Brands in books: The effects of brand placement in written narratives

Yana R. Avramova

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Promotoren: Prof. Dr. Nathalie Dens  
Prof. Dr. Patrick De Pelsmacker
Doctoral Jury

**Prof. Dr. Nathalie Dens** (promotor)
University of Antwerp

**Prof. Dr. Patrick De Pelsmacker** (promotor)
University of Antwerp

**Prof. Dr. Anouk Lievens** (chair)
University of Antwerp

**Prof. Dr. Mario Pandelaere**
Virginia Tech University

**Prof. Dr. Eva Van Reijmersdal**
University of Amsterdam

**Prof. Dr. Ivar Vermeulen**
Free University Amsterdam

**Prof. Dr. Tina Tessitore**
IESEG School of Management
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We tend to thank people once things are done, when we are safe on the other side, looking back. Although I also followed this implicit rule, I realize that I could have – and maybe should have – written my acknowledgments earlier, on numerous occasions. The end result is not what motivates or justifies this particular section of the book you are reading. The process is. And a long process it was.

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People think that stories are shaped by people. In fact, it's the other way around.
― Terry Pratchett

A book is more than a verbal structure or series of verbal structures; it is the dialogue it establishes with its reader and the intonation it imposes upon his voice and the changing and durable images it leaves in his memory. A book is not an isolated being: it is a relationship, an axis of innumerable relationships.
― Jorge Luis Borges

CONTEXT AND RELEVANCE

Research in communication has demonstrated that literary narratives are a powerful persuasion tool. It has been shown that exposure to fictional works may affect attitudes towards social groups (e.g., Prentice, Gerrig, and Bailis, 1997), opinions on social issues (e.g., Green and Brock, 2000), behavioral intentions (e.g., Dal Cin et al., 2007), and even a reader’s temporary self-concept (e.g., Richter et al., 2014). And yet, although the evidence is convincing that stories shape people, some aspects of this influence are still largely understudied. Specifically, their power to shift readers’ attitudes towards the depicted products and brand names – which are omnipresent in literature (e.g., Brown, 1995, 2015) – still needs to be assessed.

Notably, Friedman (1985) conducted a longitudinal content analysis of brand names featured in bestselling US novels in the post-war era (1946-1975), which revealed that both the number and the variety of brands in popular literature rose exponentially over the period he studied, while references to generic products did not. Converging evidence comes from a content analysis of two more recent novels, namely Scrupules (1987) by Judith Krantz and American Psycho (1991) by Bret Easton Ellis (Brown, 1995). It found that, even if the latter novel takes brand name-dropping to the extreme (and could thus be an outlier), the former mentioned 282 different brand names, appearing 582 times in total, or 33.6 times per 10,000 words – a pattern that closely mirrors the one reported earlier by Friedman (1985), and thus more or less representative for popular fiction.

Friedman (1985) eloquently called the practice “word-of-author advertising”. He used the term to refer to both sponsored and unsponsored brand mentions, noting that the latter type is much more common (at least in the sample of novels he studied). Indeed, across literary genres, branded products are frequently used by writers to depict a specific historical or social context, to create a certain atmosphere, to increase verisimilitude, or to aid characterization (Brennan and
McCalman, 2011; Brown, 1995; Friedman, 1985; Karrh, 1998), rather than for commercial purposes. Nevertheless, Friedman (1985), who also studied the incidence of brand names in popular music, Broadway plays, and newspapers (see Friedman, 1992, for a review), was among the first to call for systematic empirical research on how the emerging practice of sponsored word-of-author advertising in books affects consumers. Today, there are a number of indications that brand placement – the purposeful incorporation of brands into editorial content (Karrh, 1998; Russell and Belch, 2005; Van Reijmersdal, Neijens, and Smit, 2009), which has been traditionally associated with film and TV, and more recently with video and computer games, song lyrics, and music videos – is rapidly gaining ground in the realm of books. Academic research, however, seems to be lagging behind, with only five published papers on the subject. To narrow the gap in current knowledge, the present dissertation systematically investigates brand placement effects in fictional narratives. Specifically, in a series of studies, reported in the five empirical chapters, we manipulate key brand and placement execution characteristics, measure individual difference variables, as well as different types of responses to the placements, and test the interplay of these factors on consumers’ brand attitudes.

In the following section, a number of examples of books featuring sponsored brand placement are described, as well as some anecdotal evidence on authors’, publishers’, advertisers’, and brand placement experts’ views on the practice, as featured in recent publications. While these may not be representative of views at large, they seem to capture the motives and contemplations, as well as the joys and frustrations, that different stakeholders experience with regard to this marketing practice.

**Reality bites: Brands in books and emerging views on sponsored placements**

A number of authors have revealed that they have been approached by, or have themselves approached, companies to strike a deal for integrating certain brands in their work. One of the first and best known cases is that of Fay Weldon, who was commissioned by Bulgari to write a novel that features the name of the jewelry designer. The result, *The Bulgari Connection* (2001), features the brand more than 30 times (Arnold, 2001). Similarly, William Boyd was paid (reportedly a 6-digit figure) to write a short-story that mentions the automobile brand Land Rover; *The Vanishing Game* (2014) is freely available online, with optional audiovisual features
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(Flood, 2014). Further, Carole Matthews’ book The Sweetest Taboo (2004) was sponsored by Ford (Jacobs, 2012), while Bill Fitzhugh signed a deal with Seagram, inserting references to their alcohol products in his novel Cross-dressing in return for free publicity for his book (Fitzhugh, 2000). Finally, Cumberland Packaging Corporation, the producer of artificial sweetener Sweet’N Low has allegedly invested $1.3 million in Hillary Carlip’s e-book Find Me I’m Yours (2014), which mentions the product a number of times (Alter, 2014a). In fact, Sweet’N Low seems to have a pretty prominent role in the story, as the protagonist not only paints her nails in tone with the product’s pink packaging, but also defends its safety (which she said she researched online) when another character questions its effects on health (Alter, 2014a):

“They fed lab rats twenty-five hundred packets of Sweet’N Low a day ... And still the F.D.A. or E.P.A., or whatevs agency, couldn’t connect the dots from any kind of cancer in humans to my party in a packet.”

The examples above raise the question of how these deals are perceived by the parties involved, and how they take shape in practice. Interestingly, despite the widespread belief (or hope) that literature may be free from commercial influences, and thus an unlikely medium for brand placement (see Friedman, 1985), authors, publishers, and advertisers seem to agree that works of fiction represent a promising promotional platform and the practice of brand placement in books – a viable business model: one that offers companies a unique way to connect to their potential customers, and authors – a chance to reach a larger audience for their work and/or to secure direct financial profit (e.g., Alter, 2014a; Fitzhugh, 2001; Flood, 2014; Jacobs, 2012).

