording of the question, and two confirmed that the text was fully understandable to them. The average completion time among the three was a little bit more than 10 minutes. Thus it was decided not to shorten the questionnaire. The resulting survey after all adjustments is included in Appendix A(a; b).

3.2.3. Survey distribution and sample size

The preferred method for surveying in this study was an online data collection tool, that was chosen due to the possibility to collect more responses within a shorter period with no extra costs involved (Creswell, 2014). The questionnaire was created using the online survey platform SoSci survey and allowed access to everyone who clicks the link. The distribution of links was happening mostly through word of mouth as well as social media platforms Facebook and Instagram.

Overall, 86 respondents took part in the online experiment that was carried out for this study. Out of them, 49 are women, 36 are men, and 1 respondent preferred not to specify the gender. From all of the participants, 94% of live in Vienna, 34% of them are native German speakers and 19% are native English speakers. The age of participants ranges from 18 to 36.

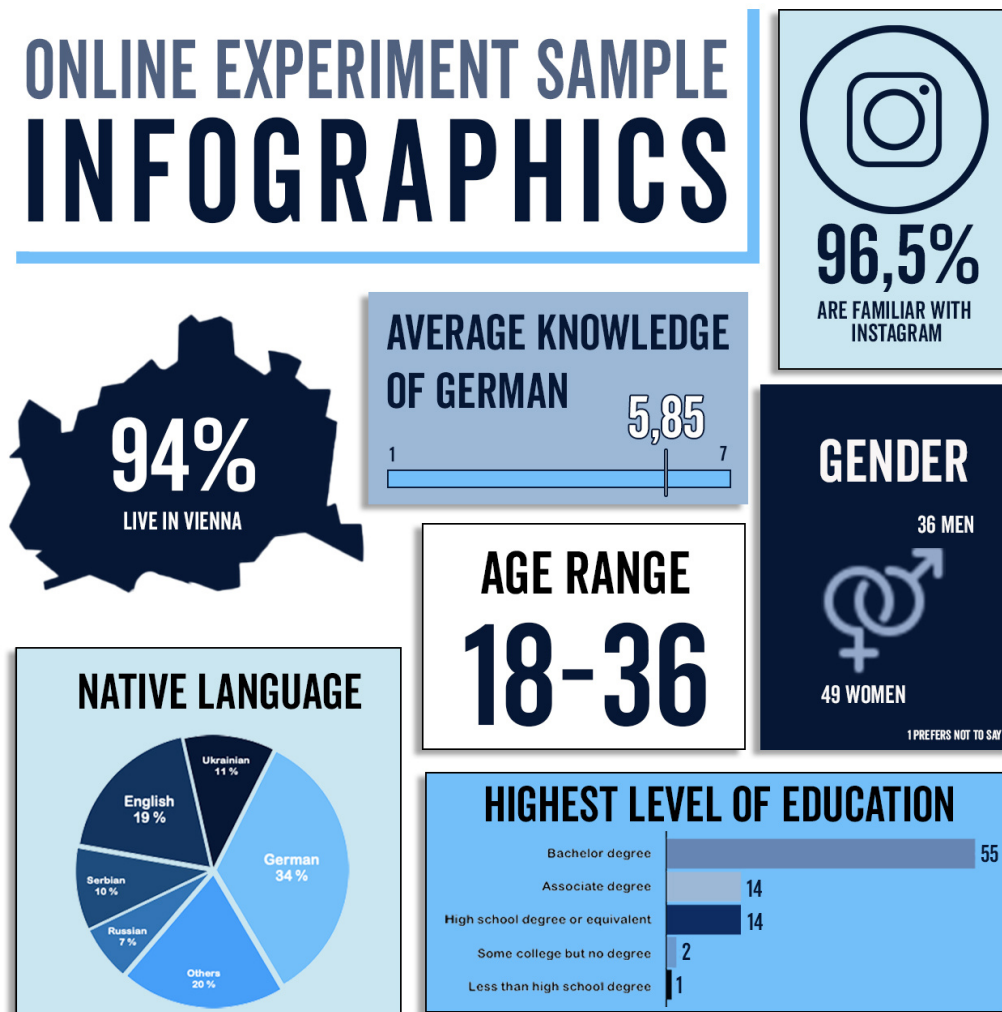See Figure 7 for the visual display of the sample description.

Figure 7. Online Experiment Sample Infographics

3.2.4 Data analysis approach

In order to make an analysis of collected data, the author made use of the statistical software SPSS to measure the needed items as well as to come up with a comprehensive conclusion about whether to retain or reject the hypotheses of this thesis.

Aiming to check for the overall association between the language of the post and engagement with it in terms of likes, comments, and shares (**H1,** the main hypothesis of this study), the Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) test was conducted for the outcomes of the online experiment. In addition, a Chi-square test was conducted

to check for the relationship between the language of the post and the preference for post A versus post B.

To find an answer whether to **H2 (a)** and **(b)** of this study could be retained, the Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) test was conducted, where for H1(a) some possible associations with English were separately tested as covariates for any interaction or effect on the engagement with the posts in English or German. For H1(b), positive, neutral, and negative attitudes towards English use in ads were summed up according to the category, and put in MANCOVA as covariates.

The moderating effects of consumer ethnocentrism and consumer world-mindedness (**H3** and **H4** respectively) were also analyzed using the Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) test, where the independent variable was the language of the post, the dependent variables were items measuring engagement with the post (a) likes; b) comments; c) shares) and the control variables were either the level of consumer ethnocentrism or the level of consumer world-mindedness. In order to analyze them, the sum-scale of the measuring items was computed and, thus, considered as the main metric. Given that items in each of the concepts were measured on a seven-point Likert scale, the overall level of Consumer Ethnocentrism ranges from 7 (very low) to 42 (very high) and World-Mindedness from 7 (very low) to 42 (very high).

3.3. Study 2: Real-World Experiment

In addition to the online experiment, the author decided to run a field experiment, where unlike aforementioned, the participants were not aware of their participation. This fact lets this thesis assume the high external validity of the real-experiment. As it is claimed in the scientific literature on the topic, experimental studies in the real world are often preferred over the ones in the "experimental world" in terms of further generalizability of findings: "whenever participants know that they are taking part in research, there is the potential for that experimental world to influence the research findings rather than the independent variables" (Lund Research Ltd, 2012).

The geographical frame of this research is narrowed down to Vienna: here there are several franchised restaurants, mostly originating from the USA (McDonald's, KFC, Hard Rock Cafe, etc.). As mentioned in the introductory part of this study, franchisees usually face the dilemma of "to standardize or to localize?": to use English in brand communication or local language (German in case of Vienna)? Indeed, people that live

in Vienna score the top ten in English fluency, however, that does not necessarily mean that the usage of English in advertising in a German-speaking country will be appreciated by them and will cause more appeal than the alternative.

In the social media context, the metrics to find out about these attitudes could be easily obtained from engagement with the social media inputs (the number of likes, comments, and shares) (Svani et.al., 2017). Hence, to empirically investigate the influence of language choice of Instagram posts on engagement with them, this study focused on the case of TGI Fridays (American franchise restaurant in Vienna). Lately, the restaurant uses only English in brand-created social media posts, however, this study will help understand whether the approach should be possibly changed and could serve as the managerial implication for other American franchises in Vienna.

As mentioned before, the main intent researcher had while employing experimental research design was to test the influence of a specific "treatment" on the general outcome, while keeping all other influential factors under control (Creswell, 2014). Any experiment design needs an experimental group and a control group (where the participants are randomly selected and assigned to either of the groups), a manipulated (independent) variable, and an effect (dependent) variable (Mertler, 2014). When the random assignment to groups is not possible as the researcher needs to use already formed groups for participation, the experiment design turns into a *quasi-experimental study* (Creswell, 2014). This experimental study was taking place on the Instagram profile of TGI Fridays Vienna, hence, the group of participants consisted mostly of the followers of this Instagram profile, and other Instagram users. Given that the treatment group was not randomly assigned, the author needed to employ the quasi-experimental approach. All of the participants were exposed to the stimuli and in this experiment design, the control group was absent. The main aim of the author in this experiment was to empirically investigate which Instagram posts get more organic engagement (likes, comments, shares): posts in English or posts in German.

The experimental study was scheduled and planned as follows. The experiment lasted approximately 1 month (March 13th - April 18th) and included 10 brand-created postings. Same as in the online experiment, in order to reduce the appeal influence on the outcome, the visual and textual parts of content inputs used for the experiment were exactly the same, and the language was the only different item. In general, the aforementioned content inputs were posted on the Instagram profile of TGI Fridays Vienna (@tgifridaysvienna) at noon in the following order: Post 1 (EN), Post 2 (GER), Post 3 (EN), Post 4 (GER), Post 5 (EN). Afterward, the order goes reversed. As it was previ-

ously scientifically confirmed that the day of the week could also influence engagement, the experiment stimuli were also posted the same day of the week to eliminate those biases. Aiming to make this experiment more subtle for profile followers, the author posted the experimental inputs randomly, without any specific and pre-set time gaps in between them (but, as mentioned above, on the same day of the week). Also, other normal postings in the meantime were done but were not considered of interest for this study. In addition, as soon as the same post with a different language appears, the previous one was hidden from the feed. The detailed posting schedule and posts themselves are provided in Appendix B.

In general, the real-world experiment in the Instagram profile of TGI Fridays Vienna resulted in overall 5454 posts impressions (the number of times the post was shown to users), 264 likes, and no comments or shares. That is why only the number of likes was considered for further data analysis procedures. The distribution of likes between German and English postings are displayed in Table 1.

Language	Impressions	Likes
English	2669	133
German	2785	131
Sum	5454	264

Table 1. Impressions and likes obtained from the real-world experiment

For the analysis of the data obtained from the Instagram real-world experiment, the author conducted a Chi-square test.

4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1. Study 1: Online Experiment

4.1.1. Language comprehension check

Given that the study tries to investigate the association of particular language use with engagement with social media posts, the language comprehension check was necessary to ensure that all participants of the experiment interpret English and German in the same way as the author of the study. Hence, all of the participants were asked to specify which language was used in post simulations: English, German, or other. Since each of 86 participants of the study encountered five stimuli sets, to ease the investigation, every stimulus was considered as a separate observation. Thus, the sample size resulted in 430 participants, where 220 belong to Group 1 (English is used in a Post A) and 210 to Group 2 (German is used in a Post A).