Brown (2015) notes that as a result of various developments (e.g., growing financial pressure, changing management attitudes, the disruptive influence of new technologies), the art field is becoming increasingly receptive to “marketing, branding, logos, slogans, and the once-denigrated denizens of business schools” (p.5). In line with this, a number of authors have expressed their openness to the prospect of inserting a brand name in their work in return for payment or free publicity. For instance, Matthew Dicks (2010) commented on his blog that although he had not been sponsored by Subaru or Smucker’s to insert their names in his novels Something Missing and Unexpectedly, Milo, respectively, he sees nothing wrong with this idea and wouldn’t reject payment after the fact. In his words:
“Consider this: I am writing *Unexpectedly, Milo*. I decide that one of Milo’s compulsions will be the need to open jars of jelly in order to release the pressurized seals on the lid. I grew up eating Smucker's grape jelly, so this is the brand that I am inclined to use, but I contact my agent and inform her that jelly will be playing an important role in my next book, appearing multiple times and always in a favorable light. [...] A brand of jelly was predestined to appear in *Unexpectedly, Milo*, and if choice of brand name is arbitrary, why not make some money in the process?"

Bill Fitzhugh (2001), who made a deal with Seagram’s (i.e., integrated their products in return for free publicity), explains his rationale in the following way:

“For reasons of artistic integrity and pure laziness I wanted a product that was already in the book. I felt this strategy would shield me from accusations of writing to accommodate a "sponsor", while simultaneously saving me the trouble of writing any new pages. The novel doesn't feature anyone enjoying fast food or applying cosmetics, but there were a few scenes involving cocktails. Then another idea hit me. I had sold the book's film rights to Universal Studios. Universal (at the time) was owned by Seagram’s. Two calls resulted in a deal wherein I would replace references to generic drinks with various Seagram’s products.”

Some authors are not just accepting of, but even thrilled by such a possibility. For instance, William Boyd, who wrote a short-story prominently featuring Land Rover, described the deal in these terms:

"They said they wanted an adventure and they said, 'Somewhere in this adventure it would be good if a Land Rover appeared.' But it was left entirely to me the extent I concentrated on that or made it fleeting and passing." [...] "I invented the story, I invented the characters, I invented the locations.” (Italie, 2014)

He further commented in an interview with the New York Times:

“I have no idea how I’ll be viewed - and I don’t really care, to be honest. It was a most intriguing job to be asked to do - I would recommend it to any novelist, if they got the chance. [...] Novelists have always written to commission (e.g., Charles Dickens). If I was approached to write a Batman movie I would assume it would have to feature Batman. There’s really no difference in this case.” (Flood, 2014).

Similarly, Fay Weldon mocked the literary elite’s outcry upon publishing her novel, commissioned by Bulgari (Flood, 2014; Kennedy, 2001):

“When the approach came through I thought, oh no, dear me, I am a literary author. You can’t do this kind of thing; my name will be mud forever. But after a while I thought, I don’t care. Let it be mud. They never give me the Booker prize anyway.”
On the other hand, companies seem to take an active role themselves, recognizing the benefits of such organic ways of integrating their brand within works of fiction. For instance, the president and chief executive of Cumberland Packing, who invested heavily in the e-book *Find Me I’m Yours*, reportedly said:

“It seemed like a more modern version of product placement on TV,” he said. “They’re cleverly and carefully having a product written into the story, but doing it in a way that didn’t tarnish the integrity of the piece.” (Flood, 2014)

On a similar note, appliance maker Electrolux commissioned a book that tells the story of a man who has to deal with the challenges of housekeeping after splitting with his girlfriend. *Men in Aprons*, on sale from the company’s own website, features the brand name on the cover and includes housekeeping tips using generic mentions of appliances (that Electrolux sells) (Petrecca, 2006). Electrolux spokesman describes the company’s objectives:

"Single men are usually pretty hard to reach through traditional advertising and PR techniques," [...] "You wouldn't expect them to read Good Housekeeping. So we said, 'Why don't we create a story that is fun and hip that they would buy, or have their frustrated mothers or girlfriends give to them as a present?’”

Thus, anecdotal evidence suggests that the views of authors and advertisers seem to converge with regard to the acceptability and persuasive potential of brand placements in books. What is more, brand placement experts are also coming to recognize these developments and have recently made the first steps into exploiting this potentially profitable niche. Specifically, Frank Zazza, a branded entertainment veteran responsible for integrating (among others) Reese’s Pieces into the 1982 movie *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* – one of the first, and arguably most successful, brand placements in film (see e.g., Russell and Belch, 2005) – recently founded a company called Brands In Books (http://www.brandsinbooks.com/). Recognizing the great potential of brand integration in books, Zazza reportedly developed “brand fingerprinting” – a patent-pending methodology where “the brand’s fingerprint is matched to the character’s fingerprint” (Mandese, 2016). Zazza’s business model is based on revenue-sharing (i.e., the author getting 50%, the publisher 25% and Brands In Books 25%) and cost-per-view pricing (where both the number of books sold and the level of plot connection of the brand placement are taken into account). The
company’s website states to “match touchpoints of your brand's DNA with those of characters from books to deliver unparalleled accuracy that will support and resonate with your specific target audience”, and to thus create “a new revenue stream for authors and publishers who are looking to work with global brands to help promote and merchandise their novel” (http://www.brandsinbooks.com/).

In sum, the time seems ripe for more brand placements in books. Moreover, recent survey data from the US shows that 27% of respondents aged 15-20 selected reading as their favorite spare-time activity, second only to listening to music (37%), and thus topping other media such as TV (23%), social media (17%), and online games (16%; Nielsen 2015). Data from the publishing industry also shows that the book market is thriving (its size estimated at $151 billion worldwide and at 60$ in the US), and projected to grow (Author Earnings, 2016; Bowker, 2014; U.S. Department of Commerce, 2015; Wischenbart, 2014).

And yet, despite these encouraging statistics, a potential hurdle for (some) practitioners that consider including brand placement in books in their marketing service portfolio could be that there is very little empirical evidence on how this is best done, that is how key placement execution factors affect target brand outcomes. From a theoretical perspective, too, advancing current knowledge on how placements in text are processed and what their implications are for brand responses, such as brand attitude, is critical. In the next section, prior research on brand placement in text is reviewed, followed by a description of the main objectives of the present doctoral project.

**PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON BRAND PLACEMENT EFFECTS IN WRITTEN NARRATIVES**

In light of Friedman’s findings, showing that brands abound in works of literature, as well as evidence for the impact of brand placement on brand recall, attitude, and choice in the context of other media (see Van Reijmersdal et al., 2009, for a review), it is not surprising that a number of scholars have called for systematic research on how exposure to brands in books affects consumers (e.g., Bhatnagar, Aksoy, and Malkoc, 2004; Brennan, 2008; Brennan and McCalman, 2011; Friedman, 1985). As already noted above, however, only a few researchers have so far answered this call. Importantly, two of the five published papers study the effects of placements
on memory (one of them using a textbook passage, rather than a work of fiction), leaving just three articles (one of which published last year) that focus on the impact of placements on brand evaluation – the outcome of interest in the present dissertation.

First, Brennan (2008) studied the generation effect, that is the finding that omitting letters from a word, which makes one “fill in the blanks”, may enhance recall for the word (Slamecka and Graf, 1978; Steffens and Erdfelder, 1998). Thus, Brennan tested whether brand recall will be enhanced if a brand name in a novel is fragmented (e.g., Pep_ _, instead of Pepsi), and showed that mild brand name fragmentation enhanced recall relative to both complete presentation and severe fragmentation. In another study on brand memory – this time using passages from a marketing textbook (which is arguably not a work of fiction), Brennan and McCalman (2011) tested the impact of brand name repetition on brand memory. They found that brand repetition in a passage enhanced recall and recognition of familiar, but not unfamiliar, brands.

In the first investigation of the impact of brand placement on brand attitude, Bhatnagar and Wan (2011) demonstrated that readers’ immersion into the story (induced experimentally by asking half of the participants to take the perspective of the protagonist) moderated the impact of perceived self-character similarity on brand attitudes: In the immersion conditions, a dissimilar protagonist was associated with higher brand evaluations than a similar protagonist. The authors argued that when similarity with the character is perceived to be high, processing of the story is more fluent and less effortful, thereby leaving more cognitive resources to elaborate on the brand integration and consider tactic-inappropriateness. In contrast, when similarity is low, immersion in the story is supposedly more taxing, thereby leaving less resources for brand elaboration and enhancing brand evaluations.

Further, Olsen and Lanseng (2012) used an excerpt from American Psycho (1991) by Bret Easton Ellis to systematically manipulate reader involvement (by warning half of the participants that they will be later asked detailed questions about the text) and plot connection (by creating two versions of the passage that varied in the degree to which the brand was relevant to the plot). They demonstrated that in the high-involvement conditions, highly plot-integrated brands were evaluated more positively than lowly plot-integrated brands, whereas no differences emerged in the low-involvement conditions.
Finally, Storm and Stoller (2015) studied the effects of brand name repetition in short narrative texts and found that higher placement frequency enhanced purchase intentions relative to both the lower placement frequency and control (no placement) conditions. Moreover, they showed that these effects were stronger for unfamiliar than for familiar brands. Most notably, they were obtained even when participants were forewarned about the potentially biasing impact of product placement, suggesting that readers may not be able (or willing) to (sufficiently) “correct” for the placements’ influence, even when they are aware of it.

In sum, previous research provides initial evidence that brand placements in fictional texts influence readers’ brand attitudes and that both placement execution characteristics (e.g., placement frequency, connection to the plot) and reader-related factors (e.g., involvement) may play a role in determining the direction or magnitude of these effects. And yet, there are many questions that still await an answer.

**CORE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT DISSERTATION**

The main objective of this dissertation is to advance extant knowledge on how exposure to brand placements in written narratives influences brand evaluation. To this end, it investigates the impact of factors that have been identified in prior research on placement effects in audiovisual media (e.g., placement repetition and modality; see e.g., Balasubramanian et al., 2006; Bhatnagar et al., 2004; Van Reijmersdal et al., 2009; Williams et al., 2011, for reviews), but it also explores the role of variables that have not yet been studied with relation to brand placement in any medium (e.g., stylistic devices, text language, narrative transportation, individual differences in need for cognition). Critically, it tests the interactive effects of these factors, as well as the mediating role of different types of consumer responses to the placements.

A fundamental factor that has taken center stage in much past research on brand placement in audiovisual media is placement prominence, that is the degree to which a placed brand is vivid or attention-grabbing. On the one hand, evidence suggests that high placement prominence – albeit benefitting brand memory – is detrimental to brand evaluation (e.g., Cowley and Barron, 2008; Dens et al., 2012; Law and Braun, 2000; Russell, 2002; Van Reijmersdal, 2009). The established explanation for this pattern (although it has only rarely been directly tested) is that highly
prominent placements activate consumers’ persuasion knowledge (Campbell and Kirmani, 2000; Friestad and Wright, 1994): Consumers recognize the integrations as a form of advertising and thus engage in critical processing of the placements in an attempt to resist the (perceived) persuasion attempt. This in turn negatively affects brand attitude. On the other hand, the positive effects of placement exposure have been attributed to more implicit processes, such as mere exposure, where consumers develop a more positive attitude towards the brand without explicit recall of exposure to the placements (e.g., Matthes et al., 2007; Matthes et al., 2012; Van Reijmersdal, Neijens, and Smith, 2007).

Importantly, however, a number of scholars have shown that mere exposure effects are not necessarily eliminated, but may instead be enhanced by recognition of previously presented stimuli (e.g., Stafford and Grimes, 2012; Sawyer, 1981; Wang and Chang, 2004; Yagi, Ikoma, and Kikuchi, 2009). In line with this, some studies have demonstrated that placement prominence may actually enhance brand evaluations (e.g., Van Vaerenbergh et al., 2011) and that different elements of prominence (such as placement frequency and modality, see below) exert an interactive, rather than additive, impact on brand attitudes (Homer, 2009; Matthes et al., 2012). Further, the direction of prominence effects seems to depend on other variables, such as the extent to which the brand is connected to the plot (Russell, 2002), the level of viewer involvement with the program (Cowley and Barron, 2008; Matthes et al., 2007), individual differences in cognitive style (i.e., field-dependence; Matthes et al., 2011), and perceived appropriateness of marketing tactics and brand familiarity (Wei, Fischer, and Main, 2008).

Given the centrality of the construct, as well as the contradictory findings of past research, the present dissertation embarks to explore the complex nature of prominence in the context of written text. More specifically, it investigates 1) if key placement execution characteristics (i.e., placement frequency and placement modality) that have been shown to affect prominence in audiovisual media, exhibit similar effects in the context of fictional narratives; and 2) if these placement factors interact with brand-related (i.e., brand familiarity), text-related (i.e., text language), and reader-related variables (i.e., level of transportation into the story; individual differences in need for cognition), which have been shown to influence processing style, to ultimately influence brand attitude. The fundamental idea, which is tested in different ways in
each of the empirical chapters, is that – rather than prominence \textit{per se} – the manner in which prominent (vs. subtle) placements are processed predicts brand evaluations. A list of the different variables studied in this dissertation is provided in Figure 1.1.

\textbf{Figure 1.1: Key variables studied in the dissertation}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Placement frequency
  \item Placement modality
  \item Speech type
  \item Brand familiarity
  \item Narrative transportation
  \item Need for cognition
  \item Text language
  \item Placement frequency
  \item Persuasion knowledge
  \item Critical processing
  \item Irritation
\end{itemize}

Placement frequency, the first placement execution characteristic that this dissertation focuses on, refers to the number of times a brand name appears within a narrative (be that audiovisual, or print; see e.g., Homer, 2009; Matthes, Schemer, and Wirth, 2007; Storm and Stoller, 2015). Inspired by Friedman’s (1985) research, showing that brand name repetition in novels is extensive, the present research explores how varying levels of brand name repetition affect brand attitude. This question is important because 1) placement repetition (either high or low) is relatively easy to implement in a text with minimal interference to the story plot, and is within the author’s control, and 2) previous research in audiovisual media has provided contradictory results with regard to its impact on brand attitude (e.g., Homer, 2009; Matthes et al., 2007; Matthes et al., 2011; Van Vaerenbergh et al., 2011). Therefore, the effects of repeated exposure to placements in text, which arguably increases placement prominence, are systematically investigated in three of the chapters in this dissertation (i.e., Chapters 2, 5, and 6). In addition, Chapter 2 investigates the moderating impact of narrative transportation (i.e., Green and Brock,
2000), chronic differences in need cognition (NFC, Cacioppo and Petty, 1982), and brand familiarity. Chapter 5 looks at whether the language of the text, in which a brand is placed, matters for how prominence affects brand attitude. Finally, Chapter 6 looks at placement modality in two different media (i.e., in text – whether the brand is featured in the narration or the dialogue; in film – whether it is visually or auditorily presented) as another element of placement prominence that may interact with repetition. These variables were chosen as potential moderators of the impact of placement repetition based on prior evidence suggesting that high (vs. low) NFC (Petty et al., 2009) and reading in a foreign (vs. native) language (e.g., Keysar, Hayakawa, and An, 2012) are associated with a more systematic processing-style, and work showing that low (vs. high) brand familiarity (e.g., Campbell and Keller, 2003) and exposure to dialogue/auditory (vs. narration/ visual) placements (e.g., Homer, 2009; Chapter 3 of this dissertation) tend to trigger greater brand elaboration.