In order to test if the manipulation worked out as intended, two cross-tab analyses with the experimental condition and the language checks (one for advertisement A, one for advertisement B) were conducted. Results of a Chi-square test reveal a significant association between the language used and identification for both cases. When advertisement A was in English language, 99.1% correctly indicated the language (χ^2(2(N=430)=400.65, p<0.01), when advertisement B was in English language, 99.5 % correctly indicated the use of English language in the advertisement (χ^2(2(N=430)=422.03, p<0.01). Hence, the languages were identified correctly and the research could be continued.

4.1.2. Association between the language of the post and engagement

Following the assumption of this study, that language can serve as an appeal for social media content and can have a significant relationship with the preferences for a post in English versus a post in German (in case of this current study), the Chi-square test was conducted to investigate whether the relationship between the language and preferences is significant.

Hence, the cross-tab analysis with the experimental condition and the post choice was conducted. The outcomes of a Chi-square test showed a significant association between the language used and a choice between Post A versus Post B

(χ^2*(1(N=430)=50.76, p<0.01),* that allows for retaining the H1(a) of this study. The Phi value obtained equals 0.34, what, however, stands for a rather weak relationship between the language of the post and preference for one versus another.

Nevertheless, the descriptive part of the Chi-square test reported the larger preference for the posts in English versus posts in German for both Group 1 and 2. For Group 1, where English was a Post A, it got 152 "likes" versus Post B in German with 68. For Group 2, German was used in Post A and got 73 "likes" versus English in Post B with 137. Figure 8 displays the aforementioned metrics visually.
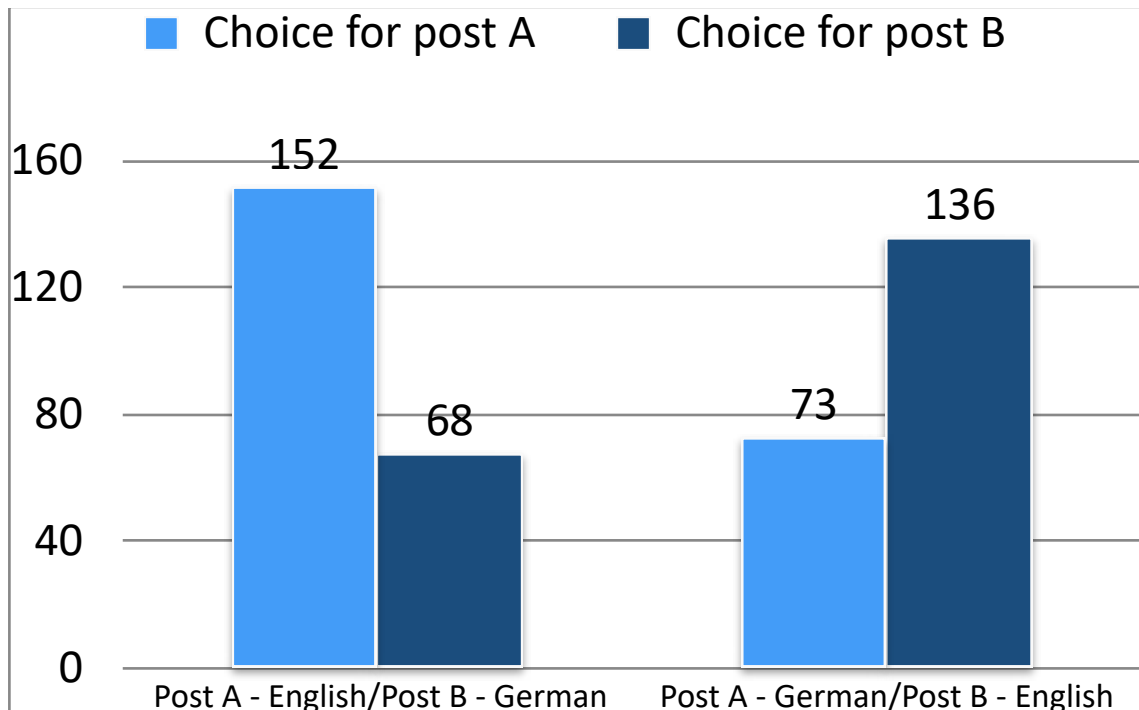
Figure 8. Post A/B choices metrics among Group 1 (A = English) and Group 2 (A = German).

Aiming to further investigate whether there are any specific associations between the likes, comments or shares and the language used in the post, and, thus, seek for the full retention of the H1 of this study, the author chose the Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) test. The experimental condition (i.e., Post A = English vs. Post A = German) served as a factor, and the three measures for engagement (likes, comments and shares) as dependent variables.

The **Multivariate test** reported a significant difference in the engagement with posts in English and posts in German: *Pillai's Trace=0.086, F(3, 426) = 13.4, p<0.01. Partial Eta*

Squared is equal to 0.086 that reports a rather medium effect size of the language of the post.

In confirmation with H1(a), the analysis revealed that when post A was in English, significantly more people reported that they would *like* advertisement A as compared to participants in the control condition, where advertisement A was in German language ($M_{AdA=English}$=3,26, SD=2.34 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$=4.65, SD=2.35, $F(1)$=38.83, $p<0.01$, η^2=0.081).

The between-subjects test for *comments* supported the H1(b), as the outcome reported the significant difference between the engagement of participants from two groups: when post A was in English, significantly more people indicated their willingness to leave a comment under post A versus post B, when the opposite is true for the control condition when the post A was in German ($M_{AdA=English}$=3.5, SD=1.88 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$=4.48, SD=1.85, $F(1)$=30.74, $p<0.01$, η^2=0.067).

Last, but not least, according to the test outcomes, the H1(c) was also confirmed, as much more people reported that they would be more willing to *share* advertisement A, when it was in English, as compared to participants in the control condition, where advertisement A was in German ($M_{AdA=English}$=3.58, SD=1.81 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$=4.47, SD=1.94, $F(1)$=24.33, $p<0.01$, η^2=0.054).

Concluding the results of the test, the findings reveal a preference towards posts in English versus posts in German considering all three engagement items in both groups 1 (A = English) and 2 (A = German). The strongest effect size was reported for likes, whereas the weakest - for shares. Figure 9 displays the mean values for preferences in favor of English vs. German, where 1 stood for a stronger preference for Post A and 7 - stronger preference for Post B.

Given the outcomes of the MANOVA test, it is possible to conclude that the language of the post does have a significant effect on the engagement with it in terms of likes, comments or shares, hence, lets for the full retention of the H1 of this study (H1(a); H1(b) and H1(c)). Overall, the test results allow to answer the **first research question** of this study formulated as: *How is the specific language of brand-created promotional Instagram posts associated with the overall engagement (in terms of likes, comments or shares)?*.
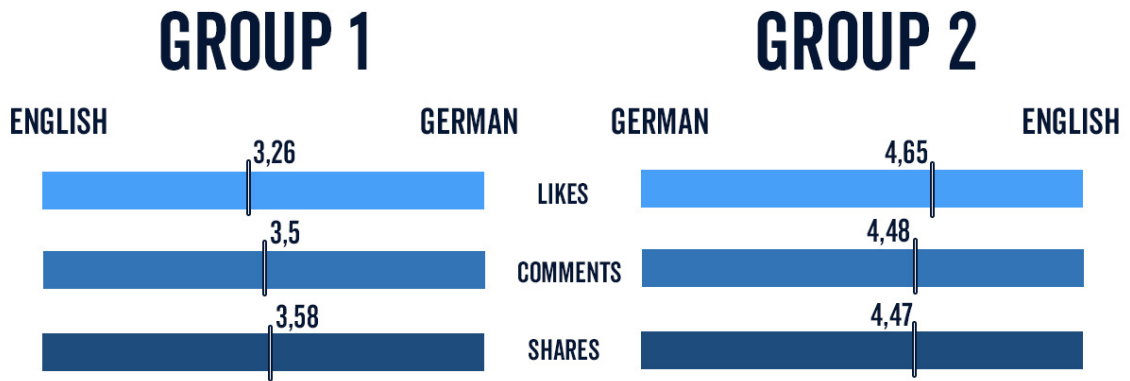
GROUP 1

ENGLISH	GERMAN

3,26 LIKES

3,5 COMMENTS

3,58 SHARES

GROUP 2

GERMAN	ENGLISH

4,65 LIKES

4,48 COMMENTS

4,47 SHARES

Figure 9. Average engagement distribution for the online-experiment stimuli (1 indicates for a stronger preference for Post A and 7 a stronger preference for Post B)

Besides, the data from the online experiment analyzed in both Chi-square and MANOVA tests reflect the stronger preference for English vs. German posts within the sample of this study. Given that the participants of the study were asked for the justification of their choice for Post A vs. Post B, it is possible to evaluate the reasons for the overall preference for one or another post. Again, English posts showed slightly better performance in all three criteria (7-point Likert scale, where 1 was Post A and 7 was Post B):

• "It looks better to me overall" - mean values: 3.26 for Group 1 and 4.65 for Group 2.
• "The message is more understandable to me" - mean values: 3.47 for Group 1 and 4.35 for Group 2
• "I like the language of the post more" - mean values: 3.27 for Group 1 and 4.82 for Group 2.

Figure 10 displays the aforementioned metrics visually.

GROUP 1

ENGLISH	GERMAN

3,26 IT LOOKS BETTER TO ME OVERALL

3,47 THE MESSAGE IS MORE UNDERSTANDABLE TO ME

3,27 I LIKE THE LANGUAGE OF THE POST MORE

GROUP 2

GERMAN	ENGLISH

4,65 IT LOOKS BETTER TO ME OVERALL

4,35 THE MESSAGE IS MORE UNDERSTANDABLE TO ME

4,82 I LIKE THE LANGUAGE OF THE POST MORE

Figure 10. Average choice justification values for the online-experiment stimuli

A MANOVA test was conducted to understand whether there are significant associations between the specific language of the post and aforementioned justification

statements in favor of one language versus another. The experimental condition (i.e., Post A = English vs. Post A = German) served as a factor, and the three justification statements as dependent variables.