The second placement execution variable that this dissertation examines, placement modality (or presentation mode), has been typically used to describe the sensory channel through which a brand placement is encoded in the context of audiovisual media. Thus, placements have been categorized as visual (i.e., branded product or identifier shown on screen), auditory (i.e., verbal reference to the brand name in dialogue), or audiovisual (i.e., containing both elements; e.g., Brennan and Babin, 2004; Gupta and Lord, 1998; Russell, 2002). Applying this concept to the print medium, the current research distinguishes between placements in the narration (where the narrator describes a scene or character) and placements in the dialogue (where a character makes a verbal reference to a brand). Building on prior evidence from cognitive psychology, neuroscience, and linguistics (e.g., Clark and Gerrig, 1990; Fischer and Zwaan, 2008; Drumm and Klin, 2011), it is proposed that dialogue placements are more prominent than narration placements. Chapter 3 therefore explores the effects of exposure to each type of placement on brand attitude and purchase intention, as well as the moderating role of individual differences in NFC, which are expected to influence the extent to which (prominent) placements are processed.

Taking this reasoning a step further, this dissertation also investigates the impact of placing a brand within different types of speech. Based on the premise that prominence varies along a continuum, it is suggested that, whether a brand name features within a character’s direct (“Can I
get a Coke?”) or indirect speech (He asked if he could get a Coke.) is also consequential for how it is perceived. Specifically, prior research has demonstrated that readers automatically generate an “inner voice” during silent reading (e.g., Stites, Luke, and Christianson, 2013; Zhou and Christianson, 2016), with direct speech being especially attention-grabbing and perceptually vivid, as it allows readers to directly experience the speech act, unmediated by the narrator (Clark and Gerrig, 1990; Yao et al., 2011). Furthermore, information conveyed via direct (vs. indirect) speech tends to be better remembered and more extensively elaborated (Eerland, Engelen, and Zwaan, 2013). In light of these findings, the present dissertation posits that placements in the direct speech of a narrative will be more prominent than placements in the indirect speech. Again, it is proposed that a variable that affects the extent of elaboration of the placed brand, namely brand familiarity, will interact with type of speech to influence brand evaluation.

In addition to testing the impact of placement modality and frequency separately, the present dissertation also sets to explore their interactive effects. Given that placement frequency may affect the extent to which a placement is processed (i.e., with higher frequency increasing the likelihood for deeper elaboration; e.g., Campbell and Keller, 2003; Homer, 2009), the idea is, once again, that the effects of placement modality on brand evaluation depend on the extent of elaboration. The last chapter thus looks at how placement frequency moderates the impact of modality in written text, and also tests if the effects replicate in the context of film. To this end, modality in text (i.e., narration vs. dialogue placements) and in film (i.e., visual vs. auditory placements) is manipulated within the same study using the same narrative content (story/script), target brand, and dependent measures. For the purposes of this study, a short film was produced that adopts Russell’s (2002) theater methodology. That is, several different versions of the placement scenes were shot that manipulated placement modality and frequency in a manner that closely matches the manipulations in the written text. This allows comparing the impact of different (yet conceptually similar) operationalizations of modality across media, as well as disentangling the effects of modality and frequency that have sometimes been confounded in previous research (e.g. Cowley and Barron, 2008; Dens et al., 2012).

In addition to studying how placement frequency and placement modality – two fundamental dimensions of placement prominence – affect brand evaluations as a function of a number of
important moderators, this dissertation also addresses a couple of other important research questions. First, given the lack of evidence for the long-term impact of the practice in any medium, a key objective of the present work is to investigate if brand placement effects in written narrative persist over time. To this end, Chapter 3 tests if the interactive impact of placement modality and readers’ need for cognition on brand attitude and purchase intention manifest both immediately after exposure to the placements, as well as at a two-week delay.

Second, this research project explores the role of several potential mediators of the effects of placement prominence on brand evaluation. Specifically, it tests whether persuasion knowledge and critical processing (e.g., Boerman, van Reijmersdal, and Neijens, 2012, 2014) drive the impact of repetition-induced prominence on brand attitude when reading in the native, or in a foreign language (Chapter 5). It further looks at whether readers’ (viewers’) affective reaction to placements in text (film), namely irritation, mediate the interactive effects of placement modality and repetition on brand attitude (Chapter 6). Throughout this dissertation, it is argued that persuasion knowledge activation in response to (prominent) placements may be a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for engaging in active resistance against a perceived persuasion attempt. Thus, even if readers link the (prominent) brand integrations to a commercial motive (which is probably less likely to occur in the context of fictional narratives, as compared to other media, such as film or TV), other variables (i.e., the many moderators investigated in this research) may ultimately determine the impact of prominence on brand evaluation.

**STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION**

There are many ways to tell a story, but in this case, the order of the dissertation chapters follows the chronological order in which the respective papers were written. Arguably, this sequence better represents how our thinking about the research questions and our interpretation of (our own and others’) findings evolved in the process. Still, although most studies were run in the order in which they were written up, the data reported in Chapter 6 were collected at the same time as those reported in Chapter 3, although the former were analyzed and reported later. Chapter 6 is also partly based on the data used in Chapter 3 (i.e., data from 2 of the 8 experimental conditions discussed in Chapter 6 are also used in Chapter 3). In the following paragraphs, I provide a short summary of the key objectives, experimental design, and main findings of the studies reported in
each chapter, and how each chapter builds upon the previous one(s). Table 1.1 presents a summary of all manipulated and measured variables for each Chapter.

**Table 1.1: Overview of the variables used in each of the dissertation chapters**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Manipulated variables</th>
<th>Placement frequency</th>
<th>Placement modality</th>
<th>Brand familiarity</th>
<th>Moderators</th>
<th>Mediators</th>
<th>Dependent measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Placement frequency, Brand familiarity</td>
<td>2/6/11</td>
<td>Narration and dialogue*</td>
<td>Unfamiliar vs. familiar</td>
<td>Narrative transportation, Need for cognition</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Brand attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Placement modality, Time</td>
<td>4*</td>
<td>Narration vs. dialogue</td>
<td>Familiar</td>
<td>Need for cognition</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Brand attitude, Purchase intention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Speech type, Brand familiarity</td>
<td>4*</td>
<td>Direct vs. indirect speech</td>
<td>Unfamiliar vs. familiar</td>
<td>Brand familiarity</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Brand attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Placement frequency, Text language</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>Narration and dialogue*</td>
<td>Unfamiliar</td>
<td>Text language, Persuasion knowledge, Critical processing</td>
<td>Brand attitude</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Placement modality, Placement frequency, Medium</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Narration vs. dialogue</td>
<td>Familiar</td>
<td>Placement frequency</td>
<td>Irritation</td>
<td>Brand attitude</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: *These variables were not manipulated, but are described here to facilitate comparability of stimuli across studies.

Chapter 2 investigates the effect of brand name repetition on brand attitude and tests the moderating impact of brand familiarity, narrative transportation, and individual differences in need for cognition (NFC). Participants in an experiment read the full text of a short-story by a bestselling author, which featured the target brand. The two factors were systematically manipulated using a 3(Repetition: 2, 6, 11) x 2(Brand familiarity: unfamiliar, familiar) between-subjects design. In support of the hypotheses, the results show that brand name repetition affects attitude towards an unfamiliar brand and readers’ narrative transportation and need for cognition moderate this effect: Attitude towards the brand improves with repetition only when both
Chapter 1: Introduction

transportation and NFC are relatively high. In contrast, no effects were found for the familiar brand.

Chapter 3 introduces the concept of placement modality, a second element of placement prominence, to the domain of written narrative. Specifically, it explores how placing a brand name in the dialogue versus the narration of a fictional text (i.e., placement modality) affects brand attitude and purchase intention. Moreover, building on the results reported in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 also tests the moderating role of need for cognition (NFC). Finally, it measures brand responses (of the same participants) both immediately after exposure, as well as two weeks later, thereby providing the first empirical evidence on the long-term effects of brand placement (in any medium). The findings show that, as predicted, encountering a brand name in the dialogue, as compared to the narration, of a story was associated with lower brand attitudes for readers with high NFC at both measurement points. Purchase intentions showed a similar pattern, but the effects were only significant at a two-week delay. In contrast, brand evaluations of readers with low NFC were largely unaffected by placement modality.

Building on the findings of Chapter 3 regarding the divergent impact of dialogue and narration placements, Chapter 4 delves deeper into the question of whether stylistic features of the text could influence brand placement effectiveness. More concretely, it explores how embedding a brand name within direct vs. indirect speech affects readers’ brand attitudes. It is expected that placements in the direct speech of a story will be perceived as more prominent than those in the indirect speech. This chapter further tests the moderating role of brand familiarity, since past work has shown that unfamiliar brands undergo more extensive elaboration compared to familiar brands (e.g., Campbell and Keller, 2003). Participants were randomly assigned to the conditions of a 2 (speech type) x 2(brand familiarity) between-subjects experiment, whereby they read a short-story featuring a familiar or an unfamiliar brand placed in either direct or indirect speech. As expected, brand attitudes were more negative after exposure to placements within direct, as compared to indirect, speech, yet contrary to predictions, brand familiarity did not moderate this effect.

Together, the first three chapters provide convergent, yet indirect, support for the idea that the manner in which placements are processed guides the effects of placement prominence on brand
evaluation. To extend these findings, Chapter 5 tests the moderating role of another variable that has been found to affect processing style, namely text language (native vs. foreign; e.g., Keysar et al., 2012). Critically, it also sets out to garner more direct support for the process underlying placement prominence effects. To this end, Chapter 5 tests how repetition-induced placement prominence affects persuasion knowledge, critical processing, and brand attitude, and whether text language moderates these relationships. A 2(Placement repetition: 2, 11) x 2 (Language: native, foreign) between-subjects design was employed, while placement prominence, persuasion knowledge, critical processing, and brand attitude were measured. It is expected that higher placement prominence will (directly) enhance brand attitude, despite a concurrent increase in persuasion knowledge activation, in both languages. However, by eliciting a more systematic processing style, reading in a foreign (vs. native) language is hypothesized to exert an indirect negative impact on brand attitude via critical processing of the prominent placements. The results provide support for some, but not all, of our hypotheses. Specifically, they confirm that higher (vs. lower) placement frequency in a written narrative indeed increases brand prominence, which in turn directly enhances brand attitude. Further, they demonstrate that, although perceived placement prominence was positively related to conceptual persuasion knowledge in both languages, persuasion knowledge only triggered critical processing of the placements in the foreign language. However, the moderating effect of language on this relationship was only marginally significant. Finally, contrary to our predictions, critical processing did not affect brand evaluation in either language group.

The last empirical chapter, Chapter 6, adopts a cross-media approach and compares the interactive effect of placement modality and placement repetition in the context of text and film. Thus, it tests whether the findings reported in Chapter 3 (modality effects in written text) replicate at lower placement repetition levels. It also examines whether consumers’ affective reaction to the placements, namely irritation (instead of cognitive responses, such as those studied in Chapter 5), mediate prominence effects on brand attitude. Finally, it tests whether the overall pattern replicates in a filmed version of the same narrative. To this end, participants were randomly assigned to the conditions of an experiment featuring a 2(Placement modality: dialogue/auditory vs. narration/visual) x 2(Placement frequency: 2, 4) x 2(Medium: text, film) between-subjects design. Critically, the target brand, placement scene, narrative content
(story/script), and dependent measures were equivalent across media conditions. The results showed that, although exposure to dialogue, as compared to narration, placements in text was associated with greater irritation, this effect did not vary across placement frequencies. Also contrary to our predictions, exposure to auditory placements in film elicited similar levels of irritation at lower and higher placement frequency. Thus, although the predicted modality effect (i.e., greater irritation in response to auditory than to visual placements) emerged at lower levels of repetition, it was eliminated (rather than amplified) at higher levels of repetition, while there was an increase in irritation for those exposed to highly-repeated visual placements. Still, we found that irritation mediated the interaction effect of modality and repetition on brand attitude in both media.

Finally, Chapter 7 presents a summary of the main findings reported in the dissertation. Further, it discusses the implications of this work for theory and practice, as well as a number of limitations in the reported studies. A number of avenues for future research are proposed.

It must be noted that all chapters were written as independent, stand-alone articles (either already published, currently under review, or in preparation for submission to academic journals). As a result, there is some overlap between the current introductory chapter and the Literature Review sections of the empirical chapters.

**CONTRIBUTIONS**

This dissertation contributes to the extant literature on brand placement effects in several important respects. Most notably, it is the first comprehensive investigation of the impact of exposure to brand placement in written narratives on consumers’ brand attitudes. While prior research has been dominated by studies on the effects of placement in film, TV programs, and computer and video games, the current work adds to a growing body of evidence showing that placements in other media, such as song lyrics (e.g., Van Vaerenbergh et al., 2011), music videos (e.g., Matthes and Naderer, 2016; Schemer et al., 2008), and written text (e.g., Olsen and Lanseng, 2012; Storm and Stoller, 2015) may be an effective way to influence consumers’ perceptions of placed brands.
On a more concrete level, the present research has advanced current knowledge by systematically investigating the impact of several key placement characteristics which have not been studied before in the context of fictional narratives, such as placement repetition and placement modality, as well as brand familiarity (for a recent exception, see Storm and Stoller, 2015). In fact, the concept of placement modality was first introduced to the context of a print medium in one of the studies reported in this dissertation (Chapter 3). This project is also the first to look at the role of stylistic features of the text, where the brand is placed, therefore extending both work on the impact of placements in fiction, as well as previous work in (cognitive) linguistics concerned with the processing and implications of different types of text (narration vs. dialogue; direct vs. indirect speech; see Chapters 3 and 4). Our work also contributes to research on narrative persuasion and entertainment-education (e.g., Green and Brock, 2000; Moyer-Guse, 2008; Slater and Rouner, 2002; Van Laer et al., 2014) by showing that stories may predictably influence readers’ evaluations of featured brands, and that narrative transportation, in particular, plays an important role in the process (Chapter 2).