The **Multivariate test** revealed a highly significant difference in justifications between two languages: *Pillai's Trace=0.185, F(3, 426)=32.31, p<0.01. Partial Eta Squared* reports a large effect size: 0.185.

The between-subjects test outcome for the *overall visual looking of the post* reported the significant difference between the participants from two groups: when post A was in English, significantly more people indicated that it looked better overall, when the opposite is true for the control condition when the post A was in German ($M_{AdA=English}$=3.26, SD=1.39 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$=4.65, SD=1.57, $F(1)$=94.51, $p<0.01$, η^2=0.181).

For the *language understanding*, the significant difference between two groups was revealed as well: when post A was in English, significantly more people indicated the language of the post A as a language they understand better, when for the second control condition the opposite is true ($M_{AdA=English}$=3.47, SD=1.92 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$=4.35, SD=2.09, $F(1)$=20.94, $p<0.01$, η^2=0.047).

Last, but not least, the *overall preference towards one language versus another* have also revealed a significant difference between the groups: when English was used in the post A, significantly more people indicated their preference towards post A versus post B (in German). When post A was in German, the opposite is true ($M_{AdA=English}$=3.27, SD=2.42 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$=4.82, SD=2.35, $F(1)$=45.2, $p<0.01$, η^2=0.096).

Hence, all of the three justifications revealed a stronger preference towards the post, where English was used: the largest effect size belongs to the overall visual looking, the smallest - to a better language understanding.

4.1.3. Moderation by the perception of English in advertising

Several existing studies were already investigating the associations and feelings about English in international advertising. This study adopted both measuring scales and items from the study of Hsu (2008), which aimed to research the language perceptions of English use in Taiwanese advertising copy.

For the case of *English language associations*, the biggest share of answers supported *Internationalism and Standardization* (21.8%), *American and English culture* (20.1%), and *Future and Innovation* (17.2%). The online experiment outcomes for this thesis completely corroborate the aforementioned metrics: considering mean values measured on the scale from 1 to 7, the biggest share of supporting responses belongs to *Internationalism and Standardization* (6.14), followed by *American and English culture* (6.06), and, lastly, *Future and Innovation* (4.63). Figure 11 displays the full descriptive statistics with mean values.
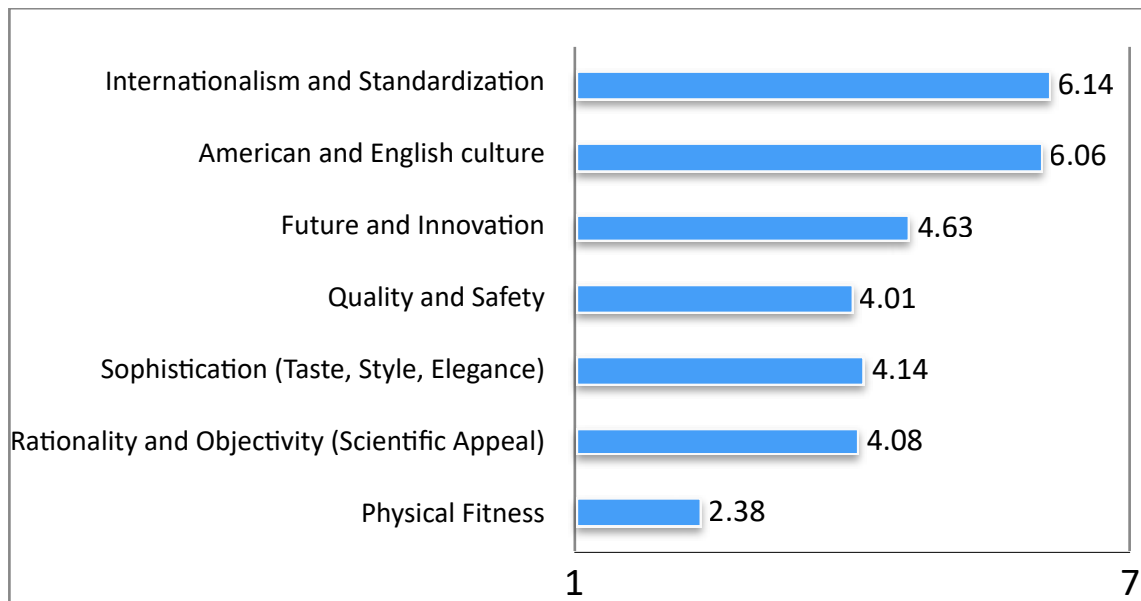
Figure 11. English advertising associations descriptive chart

Moving forward to measuring *the feelings about the English advertising,* the results of the study by Hsu(2008) reported the highest composed percentages for positive perceptions (43.2%), followed with neutral (37.4%) and negative (1.4%). This current thesis reported the largest supporting responses share for neutral perceptions (compound mean 12.17), followed with positive (11.79), and negative (2.55). Full descriptive statistics with mean values of feelings about English advertising are displayed in Figure 12.

Given that this study aims to find an association between the perceptions of English advertising and willingness to engage with the posts in English versus in German, three groups of feelings were added to MANCOVA test as covariates, that according to H2(b) would probably have some significant interaction with the manipulation of English use in posts on consumers' engagement.
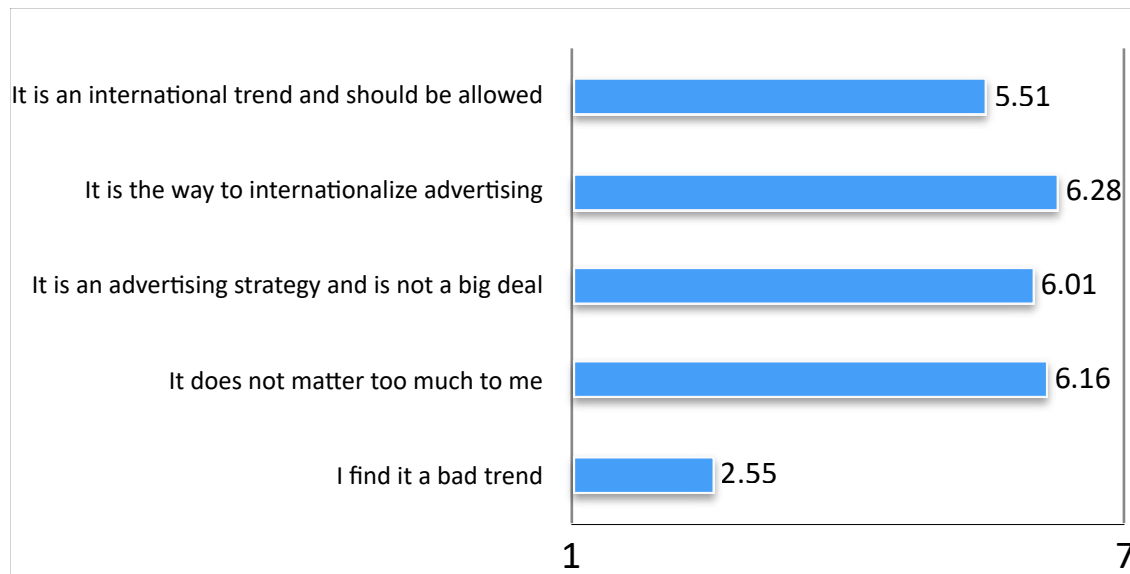
Figure 12. Average values for feelings about English in advertising

For the **Associations with English advertising**, the MANCOVA test was conducted. All seven "Association" items were added as covariates separately to see which association could make a significant difference in a way digital consumers interact with a post in English versus German. The output of the test reported a significant interaction with *Rationality and Objectivity (Scientific Appeal) only.*

Overall, the **Multivariate test** resulted in a significant outcome that allows declaring that there is a significant moderating effect of association with Rationality and Objectivity on the engagement with posts in English and posts in German: *Pillai's Trace=0.028, F(3, 412)=3.978, p=0.008. Partial Eta Squared* reports a low effect size: 0.028.

As the analysis already revealed, when post A was in English, significantly more people reported that they would *like* advertisement A as compared to participants in the control condition, where advertisement A was in German language. Here, additionally the significant moderation effect of Rationality and Objectivity was detected ($M_{AdA=English}$=3.26, SD=2.343 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$=4.65, SD=2.353, $F(1)$=6.009, p=0.014, η^2=0.015).

In addition, this association with English has a significant moderating effect on *comments* ($M_{AdA=English}$=3.26, SD=2.34 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$=4.65, SD=2.35, $F(1)$=10.43, p=0.01, η^2=0.025), and shares ($M_{AdA=English}$=3.26, SD=2.34 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$=4.65, SD=2.35, $F(1)$=10.47, p=0.01, η^2=0.025).

To sum up, the effect size is larger for shares and comments, and for likes it is the weakest among the three metrics.

As expected, the interaction plot of the moderating effect and control condition revealed a positive effect of associations with English ads (the case of association with Rationality and Objectivity) on the higher engagement with Instagram posts in English in terms of likes (Figure 13(a)), comments (Figure 13(b)), and shares (Figure 13(c)).
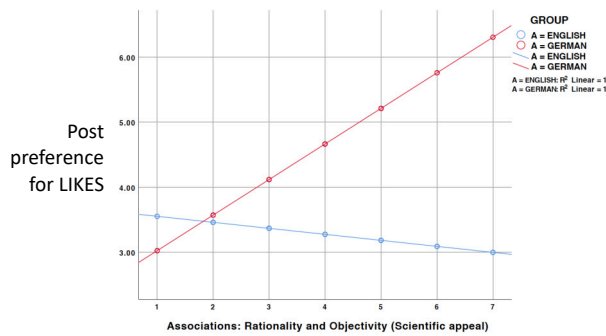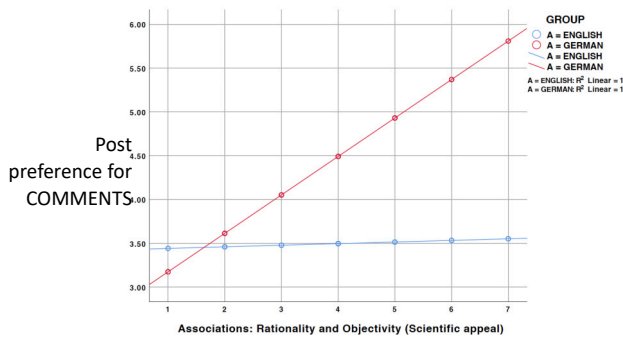

The lower value on the Y-axis indicates a bigger preference for post A, the higher value indicates a bigger preference for post B.

Blue line on the graph represents group 1, where post A was exposed in English and post B in German.

Red line on the graph represents group 2, which was exposed to the posts in the reverse order: post A in German, post B in English.

Figure 13(a). Interaction effects between the association with English advertising and two control conditions for the case of LIKES.

The lower value on the Y-axis indicates a bigger preference for post A, the higher value indicates a bigger preference for post B.

Blue line on the graph represents group 1, where post A was exposed in English and post B in German.

Red line on the graph represents group 2, which was exposed to the posts in the reverse order: post A in German, post B in English.

Figure 13(b). Interaction effects between the association with English advertising and two control conditions for the case of COMMENTS.
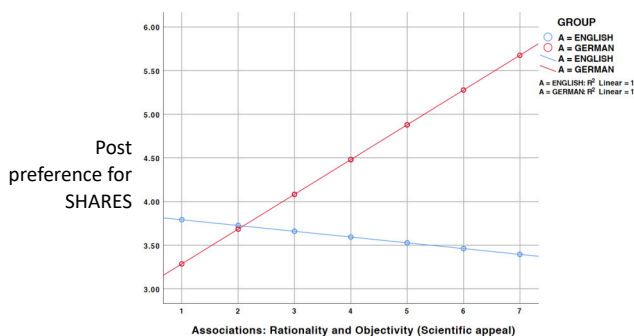
The lower value on the Y-axis indicates a bigger preference for post A, the higher value indicates a bigger preference for post B.

Blue line on the graph represents group 1, where post A was exposed in English and post B in German.

Red line on the graph represents group 2, which was exposed to the posts in the reverse order: post A in German, post B in English.

Figure 13(c). Interaction effects between the association with English advertising and two control conditions for the case of SHARES.

Another MANCOVA test was conducted to investigate the possible effect of **feelings about English advertising** on engagement with post in English versus post in German in

the case of this current study. In order to get a better understanding on a possible interaction effect, all measuring items were recoded into: positive feeling ("It is a way to internationalize advertising", "It is an international trend and should be allowed"), neutral ("It is an advertising strategy and not a big deal", "It doesn't matter too much for me") and negative ("…I find it a bad trend"). As the computed variables for positive and neutral feelings consist of more than one variable, the reliability analysis was conducted and reported the Cronbach's Alpha of 0.553 and 0.730 respectively.

The MANCOVA test with the computed variables resulted in a significant result for feeling *neutral* and *negative.*

Overall, the **Multivariate tests** for both feelings resulted in a significant outcome that allows to declare that there is a significant moderating effect of <u>neutral feelings about English in advertising</u>: *Pillai's Trace=0.023, F(3, 420)=3.297, p=0.02. Partial Eta Squared* reported a low effect size: 0.023. The moderating effect of <u>negative feelings</u> on the engagement with posts in English and posts in German came out even stronger: *Pillai's Trace=0.061, F (3, 420)=9.02, p<0.01. Partial Eta Squared* is equal to 0.061, reporting the moderate effect level.

The **tests of Between-Subject effects** also detected a significant moderation effect of <u>neutral feelings</u> on engagement with posts in English vs. posts in German in terms of *likes*: ($M_{AdA=English}$ = 3.26, SD=2.34 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$ = 4.65, SD=2.35, $F(1)$=4.55, p=0.033, η^2=0.011), *comments*: ($M_{AdA=English}$ = 3.26, SD=2.34 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$ = 4.65, SD=2.35, $F(1)$=9.63, p=0.002, η^2=0.022), and also shares: ($M_{AdA=English}$ = 3.26, SD=2.34 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$ = 4.65, SD=2.35, $F(1)$ = 4.28, p=0.039, η^2=0.010).

Negative feelings were also reported as a powerful covariate in MANCOVA test with large moderating effect for all three engagement metrics, as likes: ($M_{AdA=English}$ = 3.26, SD=2.34 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$ = 4.65, SD=2.35, $F(1)$=5.13, p=0.024, η^2=0.012), *comments*: ($M_{AdA=English}$ = 3.26, SD=2.34 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$ = 4.65, SD=2.35, $F(1)$=19.62, p<0.01, η^2=0.044), and shares: ($M_{AdA=English}$ = 3.26, SD=2.34 vs. $M_{AdA=German}$ = 4.65, SD=2.35, $F(1)$=19.25, p<0.01, η^2=0.044).

The scatterplot for interaction of the moderating effect and control condition revealed quite unexpected effect directions for both neutral and negative feelings towards English in advertising. Neutral feelings reported a negative effect on the engagement with English posts in all three metrics (Figure 14 (a,b,c)), while for the negative feelings, the

positive effect was detected: the stronger the negative feeling, the bigger the engagement with the posts in English(Figure 15(a,b,c)).
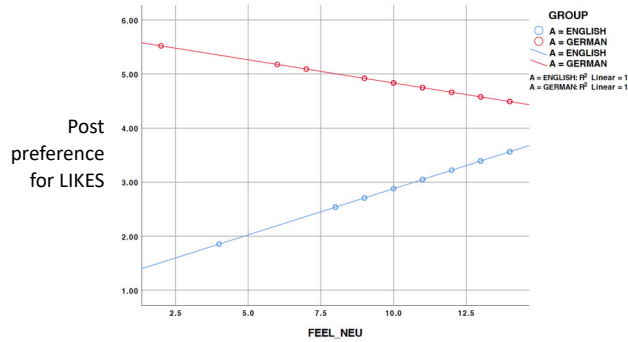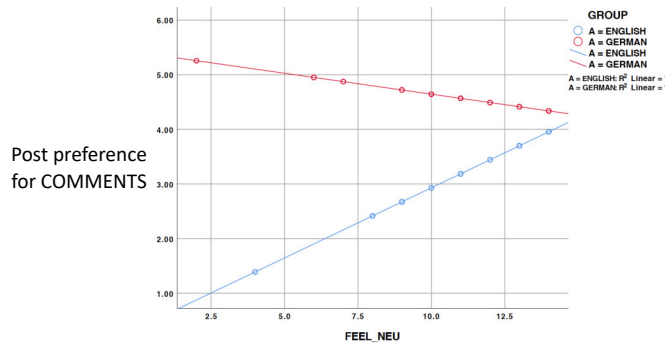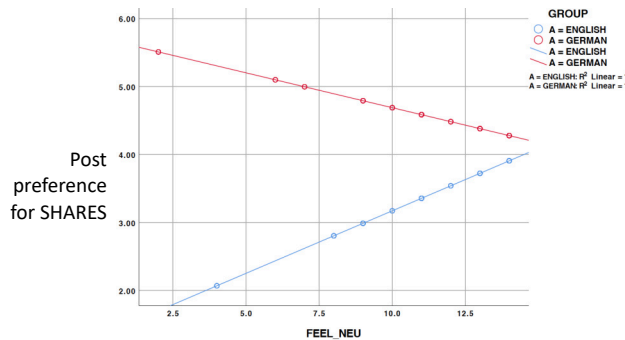

The lower value on the Y-axis indicates a bigger preference for post A, the higher value indicates a bigger preference for post B.

Blue line on the graph represents group 1, where post A was exposed in English and post B in German.

Red line on the graph represents group 2, which was exposed to the posts in the reverse order: post A in German, post B in English.

Figure 14(a). Interaction effects between the neutral feelings about the English advertising and two control conditions for the case of LIKES.
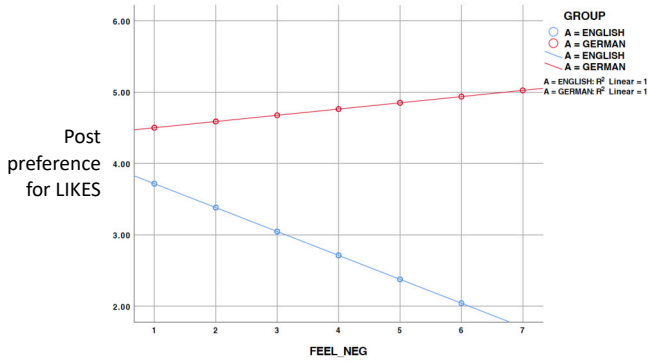

The lower value on the Y-axis indicates a bigger preference for post A, the higher value indicates a bigger preference for post B.

Blue line on the graph represents group 1, where post A was exposed in English and post B in German.

Red line on the graph represents group 2, which was exposed to the posts in the reverse order: post A in German, post B in English.
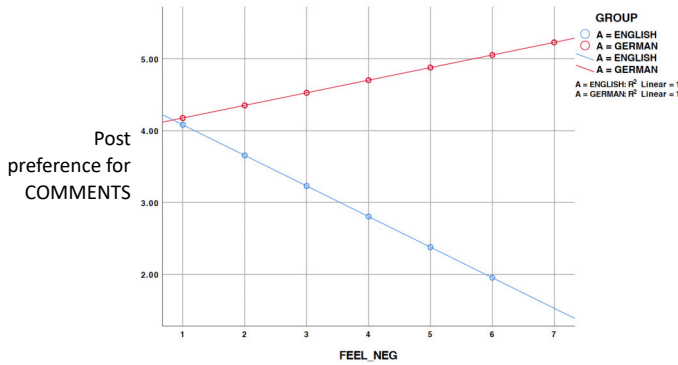
Figure 14(b). Interaction effects between the neutral feelings about the English advertising and two control conditions for the case of COMMENTS.

The lower value on the Y-axis indicates a bigger preference for post A, the higher value indicates a bigger preference for post B.

Blue line on the graph represents group 1, where post A was exposed in English and post B in German.

Red line on the graph represents group 2, which was exposed to the posts in the reverse order: post A in German, post B in English.

Figure 14(c). Interaction effects between the neutral feelings about the English advertising and two control conditions for the case of SHARES.

The lower value on the Y-axis indicates a bigger preference for post A, the higher value indicates a bigger preference for post B.

Blue line on the graph represents group 1, where post A was exposed in English and post B in German.