Further, this dissertation is the first to explore the role of individual differences (in need for cognition) as a moderator of prominence effects in written text (Chapters 2 and 3). In fact, to our knowledge, only one paper so far has investigated the impact of chronic differences in cognitive style (i.e., degree of field-dependence; Matthes et al., 2011) on brand placement effectiveness in the context of any medium (in that case, a TV program). Our findings with regard to the importance of NFC are especially relevant for practitioners, as a plethora of demographic (e.g., education), cognitive (e.g., verbal reasoning skills), and personality factors (e.g., openness to experience) have been shown to correlate with (high) NFC (e.g., Cacioppo et al., 1996; Fleischhauer et al., 2010; Sadowski and Cogburn, 1997). Moreover, both media and entertainment genre preferences tend to be reliably associated with NFC, or factors associated with NFC (Cacioppo et al., 1996; Green et al., 2008; Rentfrow, Goldberg, and Zilca, 2011). Given that digital book publishers and retailers nowadays have unprecedented access to detailed consumer data (e.g., Alter, 2012; Alter and Russell, 2016; Harvey, 2015), our insights into the relationships between text, placement execution, and reader-related variables can be used to optimize the effects of brand placement in fiction.
Chapter 1: Introduction

Another key contribution of this dissertation is that it tests the delayed effects of exposure to placements in text (Chapter 3). Thus, unlike most previous studies, which have focused on the short-term impact of brand placement, it also investigates how brand integrations in a fictional narrative influence responses of the same consumers both in the short-term and in the long-term, demonstrating that placement effects do not dissipate immediately after exposure. This finding is especially noteworthy for practitioners, who might be reluctant to make strategic decisions that are only based on evidence for the immediate (and potentially fleeting) impact of placement exposure.

The present research is also the first to ever look at the influence of another important factor, namely the language of the text containing the brand integrations (Chapter 5). From both a theoretical and a practical standpoint, it is surprising that no previous studies have looked into the role that language plays. People around the globe read fiction in foreign languages (most often, English). As a matter of fact, they also watch movies, listen to music, and play games in a foreign language, yet the effects of exposure to brand placements in any of these media have never been explored. The results of our study, testing whether language moderates the impact of placement prominence on cognitive responses to the placement, as well as on brand evaluation, hence provide the first (albeit mixed) evidence that language may need to be taken into account.

Finally, this dissertation reports the first attempt to replicate brand placement effects across different media by systematically manipulating the factors of interest (i.e., placement repetition and modality) within the same study, while keeping the narrative content, target brand, and dependent measures constant. Albeit our findings have raised as many questions as they answered, the novel approach adopted in this study will hopefully inspire future work to similarly explore placement effectiveness across media boundaries.

Admittedly, each of the empirical chapters reports only one study (although Chapter 3 features a longitudinal design with two measurement points) – a fact that inevitably questions the generalizability of the present findings. Moreover, one could argue that this approach has garnered only tentative, relatively superficial knowledge on a number of issues, instead of providing stronger evidence and deeper insights into the workings of some of the studied phenomena. This tradeoff is probably inherent to any (short-term) scientific endeavor. And yet,
as diverse as our studies seem to be, they feature a number of recurring elements (independent variables, measures), test the (moderating) impact of different variables that are related in important ways (hence allowing for some “triangulation”), and (conceptually) replicate some key findings. Finally, to put things in perspective, the research reported in this dissertation has essentially doubled the number of existing studies on the topic of brand placements in written narrative. It is our hope that it provides a good starting point for future investigations in this burgeoning field to sprout and flourish.
Chapter 2

Brand placement repetition in a fictional text: How placement repetition, narrative transportation, and need for cognition affect attitude towards familiar and unfamiliar brands

Chapter 2: Brand placement repetition

Brand placement – the (paid) inclusion of brand identifiers in editorial content – has a long history in movies and television. Most research to date has accordingly investigated placement effectiveness in these media (e.g., Dens et al., 2012; Gupta and Lord, 1998; Homer 2009; Matthes and Naderer, 2015; Redker, Gibson, and Zimmerman, 2013; Russell, 2002), although studies on other platforms, such as computer games (e.g., Cauberghe and De Pelsmacker, 2010), song lyrics (e.g., Van Vaerenbergh et al., 2011), and music videos (Schemer et al., 2008), have been recently accumulating. In contrast, our knowledge on placement effects in another major medium – books – is still extremely limited, despite the fact that brands have permeated works of literature for many decades. Across literary genres, branded products are frequently used by writers to create a natural setting, a historical and social context, to increase verisimilitude, or to aid characterization (Brennan and McCalman, 2011; Karrh, 1998). Friedman (1985) studied brand name usage in American bestsellers published between 1946 and 1975 and found that brand names were more than 500% more prevalent in the 1970s than in the 1940s, with the steepest increase in the last decade of that period. He called for research on the impact of emerging ‘sponsored word-of-author advertising’ on consumers and other scholars have since appealed for work on books as promotional platforms, voicing the need to advance current theories of brand placement effects which focus on audiovisual media (see Bhatnagar et al., 2004; Brennan, 2008; Brennan and McCalman, 2011).

From a practical perspective, brand placement in books is likely to be more and more tempting for advertisers, as they are seeking alternative communication outlets in light of the growing placement clutter in audiovisual media (Alter, 2014; Atkinson 2003). The stakes are high for book publishers as well, as they search for new sources of revenue and struggle with the consequences of online retailers and book digitalization (Jacobs, 2012; see also Arnold, 2001). Finally, authors themselves seem to recognize the marketing potential of books, and some have seized the opportunity to weave brands into their narrative (often, for an attractive compensation; see Alter, 2014; Flood, 2014). For instance, Fay Weldon’s novel ‘The Bulgari Connection’ (2001) was commissioned by the renowned jewellery designer, and Carole Matthew’s novel ‘The Sweetest Taboo” (2004) was sponsored by Ford. More recent examples include Hillary Carlip’s e-book ‘Find Me I’m Yours’ (2014), which features (and defends the safety of) the artificial

In sum, gaining insight into the specific factors that enhance placement effectiveness in the context of fiction is essential for both theory and practice. And yet, to our knowledge, only three empirical papers have so far investigated brand placement effects within fictional narratives. Specifically, Brennan (2008) studied whether brand recall will be enhanced if a brand name in a novel is fragmented (e.g., Pep_ _, instead of Pepsi), and found that mild brand name fragmentation enhanced recall relative to both complete presentation and severe fragmentation. Bhatnagar and Wan (2011) demonstrated that readers’ immersion into the story moderated the impact of perceived self-character similarity on brand attitudes: When immersion was induced, a dissimilar protagonist was associated with higher brand evaluations than a similar protagonist. Finally, Olsen and Lanseng (2012) explored the role of placement plot connection and showed that under high (induced) involvement, highly plot-integrated brands were evaluated more positively than lowly plot-integrated brands.