Red line on the graph represents group 2, which was exposed to the posts in the reverse order: post A in German, post B in English.
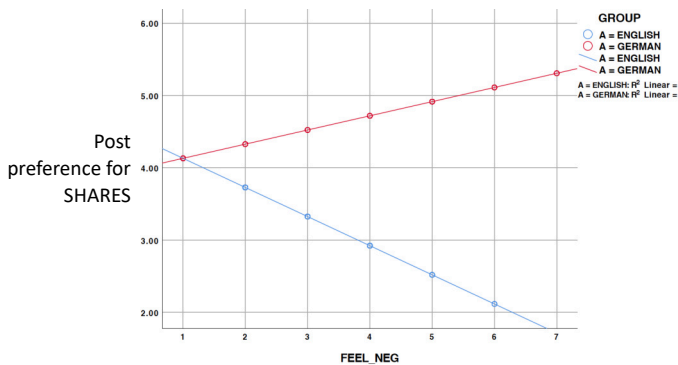
Figure 15(a). Interaction effects between the negative feelings about the English advertising and two control conditions for the case of LIKES.

The lower value on the Y-axis indicates a bigger preference for post A, the higher value indicates a bigger preference for post B.

Blue line on the graph represents group 1, where post A was exposed in English and post B in German.

Red line on the graph represents group 2, which was exposed to the posts in the reverse order: post A in German, post B in English.

Figure 15(b). Interaction effects between the negative feelings about the English advertising and two control conditions for the case of COMMENTS.

The lower value on the Y-axis indicates a bigger preference for post A, the higher value indicates a bigger preference for post B.

Blue line on the graph represents group 1, where post A was exposed in English and post B in German.

Red line on the graph represents group 2, which was exposed to the posts in the reverse order: post A in German, post B in English.

Figure 15(c). Interaction effects between the negative feelings about the English advertising and two control conditions for the case of SHARES.

All in all, the MANCOVA resulted in a significant moderating effect of *Rationality and Objectivity* for all three dependent engagement variables (likes, comments, and shares), and showed the expected effect direction on the interaction plot. This fact allows for partial retention of the H2(a) of this thesis: *The effect of English (vs. German)*

advertising on consumer social media engagement (likes/comments/shares) is moderated by the associations with English in advertising, so that more favorable associations towards English increase the engagement with social media content in English versus German.

The second MANCOVA reported a significant interaction with neutral and negative feelings only. In both cases the between-subject effects tests detected the significant interaction for all three metrics, whilst negative feelings showed the largest effect size. However, in this case, the effect directions displayed on the plots, did not corroborate with the expected in the hypothesis for both cases. Hence, the test results let partially support the H2(b): *The effect of English (vs. German) advertising on consumer social media engagement (likes/comments/shares) is moderated by the feelings towards English in advertising, so that more favorable feelings towards English increase the engagement with social media content in English versus German.*

4.1.4. Moderation by Consumer Ethnocentrism and Consumer World-mindedness

Before creating a computed measure, the reliability test was conducted for all constructs belonging to both consumer world-mindedness and consumer ethnocentrism. Afterward, the composite-scale was computed and in further was considered as the main metric. Table 2 displays a wrap-up of all metrics for the measurements of two concepts.

	Consumer Ethnocentrism	Consumer World-mindedness
Cronbach's Alpha	0.777	0.612
Scale	7 (very low) - 42 (very high)	7 (very low) - 42 (very high)
Average level within the sample	19.74	34.64

**Table 2.** Consumer Ethnocentrism and Consumer World-mindedness measurements

a) Consumer Ethnocentrism

Following the aim to test for any significant moderating effect of consumer ethnocentrism on engagement with posts in a specific language, the MANCOVA test was conducted with the composed value for consumer ethnocentrism as a covariate.

The outcome of a **Multivariate Test** reported a highly significant result: *Pillai's Trace=0.044, F(3, 424)=6.440, p<0.01.* The value of the moderating effect of consumer ethnocentrism, however, came out with a low effect size: *Partial Eta Squared*=0.044.

Nevertheless, the result for the **Between-Subject Tests** was not significant for all three engagement metrics: a significant moderation effect was found for only for comments and shares, and the effect of "consumer ethnocentrism x control condition" interaction on likes did not turn out to be significant. For comments the effect size is reported to be larger ($F(1)=12.49$, $p<0.01$, $\eta^2=0.028$) than for the shares, where $F(1)=7.06$, $p=0.008$, $\eta^2=0.016$. For Likes, no significant relationship was detected.

The plot of interaction effects also showed a result, opposite from the awaited: a positive moderating effect of the higher level of consumer ethnocentrism on the engagement with the posts where English was used (Figure 16(a,b)).
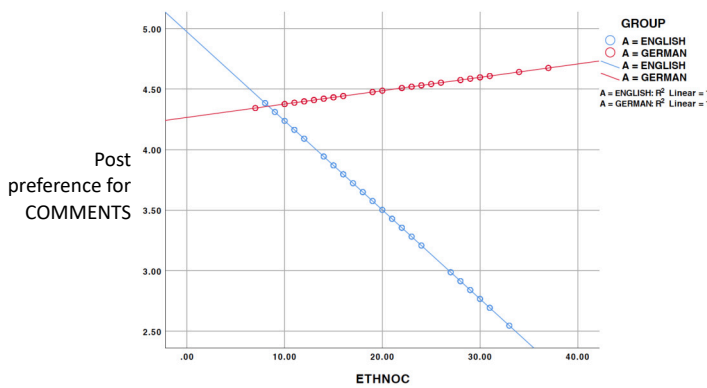
The lower value on the Y-axis indicates a bigger preference for post A, the higher value indicates a bigger preference for post B.

Blue line on the graph represents group 1, where post A was exposed in English and post B in German.

Red line on the graph represents group 2, which was exposed to the posts in the reverse order: post A in German, post B in English.

Figure 16(a). Interaction effects between consumer ethnocentrism and two control conditions for the case of COMMENTS.
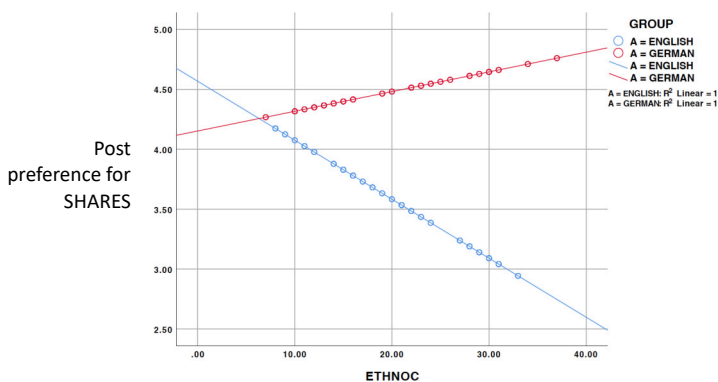
The lower value on the Y-axis indicates a bigger preference for post A, the higher value indicates a bigger preference for post B.

Blue line on the graph represents group 1, where post A was exposed in English and post B in German.

Red line on the graph represents group 2, which was exposed to the posts in the reverse order: post A in German, post B in English.

Figure 16(b). Interaction effects between consumer ethnocentrism and two control conditions for the case of SHARES.

b) Consumer World-mindedness

In case of consumer world-mindedness, in order to check for the effect and any significant interaction with the control conditions os the study and whether it has any impact on the overall engagement, same as with consumer ethnocentrism, the MANCOVA test was conducted, with the composed value for world-mindedness as a covariate.

Here, the **Multivariate Test** also reported a significant result: *Pillai's Trace = 0.029, F(3, 424)=4.23, p=0.006*. *Partial Eta Squared* for Consumer World-mindedness overall is also low and is equal to 0.029.

However, the **Between-Subject Tests** resulted in a significant interaction for the case of one engagement metric only: the significant moderating effect was found on the number of comments *F(1)=10.52, p=0.01*, with a low effect size η^2=0.024. For Likes and Shares, no significant relationship was reported.

The interaction plot of the moderating effect and control condition revealed, as expected, a positive effect of consumer world-mindedness on the higher engagement with Instagram posts in English, however, for comments only (Figure 17).
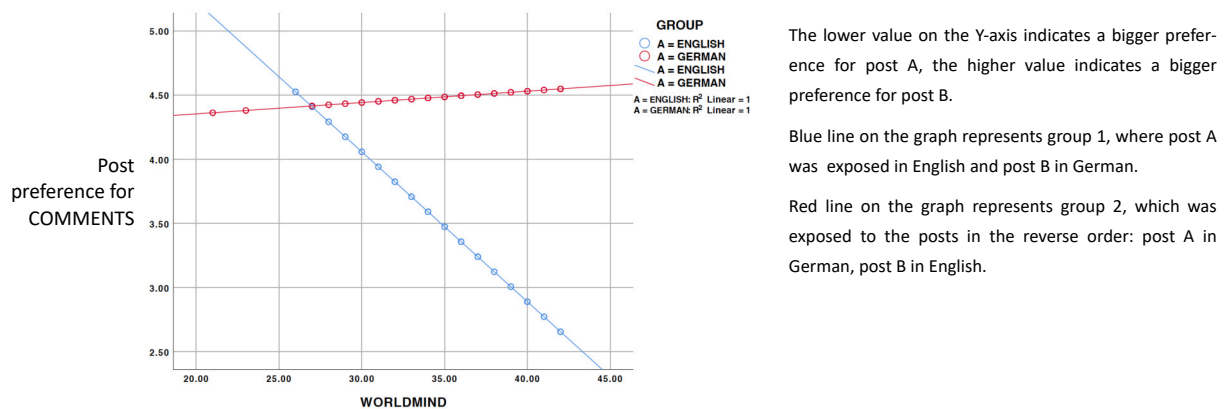

The lower value on the Y-axis indicates a bigger preference for post A, the higher value indicates a bigger preference for post B.

Blue line on the graph represents group 1, where post A was exposed in English and post B in German.

Red line on the graph represents group 2, which was exposed to the posts in the reverse order: post A in German, post B in English.

Figure 17. Interaction effects between consumer world-mindedness and two control conditions for the case of COMMENTS.

To sum up, the outcomes of MANCOVA for consumer ethnocentrism reported a significant result in the multivariate test, but in the between-subject effects test, the significant relationship was found only for comments and shares. Further, the plots of interaction effects reported the effect direction, opposite from the expected. Since the test results for Consumer Ethnocentrism supported the H3 of this study (*The effect of English (vs. German) social media posts on consumer engagement (likes/comments/shares) is moderated by a higher level of consumer ethnocentrism, so that a higher level of*

consumer ethnocentrism decreases the engagement with social media content in English versus German) only for comments and shares, as well as showed the opposite effect direction, this hypothesis is considered as partially supported.

Consumer world-mindedness covariate was also reported as the one with significant interaction in the multivariate test. In between-subject tests, consumer world-mindedness came out with the expected effect direction, but a significant effect on comments only. Hence, the H4 assuming that *the effect of English (vs. German) social media posts on consumer engagement (likes/comments/shares) is moderated by a higher level of consumer world-mindedness, so that a higher level of consumer world-mindedness increases the engagement with social media content in English versus German*) can be also supported only partially.

Table 3 displays all covariates that were tested as significant in this study, with the effect sizes and interaction directions.

Moderating effect	Engagement metric	Effect size	Effect direction
Associations with English advertising: Rationality and Objectivity	Likes	$\eta^2 = 0.015$	**Positive.** The higher the level of association - the more engagement a post in English gets.
	Comments	$\eta^2 = 0.025$	
	Shares	$\eta^2 = 0.025$	
Feelings about English advertising: Neutral	Likes	$\eta^2 = 0.011$	**Negative.** The higher the level of neutral feeling - the less engagement a post in English gets: interaction lines end at the neutral point of post preference.
	Comments	$\eta^2 = 0.022$	
	Shares	$\eta^2 = 0.010$	
Feelings about English advertising: Negative	Likes	$\eta^2 = 0.012$	**Positive.** The higher the level of negative feeling - the more engagement a post in English gets.
	Comments	$\eta^2 = 0.044$	
	Shares	$\eta^2 = 0.044$	
Consumer Ethnocentrism	Comments	$\eta^2 = 0.028$	**Positive.** The higher the level of ethnocentrism - the more engagement a post in English gets.
	Shares	$\eta^2 = 0.016$	
Consumer World-mindedness	Comments	$\eta^2 = 0.024$	**Positive.** The higher the level of consumer world-mindedness - the more comments a post in English gets.

Table 3. Effect directions of the covariates with a significant interaction

4.2. Study 2: Real-world Experiment

As mentioned in the previous section, the Chi-square test was conducted to check for any possible association between the language of the post and the engagement intention. Firstly, the cross-tab analysis with the number of impressions (times the post was seen by users) and likes was conducted. The aggregated data from each language of the stimuli from the Instagram experiment was used for metrics. Unlike the online-experiment, the Chi-square test did not show any significant association between the language used and the number of likes given to Post A versus Post B *($\chi^2(1(N=5454)=0.26, p>.05)$.*

Thus, the author took a decision to run 5 separate tests for each of the 5 stimuli from the experiment: "Smile", "Buffalo Wings", "Lunch", "Sip", and "It is Friday" to make an attempt to find any intent association. However, even after doing so, a significant interaction was still not detected for the case of any of the stimuli: Smile *($\chi^2(1(N=1213)=0.52, p=.82)$*; Buffalo Wings *($\chi^2(1(N=939)=2.32, p=.13)$*; Lunch *($\chi^2(1(N=1295)=0.5, p=.62)$*; Sip *($\chi^2(1(N=1121)=0.5, p=.48)$*; It is Friday *($\chi^2(1(N=887)=0.53, p=.46)$*. Thus, the result of the real-world Instagram experiment does not corroborate with the result of the online experiment (as well as the answer it gave to the **first research question** of the study), and does not allow for supporting the H1 of the thesis.

Table 4 displays all hypotheses of this study and the statistical results for each of them.

H1: There is an association between the language of the post and digital customer engagement with social media posts in terms of a) likes/b) comments/c) shares	MANOVA	Fully supported	
	Chi-square (online experiment)	Fully supported	
	Chi-square (real-world experiment)	Rejected	
H2(a): The effect of English (vs. German) advertising on consumer social media engagement (likes/comments/shares) is moderated by the <u>associations with English in advertising</u>: more favorable associations towards English increase the engagement with social media content in English vs. German.	MANCOVA	Partially supported	Significant for *Rationality and Objectivity* only
H2(b): The effect of English (vs. German) advertising on consumer social media engagement (likes/comments/shares) is moderated by the <u>feelings towards English in advertising</u>: more favorable feelings towards English increase the engagement with social media content in English vs. German.	MANCOVA	Partially supported	Significant for *neutral and negative feelings* only. The effect direction is opposite from the expected
H3: The effect of English (vs. German) social media posts on consumer engagement (likes/comments/shares) is moderated by a higher level of <u>consumer ethnocentrism</u>: a higher level of consumer ethnocentrism decreases the engagement with social media content in English vs. German.	MANCOVA	Partially supported	Significant for *comments* and *shares* only. The effect direction is opposite from the expected
H4: The effect of English (vs. German) social media posts on consumer engagement (likes/comments/shares) is moderated by a higher level of <u>consumer world-mindedness</u>: a higher level of consumer world-mindedness increases the engagement with social media content in English vs. German.	MANCOVA	Partially supported	Significant for *comments* only

Table 4. Hypotheses of the study and the statistical results

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The fact that a considerable amount of people from all around the world not only uses social media platforms but also stays active in there, undeniably makes brands highly interested in consistent social media marketing activities. Trying to stay influential in that ultimately competitive digital world market, they strive to be valuable and engaging for their new and already existing customers. Given that every brand's main goal is to "hog the limelight" in the market and get more awareness and interest, there have been a number of studies carried out to understand the best practices and hints to create engaging and appealing content: different kinds of visual inputs, time of posting, places in the feed, copywriting strategies, etc. have been empirically tested already.

Due to the ongoing globalization and, consequently, international expansion of companies and franchising, a lot of marketers are often puzzled whether to "go local" in their brand communication, or "go international". A considerable amount of investigations was carried out in this area as well, however, comprehensive research that would focus primarily on content language as an appeal in social media content marketing, was missing. Hence, the main aim of this master thesis was, in essence, to contribute to the existing studies by focusing on the linguistic part of brands' communication strategies. Particularly, it tried to find a significant relationship between the use of specific language in a brand post (English or German) and organic engagement with it (likes, comments, and shares). Moreover, this study aimed to trace the possible effects of English advertising perceptions, and the levels of consumer world-mindedness or ethnocentrism on the overall engagement.

To answer the declared research questions, a causal research design was chosen, where the author decided to conduct two different experiments simultaneously (the online experiment in a form of a survey and the real-world experiment in Instagram) and, further to check whether the outcomes of both studies corroborate.

However, after the completion of the existing theoretical research part as well as conducting both experiments, the author came to the conclusion, that the outcomes of the two came out with drastically different results. All of the hypotheses tested in the online experiment were either fully or partially retained, whilst the main hypothesis tested using the real-world experiment data was rejected as there was no significant difference between the engagement with English versus German Instagram posts. Hence, it was not possible to claim the association with a higher willingness to like/comment/share the post in English or German. The specific feature of the online exper-

iment was the inability to skip the question (all participants were obliged to choose either of the two posts and also specify their preference about engagement with either of them). Unlike this, the real-world experiment was conducted as if it would be regular daily postings of a brand (no obligation to engage with content). Thus, the Instagram users who saw the particular posts considered for this study, automatically became the participants of the experiment, not being aware of it. This fact let the author observe the real behavior of the participants and analyze it: which post they want to engage with, or whether they want to engage with it at all.

One might say that for the purpose of this particular study the online experiment result is more reliable as its main aim was to understand language preferences without leaving an option not to engage at all, which lets for a better understanding of linguistic appeals. Two same posts were simply put next to each other and participants were just choosing the language they like. In the real-world experiment, however, either the Instagram algorithm might have eliminated the post from the feed of any person, or people could have been engaging (or not) with the post because of any other appeals they saw. Others may argue about the opposite of the aforementioned: the real-world experiment results are more reliable because they reflect the real behavior of digital consumers, hence accounts for the higher external validity as the participants of the study were not aware of their participation in the experiment and acted in the digital marketplace as under usual conditions.

Taking a step back and looking at the results of the online experiment, apart from the significant association between the language and engagement, the findings show a bigger average preference for English posts vs. German, even though the preferences do not go to high extremes, but rather stay in a moderate range. Indeed, the participants have knowledge of both languages: the mean value for German knowledge within the sample is 5.85 on the scale from one (low) to seven (high) and considering that the experiment was fully held in English, a good knowledge of English is also assumed. Given that both languages are known for our sample, they most likely do not see any large difference between the posts, or just slightly have any bigger preference for either English or German due to better knowledge, connection to the language, or preference for overall visual and contextual meaning. As the participants did not have options to skip the question or put a preference for both options simultaneously, this difference in language preferences might have arisen.

For a better understanding of the motivations for engaging with one or another post, all respondents of the study were asked for **language choice justification**. As men-

tioned above, a slightly bigger preference was given to English and the main reasons were both better visual looks and overall post language appeal. MANOVA test revealed a highly significant association between the post in a specific language and the justification statements: the largest effect size belongs to the choice due to the overall visual looks, and the smallest effect was created by the choice due to the better understanding of the language. Indeed, Birner (2005) concluded, that a larger appeal for English versus German in advertising might lie the way it sounds or looks like: English words are shorter, contain fewer syllables, and can deliver the main idea more shortly and concisely. This reasoning of higher preference can be also considered true for the case of this experiment. A better language understanding, however, is the statement, where the mean value was the closest to the middle in between relevance for English and German, which also can justify the fact of a roughly similar level of knowledge of both languages among the respondents.

The slightly higher preference in favor of English posts within the sample of the online experiment might also be explained by the high average level of **consumer world-mindedness** among the participants (34.64 out of 42) which would hint on the higher openness to the foreign and "other". As claimed by Cannon & Yaprak (2002), they are most likely the people, who would rather consider themselves to be "world citizens", than belonging to any specific locality. The latter goes in line with the fact, that on average, the low level of **consumer ethnocentrism** was detected among the online experiment participants (19.74 out of 42). The association tests were significant for both of the aforementioned items. However, it was concluded, that when the higher level of consumer world-mindedness indeed creates a larger willingness to engage with posts in English, the higher level of consumer ethnocentrism also shows a positive influence for the engagement with posts in English. The reason for such an outcome might lie in the fact that the majority of the experiment participants do not originate from a German-speaking country: only 34% of all respondents specified German as their mother's tongue. Nevertheless, the between-subject association tests did not show significant association for likes, comments, and shares individually (for both ethnocentrism and world-mindedness). In case of consumer ethnocentrism, a significant association was revealed for comments and shares, whilst for consumer world-mindedness - for comments only. Hence, their effect on language preferences overall is still rather questionable.