Extending this work, the present research examines the impact of other key variables, which seem especially pertinent to the context of written narrative, on brand attitudes. First of all, we study the impact of brand name repetition. Although it is very (and increasingly) common that brands appear repeatedly within a literary work (Friedman, 1985), no research has so far looked at the attitudinal effects of such repeated exposure. Moreover, we test whether the effects of repetition vary as a function of whether the placed brand is familiar or unfamiliar. Brand familiarity has been shown to moderate the influence of repetition on brand attitude in traditional advertising (Campbell and Keller, 2003), as well as other placement effects in audiovisual media (e.g., Mau, Silberer, and Constien, 2008). The present research is the first to experimentally manipulate both placement repetition and brand familiarity and test their attitudinal effects within the context of a fictional text. Our rationale for focusing on brand attitude, rather than on brand memory (which has received more attention in prior placement studies), is based on evidence that 1) (explicit) memory of a placed brand has been shown to be a poor predictor of brand attitude (e.g., Matthes, Schemer, and Wirth 2007; Redker et al., 2013; Russell 2002; Van Reijmersdal, 2009) and 2) brand attitude is an important determinant of purchase behaviour (e.g., Fischbein
and Ajzen, 1974; Spears and Singh, 2004). In light of the growing interest in what makes placements more persuasive, rather than just more memorable, other researchers have also called for more empirical work on the impact of placements on brand attitude, especially with regard to unfamiliar brands (e.g., Brennan, 2008; Shin and Kim, 2011).

In the present research, we propose that whereas attitudes towards familiar brands will not be swayed by exposure to (repeated) placements, attitudes towards unfamiliar brands will be affected. Moreover, the direction and magnitude of this effect will be determined by variables that may guide processing of placements in a fictional work, namely the level of readers’ narrative transportation and need for cognition (NFC). Specifically, we argue that readers’ attitude towards the unfamiliar brand will be enhanced when both transportation and NFC are relatively high. Notably, a key methodological contribution of our work is that, while earlier studies on brand placement in written narratives employed either a three-page excerpt from a novel (Olsen and Lanseng, 2012), or a magazine travel article (Bhatnagar and Wan, 2011), the experiment reported in the current paper used the full text of an existing short-story, further enhancing the ecological validity and practical implications of our findings.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Brand placement repetition

The attitudinal impact of placement repetition has been explored in several studies on audiovisual media. Interestingly, while one study showed that higher brand name repetition in song lyrics was associated with more positive brand attitudes (Van Vaerenbergh et al., 2011), two studies within audiovisual media indicate that the direction of repetition effects may depend on how placements are processed. Employing a movie and a TV program, Homer (2009) showed that repetition (3 vs. 1 exposure) of a subtly placed brand did not affect brand attitudes, whereas repetition of a prominent placement decreased them. This pattern corroborates work demonstrating that subtle placements are processed in a more shallow manner, while prominent placements tend to elicit greater elaboration. Presumably, deeper processing is more likely to activate persuasion knowledge (Friestad and Wright, 1994) – thoughts and beliefs that make consumers prone to recognize or interpret a message as a persuasive attempt – which may lead to counterarguing and
thus result in negative brand evaluations (Dens et al., 2012; Russell, 2002; Van Reijmersdal, 2009; see also Shiv, Edell, and Payne, 1997).

In another study, Matthes and colleagues (2007) explored the effects of repetition on responses to an unfamiliar brand placed in a TV magazine. Repetition positively affected brand attitudes of viewers who were highly involved and had low persuasion knowledge, but decreased brand attitudes of viewers who were lowly involved in the program and who had high persuasion knowledge. In addition, brand recall and brand attitudes were strongly and negatively related in the latter group (indicating deeper placement elaboration), yet completely unrelated in the former group. This pattern is consistent with evidence that subtle placements, albeit less memorable, may implicitly enhance brand attitudes (e.g., Redker et al., 2013; Russell, 2002; Van Reijmersdal, 2009).

In sum, past studies have documented divergent effects of brand name repetition on brand attitudes, yet their findings are not necessarily directly comparable, given that they come from different media, and they employed different experimental designs and different moderators. Moreover, their implications for the context of fiction are not always straightforward: For instance, it is difficult to predict whether a brand featured in a book would ‘behave’ like a subtle or a prominent placement (cf. Homer, 2009). Similarly, involvement with a TV program (cf. Matthes et al., 2007) may be qualitatively different from transportation into a written narrative (Green et al., 2008; Hakemulder, 2011; Tukachinsky, 2014), and coming across a brand name in a book might raise less suspicion (and thus, tactic-related thoughts) than encountering it on screen (Friedman, 1985; Jacobs, 2012). Thus, an empirical investigation of placement repetition effects in the context of written fiction seems not only justified, but also desirable (see Bhatnagar et al., 2004).

On the other hand, if we zoom out of the specific context, these findings converge in one crucial respect, that is how a placement is processed is an important determinant of placement repetition effects on brand attitudes. Therefore, the present study embarks to investigate the (interactive) impact of three key variables that have been shown to affect consumers’ processing style and to be especially pertinent to the context of written narratives, namely brand familiarity, (state)
narrative transportation, and (chronic) need for cognition, and the downstream consequences for brand attitudes.

**Brand familiarity**

Empirical evidence regarding the role of brand familiarity in placement effectiveness has been mixed. For instance, Wei, Fischer, and Main (2008) found that sponsor disclosure decreased attitudes towards an unfamiliar brand featured in a college radio program, but did not affect or even enhanced attitudes towards a familiar brand. In contrast, Mau et al. (2008) showed that attitudes towards a highly familiar brand were negatively affected, whereas attitudes towards an unfamiliar brand were enhanced upon exposure to the brands within a video game. In a study on the attitudinal effects of film placements, Verhellen, Dens, and De Pelsmacker (2015) demonstrated that placement prominence and plot connection interact to affect unfamiliar brands, but exert no effect on familiar brands.

Moreover, to our knowledge, no work exists on the interactive effects of placement repetition and brand familiarity on brand attitudes. The only study that has manipulated both variables in a placement context has tested their impact on brand memory, using an excerpt from a marketing textbook. Specifically, Brennan and McCalman (2011) found that repetition enhanced recall and recognition of a familiar, but not an unfamiliar, brand. However, given that recall is not a reliable predictor of attitude (e.g., Matthes et al., 2007; Redker et al, 2013; Van Reijmersdal, 2009), and that a textbook is different from a literary text in many respects, testing the role of brand familiarity in repeated placement effects on brand attitudes in the context of fiction is crucial (see Brennan and McCalman, 2011).