Section 4 of this thesis concluded that the outcomes of the survey fully corroborate the results of the previous studies researching the **associations and feelings about English in international advertising**. It was indicated that the majority of the confirming rates

were given to the associations with Internationalism and Standardization (that could be considered as a reflection of a high level of consumer world-mindedness and also the perception of English as a language of international communication), Future and Innovation (asserting the world globalization now and then), as well as American and English culture (because English, as any native language, above all, points on its country of origin and culture). However, the effect of neither from the aforementioned associations was confirmed as significant in the analysis of covariance tests. The only statistically significant association is Rationality and Objectivity, which showed a positive interaction effect with both control conditions in terms of Instagram post engagement. This confirms the statement concluded by Birner (2005) about the positive effect of associations with American technological breakthroughs on the perception of brand advertising held in English.

Besides, the overall **feelings about English advertising** within the population sample are reported to be mostly neutral and positive. The majority of respondents answered that it is the way to internationalize advertising (average 6.27 out of 7), that justifies the highest share of associations with Internationalism and Standardization, as well as corroborates the conclusions by Kasanga (2019), who claims that the use of English is able to create a positive and prestigious image of "globality" and "internationality" for brands. This positive feeling among the respondents is followed by the neutral statement that it does not matter too much for them (average 6.16 out of 7). As Zhiganova (2016) already concluded in her study of English advertising in Germany, due to the huge ongoing expansion of English, the respondents of her study while accepting the fact that English advertising seems more international, claimed that they did not see it as a novelty or something original in advertising anymore. And indeed, the German language did adopt some words from English, hence the speakers might already consider those as equal to existing authentic synonyms.

However, in this study the positive feelings did not show any significant effect on the post language preferences or engagement, unlike neutral and, especially negative feelings. Unexpectedly, the high level of neutral feelings about the advertising in English was moderating for the lower level of engagement with the posts, where English was used. However, according to the interaction diagram, that also did not mean the higher engagement with the posts in German, as both fit lines met and ended at the middle level of posts preferences. The conclusion is the more neutral a user feels about the English advertising, the less difference he might notice between English versus any other language in advertising. The negative feelings showed the largest effect size as a covariate in the whole study (Partial Eta Squared for comments and shares is equal to

0.044), that lets for a conclusion that negative feelings about the English advertising can significantly change the way a digital consumer engages with English content due to its effect as a predictor. The direction of an interaction effect displayed on the plot showed a positive way: the bigger the level of negative feelings towards English advertising - the larger the engagement with English posts in terms of comments and shares. Dodaro (2017) in her article, for instance, agrees that the content, which provokes some emotional response (no matter positive or negative), can be a trigger for engagement. Jones (2012) also confirms that emotions play a significant role for content to go viral (where negative emotions are considered as mostly reacted to and shared).

Generally speaking, this study aimed to ease the "dilemma" of marketers in Vienna whether to stick to German, the local language, in their Instagram brand communication, or use English, more "international" one in order to bring more value to the content, reach more international audience, and get more engagement from it. In terms of social media appeals research, the majority of existing studies primarily focused on the number of likes, comments, and shares. On the surface, the higher number for the aforementioned metrics has always been an ultimate KPI for all content marketers, also been often positioned as the main measure of social media marketing effectiveness.

However, the question that currently stays under discussion within content marketing research is whether the success in terms of high social media engagement necessarily equals a bigger actual success of a brand overall, i.e. the success of image out of the digital world? Should the "vanity metrics" such as impressions, likes, comments, shares, followers, time on site, bounce rate, etc. (Hochuli, 2020) really matter to marketers as much as they do now?

Hochuli (2020) in his article for Content Marketing Institute claims that all those engagement numbers do have a lot of meaning and importance until one tries to put them into correlation with the number of items or services sold. Also, these metrics can barely be used as numbers proving the actual value that social media marketing strategy brings: "the sheen on these numbers fades when you use them to explain important business outcomes like ROI or customer lifetime value (CLTV)" (Hochuli, 2020). Nevertheless, that also does not mean that the "vanity metrics" do not have to be considered at all: Harris (2020) asserts, that they need to serve "as a means, not as an end goal" of a marketing strategy. This suggests, that the impressions-engagement values work as a tool of understanding the audience and the market, where the specific product needs to be communicated, as well as a means for recognizing their values and in-

terests. "The purpose of a vanity/optimization metric is to help optimize your content for your target audience on a specific channel."(Hochuli, 2020).

Indeed, due to the large expansion and popularity of social media, digital consumers are overwhelmed with the amount of content they see every day, thus the competition among the brands, which are trying to outperform one another, grows with geometric progression (Katinas, 2019). Hence, the biggest emphasis needs to be done not on getting more engagement, followers and reach, but on bringing value to customers: educating, not selling; getting organic impressions instead of paid reach; don't get more audience, but start to "own it" (Katinas, 2019; Vaynerchuk, 2013). Current social media trends do not indicate the biggest appeal for a specific kind of picture, text, video or (in case of this study), the language, but ultimately for the message the brand delivers in that content, as well as the overall value a brand brings to digital consumers. This fact makes people stick to a brand, and simultaneously lets a brand "own" their audience and sell with the image the brand possesses, but not with a more vivid/loud/expensive advertising or a commercial (Katinas, 2019; Vaynerchuk, 2013).

Given the results of this study, where in an online experiment (survey) all of the covariates that could possibly influence the engagement with the posts in either of the languages, have a significant interaction, but only a low effect size; and in a real-world experiment, which reported a non-significant result at all, the aforementioned point might be also applied as a fair explanation for the obtained results. The visual looks of the content do not matter too much anymore: what is important is how much value the content message brings to an existing or a potential consumer. Nevertheless, the question about which of the two experiment outcomes from this study can be considered to be of higher precision and validity still stays up to further discussion and research.

6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

6.1. Contribution to knowledge in the field

Social media advertising is a fairly new area for scientific research and therefore is currently an extremely popular subject for investigation. As mentioned in the introductory part, a considerable amount of scientific studies has already been conducted in this field. Those, however, mostly focused on the social media content appeals: visual and contextual. Very rarely were the regular marketing studies brought into the social media context. Therefore, since the researches alike have never been conducted before, this thesis aimed to do so and fill some gaps in digital marketing knowledge.

Firstly, the study brought up the dilemma of standardization vs. localization in advertising and put the language, the main part of it, under the social media marketing experiment. The current research came up with the conclusion, that for the case of Vienna, English, as a standardization language, might be, most likely, more appealing in advertising for a target audience, than a local German as the former language is more preferred overall, as well as looks better on the posts.

Secondly, taking the examples of studies about perceptions of English in advertising, this research made an attempt to link it to social media advertising experiment and see if any possible effects are created by different perceptions and feelings. Apart from this, this study fully confirmed the main associations and feelings about English, reported in other studies.

Last, but not least, following the existing research that focused on consumer ethnocentrism and consumer world-mindedness effects on advertising appeals, this master thesis put these two items in the linguistic context of social media content marketing and checked how their higher or lower level might affect the overall post language preference (international English vs. local German).

6.2. Implications for relevant stakeholders

The main goal of this study was to help local marketers find a solution to the dilemma of what language to use in their brands' social media communication activities. One of the first conclusions this research drew was that consumers are feel-

ing mostly positive or neutral about the use of English, or even prefer English to German when they are to choose between the languages. If brands are franchises, this fact might hint them on the use of standardization strategy in social media brand communication, and if the brand is local, English might serve as a means of getting more reach. Also, in the case of Vienna as a touristic city, English use can help to be more international and tourist-friendly.

An important point to understand, that even though the majority of the sample had a positive or neutral feeling about the English advertising, and only a very small amount felt negative, the latter feeling has the biggest effect size among all moderators in this study. Nevertheless, even though the negative feeling is reported to have a strong positive effect on engagement, it is not suggested to use this strategy for social media content marketing purposes. Making consumers feel negative about the message the brand tries to deliver will most likely not bring any benefits for the overall brand image.

This study also gives suggestions for further managerial implications in social media content marketing. For instance, companies that specialize in technology and scientific advances might want to consider the positive effect of an English advertising association with Rationality and Objectivity and change their social media brand communication to English in order to possibly get more appeal and engagement. Moreover, according to the respondents of the online experiment, the fact that posts in English look better overall creates the most effect on the engagement with them. Hence, given the age range of the sample (18-36, i.e. "millennials"), Viennese marketers, targeted on a local audience of the same age also can draw conclusions about the average high level of consumer world-mindedness their target audience might have, as well as the way this audience perceives the content in English and feels about it.

7. LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Despite the contribution this study makes to the existing research, there are some limiting factors that made some items quite challenging to investigate more precisely (or impossible at all). First and foremost, the major limitation of this study is a little sample size. The samples for both experiments are rather not sufficient for 100% certain generalizing the results on the whole population of Vienna. The sample size for the online experiment is only 88 respondents with the age ranging from 18 to 36, therefore, for further research in this topic a larger and more heterogeneous sample definitely needs to be created.

Secondly, the effect of control variables was measured given the outcomes of the online experiment, where respondents needed to rate the extent to which they will be willing to like, comment or share one or another post (the fictitious Instagram post). The answer to those questions was obligatory. However, in a real-life situation, there is also an option not to engage with the post at all and ignore it in the Instagram feed, that was the case in the real-world experiment, where no significant difference was revealed. In addition, the survey design setting does not necessarily reflect precisely the real behavior or opinion of a respondent, when the field experiment will do it with larger precision.

Additional limitation created by the experiment sample is the inability to fully understand how the level of consumer ethnocentrism influences the language appeals. As this study focused only on English and German, the percentages of participants indicating these languages as native are only 19% and 34% respectively. The rest of the respondents indicated their native language other than those above. Therefore, any further research study that will aim to investigate the effect of consumer ethnocentrism on the language appeals needs to make sure the target sample includes exclusively the people, originating from the country, where the languages under investigation are native.

The real-world experiment itself also has its own validity threats. As claimed by Mertler (2019), such experimental studies even though allowing to get some conclusions, "do not control for all extraneous and influential variables; therefore, researchers cannot completely rule out some alternative explanations for the results they may obtain" (p. 132). Besides, even though the majority of followers of TGI Fridays Vienna Instagram profile might have Vienna as their primary location, Instagram does not allow to hide posts from the other users, who do not belong to the "target research group", hence,

everyone can see the content (influences the number of impressions) and eventually engage with it. This could put the external validity of the experiment outcomes under question. Besides, there are many so-called "bots" that use the special apps that will automatically like or comment on the posts with a particular hashtag or from a particular location, no matter what kind of content it is. Those cannot be excluded from the posts exposure as well.

Provided that this thesis faced some challenges to fully investigate the topic and answer the research questions with 100% certainty, the aims and outcomes of this study might be of interest for further studies and exploration. For instance, one of the focus points of this research was the moderating effect of the perceptions of English advertising on engagement with social media content in English. However, a lot of brands that originate from English-speaking countries, whilst being aware of international English fluency, use their native language for brand communication and brand-building strategy. The brands alike do not change their messages according to the market, but rather are "real" and "authentic" everywhere they start running their operation. This creates the notion of brand authenticity. In fact, the case of TGI Fridays used in the real-world experiment is exactly the example of such. It operates all around the world as an American restaurant, and shares the American culture and values.

Brand authenticity is scientifically proven to have a highly positive appeal towards a brand image perception and loyalty (Tran, et.al., 2020; Hernandez-Fernandez & Lewis, 2019). However, the study that would merely focus on the effect of authenticity on the perceptions of English versus local language in social media communication of American/English brands or, like in this study, the engagement with the posts in English versus posts in a local language, is missing.

In addition to this, given that this study was geographically limited to one city, more specifically, one American franchised restaurant, located in Vienna, more generalizable research for the language appeals is needed. Namely, for a more comprehensive research, it is crucial that more heterogeneous cases are coming under investigation: not only international franchisees originating from different countries, but also local brands or businesses that are located in Vienna. To create more complete and precise picture of differences in engagement with social media posts in English and German for the case of Vienna, it is suggested to run targeted paid advertisement limited geographically. In this way, the main limitation of this study will be solved and the sample will more likely consist of the audience, that is aimed to be reached for the purposes of the overall research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. The survey used for the online experiment.

a) Online experiment stimuli

Post A

Post B

Post A

Post B

1. How much do you agree with the following statements?
Give a rating from 1 to 7 (1-
strongly disagree – 7-strongly agree)

	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Even if it would cost more in a long-run, I would rather buy locally made products.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
A real patriot should always buy locally-made products.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The local products should rather be purchased to prevent letting foreign countries get better off.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
There is nothing like products from your own country.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Countries should not buy foreign products, because this hurts local business and causes unemployment.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
All people should always buy locally-made products instead of imports.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

2. How much do you agree with the following statements?
Give a rating from 1 to 7 (1strongly disagree – 7-strongly agree)

	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When a foreign friend suggests me to try a product from his culture, I try it without any prejudice.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Even when consuming a particular foreign product does not fit the norms and values of my country I still try it.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Even if I don't know how a specific foreign brand will perform beforehand, I still try it.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Even though I normally would buy Austrian (or other) wine, if I am going to Spain, I would be willing to try local wine.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Even though I might have a favourite drink, whenever I am going abroad, I am trying the local alternative.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Even if I prefer a specific kind of food, while going to another country, I would like to try local cuisine.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

1. Which associations do advertisements in English create to you? (rate 1-7 where 1 is strongly disagree and 7 is strongly agree)

	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree
	1 2 3 4 5	6 7
Rationality and Objectivity (Scientific appeal)	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○
American or English Culture	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○
Sophistication (Taste, Style, Elegance)	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○
Internationalism and Standartization	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○
Physical Fitness	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○
Quality and Safety	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○
Future and Innovation	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○

2. How do you feel about the trend of using English in advertising?

	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree
	1 2 3 4 5	6 7
It is the way to internationalize advertising.	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○
It does not matter too much for me.	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○
It is simply an advertising strategy and is not a big deal.	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○
It is an international trend and should be allowed.	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○
It represents the idealization of foreign things, I find it a bad trend.	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○

b) The full survey

< five stimuli from Appendix (a) >

1. Which Instagram post would you rather like?

○ Post A
○ Post B

2. Which Instagram post of the two would you rather …
Please indicate which of the following statements is more true for post A in relation to post B.

	A	B
...like?	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
...comment?	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
...share?	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	

3. What language was used in post A?

[Please choose] ▽

4. What language was used in post B?

[Please choose] ▽

Please justify your choice:
Please indicate which of the following statements is more true for post A in relation to post B.

	A	B
It looks better to me overall	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
The message is more understandable to me	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
I like the language of the post more	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	

(Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are the same for all 5 stimuli)

IG CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT: DOES THE LANGUAGE MATTER?

1. What is your native language?
Please type your native language below

Do you currently live in Vienna?

Yes ⦿

No ◯

	Not at all					Very well	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To what extent do you understand German?	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿

Sample demographics

	Not familiar at all					Extremely familiar	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
How familiar are you with Instagram?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

1. How old are you?
Please type your age below

What is your gender?

[Please choose] ◌

Which of the following options describes your highest completed education?

[Please choose] ◌

Appendix B: Real-world experiment posting schedule and stimuli

Post "SMILE" (ENG): Posted 13.03.2020

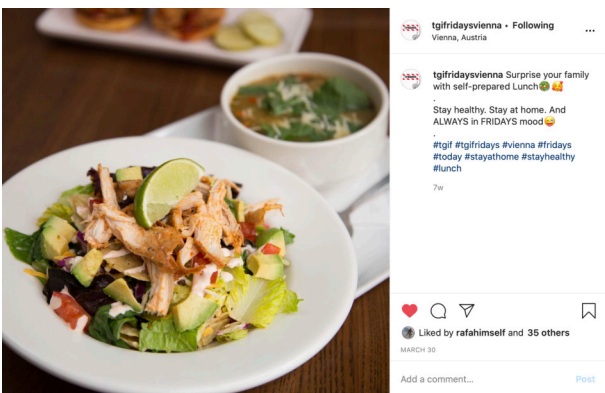Post "SMILE" (GER): Posted 10.04.2020
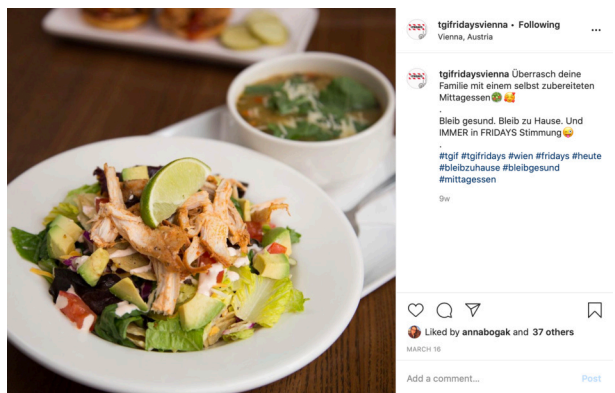

Post "BUFFALO WINGS" (ENG): Posted 14.03.2020

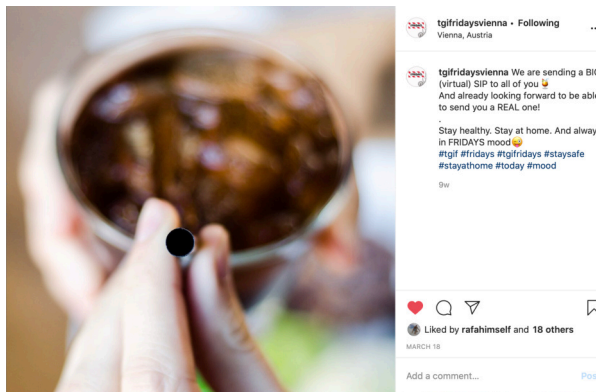Post "BUFFALO WINGS" (GER): Posted 18.04.2020
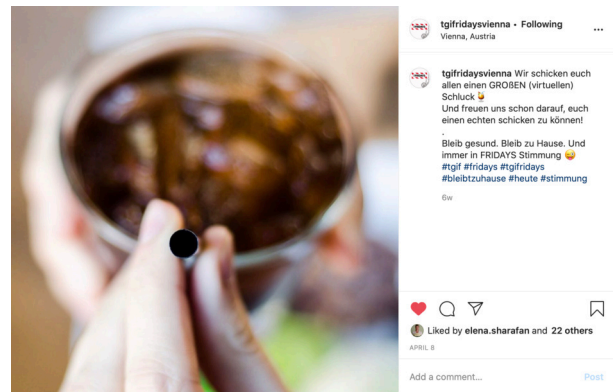

Post "LUNCH" (ENG): Posted 30.03.2020

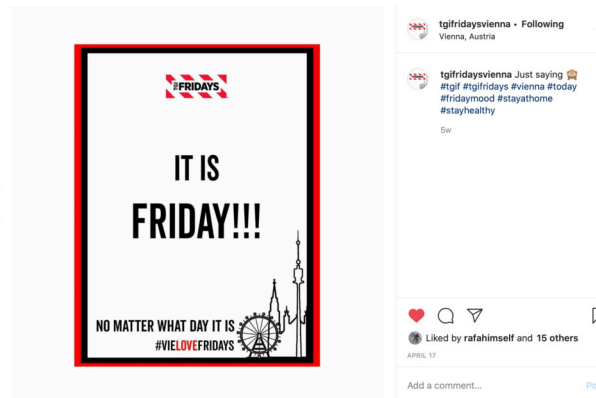Post "LUNCH" (GER): Posted 16.03.2020

Post "SIP" (ENG): Posted 18.03.2020

Post "SIP" (GER): Posted 8.04.2020

Post "FRIDAY" (ENG): Posted 17.04.2020

Post "FRIDAY" (GER): Posted 20.03.2020