Interestingly, brand familiarity has been shown to moderate advertising repetition effects (Cambell and Keller, 2003; see also Calder and Sternthal, 1980). Specifically, using TV and internet ads, Campbell and Keller (2003) demonstrated that advertising wearout occurs sooner for unfamiliar than for familiar brands. They argued that, although novel stimuli activate a learning goal and thereby trigger deeper processing than familiar stimuli (Britton and Tesser, 1982; Sujan, 1985), they are not linked to any knowledge in memory that consumers could actually elaborate on. The available cognitive resources can thus be used to consider tactic inappropriateness and
generate counterarguments to the message (see also Shiv et al., 1997). Conversely, familiar brands activate existing brand knowledge and attitudes and thus provide sufficient material for elaboration, thereby preventing consumers from counterarguing the ad claims. In line with this account, Campbell and Keller (2003) found a curvilinear relationship between repetition and attitudes for unfamiliar brands (i.e., attitudes increased from 1 to 2 repetitions, but then decreased at 3 repetitions), but no shift in attitudes toward familiar brands.

It is reasonable to expect that brand familiarity would similarly influence the level of elaboration in a brand placement context, such that a familiar (vs. unfamiliar) brand encountered in a fictional text will be processed less extensively. Since familiar brands can be readily linked to stored knowledge in memory, readers would be less likely to extract new brand information from the story; rather, they will draw on their pre-existing attitudes when evaluating the brand and the narrative content will not have an impact on brand attitudes (see also Kamleitner and Jyote, 2013; Mau et al., 2008). Therefore, we expect that repetition will not affect attitudes towards the familiar brand.

When it comes to unfamiliar brands, however, our predictions are more nuanced. Specifically, under certain conditions (which we discuss in detail below) placed unfamiliar brands could benefit from deeper processing and repeated exposure, unlike brands featured in repeated ads. Our rationale is as follows: First, in contrast to traditional advertisements, brand placements are integrated in editorial content, which could provide rich elaboration material. In other words, unlike participants in Campbell and Keller’s (2003) studies, who supposedly had no information to elaborate on other than the (repeating) ad itself, consumers exposed to product placements might actually process an unfamiliar brand in relation to the narrative context in which it appears (Karrh McKee, and Pardun, 2003). Since no prior knowledge is activated in the case of unfamiliar brands, the context will have a strong impact on attitudes (Finn and Roediger III, 2013; Kamleitner and Jyote, 2013; Mau et al., 2008). That is, in line with associative network theory (Collins and Loftus, 1975; Keller, 1993), associations elicited by the story would create new ‘nodes’ in the brand’s associative network (Dens and De Pelsmacker, 2010; Verhellen et al., 2015). Through a process of spreading activation, context-related affect and cognitions will thereby be transferred to the brand. Put differently, the story characters, plot, and setting will
imburse meaning in an otherwise ‘empty’ brand name (McCracken, 1989; Redker et al., 2013; Russell, 2002). Finally, in contrast to repeatedly seeing or hearing the same ad, each incidence of a brand that is ‘repeatedly’ featured within a narrative is de facto different, as it appears in the course of a story. Thus, every time an unfamiliar brand is mentioned within the text, a new opportunity arises for readers to link it to different elements of the story, creating a richer set of (positive) associations that could ultimately enhance brand attitude.

Notably, inherent to our processing account is an important boundary condition: It implies that the effect of repetition on attitudes towards unfamiliar brands should critically depend on both the type and degree of elaboration that readers engage in. That is, processing of the placed brand with relation to the story, and the resulting meaning transfer from the story to the brand, would require that readers are sufficiently absorbed in the story, and sufficiently motivated to process the unfamiliar brand, in the first place; otherwise, such a transfer would be less likely. Therefore, the present research investigates the moderating role of narrative transportation and need for cognition. On the one hand, studies on narrative persuasion suggest that (high) narrative transportation facilitates narrative (vs. analytical) elaboration of story content, which in turn drives attitude change (i.e., development of story-consistent attitudes; e.g., Green and Brock, 2000). On the other hand, dispositional differences in need for cognition reflect the relative propensity to engage in extensive and effortful elaboration (Cacioppo and Petty, 1982), which might be especially relevant in the context of fictional works. We thus propose that both of these variables will be crucial in predicting the direction and magnitude of brand placement repetition effects in written narratives.

**Narrative transportation**

Research in communication has long demonstrated that narratives are a powerful persuasion tool (e.g., Dal Cin et al., 2007; Green and Brock, 2000; Prentice, Gerrig, and Bailis, 1997). Evidence suggests that narrative processing, which underlies narrative persuasion, is fundamentally different from processing of non-narrative (rhetoric) forms of argumentation. According to the transportation-imagery model (Green and Brock, 2000, 2002; Slater and Rouner, 2002; Van Laer et al., 2014), narratives persuade via narrative transportation – a state of absorption in the fictional world that involves attentional, cognitive, and emotional responses, vivid mental
imagination, and suspension of disbelief (Green and Brock, 2000, 2002; Prentice et al., 1997). Since transportation fosters narrative elaboration, rich imagery and thoughts are continuously generated that focus on the storyline, rather than on the persuasion-relevant issue (Green, Garst, and Brock, 2004). As a result, information contained in (or implied by) the narrative is not critically scrutinized and counterarguing is reduced, making attitude change more likely (Green and Brock, 2000; Slater and Rouner, 2002). In contrast, low transportation may elicit analytical elaboration: Readers may become more alert to potential persuasive attempts, more critical of the content, and thus more likely to generate counterarguments and resist attitude change (see Tukachinsky, 2012).

In the context of the present research, these findings imply that narrative transportation may influence processing of and responses to brand placements within a literary narrative. As described earlier, unfamiliar brands typically trigger more extensive elaboration than familiar brands (Campbell and Keller, 2003; Sujan, 1985). We suggest that when elaboration is narrative-based, an unfamiliar brand will be interpreted with relation to the content in which it appears. Given that narrative transportation elicits story-related affect and cognitions and thwarts counterarguing (e.g., Green and Brock, 2002; Green, Garst, and Brock, 2004), highly transported readers should be more likely to engage in such narrative-based processing of the placed brand. In addition, since this type of processing tends to consume attentional, cognitive, and emotional resources (Green and Brock, 2000; Mazzocco et al., 2010; Slater and Rouner, 2002), it is less likely that the persuasive nature of the placement and tactic inappropriateness will be contemplated. Based on the idea that repeated exposure offers additional opportunities for associating the unfamiliar brand with the story context, we predict that attitudes of highly-transported readers will be enhanced as repetition increases.

In contrast, we expect that lowly-transported readers will be more likely to engage in analytical processing. Therefore, a placement for an unfamiliar brand will not be as readily linked to the content of the story; instead, it will be processed in a context-independent manner (see also Matthes et al., 2011). As a result, higher repetition will increase the chance that an alerted reader considers the placement as inappropriate, thereby decreasing brand attitudes.
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**H1:** The effect of placement repetition on attitudes towards unfamiliar brands will be moderated by narrative transportation, such that:

**H1a:** Increasing repetition will positively affect brand attitudes of more highly transported readers.

**H1b:** Increasing repetition will negatively affect brand attitudes of more lowly transported readers.

Finally, we expect no moderating effect of narrative transportation for familiar brands: Due to their potential to directly activate existing associations in consumers’ memory, their connection to the story will be weaker. Hence, narrative transportation will not affect how a familiar brand is processed and will therefore not sway brand attitudes either way.

Our predictions about the effects of repetition on attitudes towards the unfamiliar brand rest on the fundamental assumption that readers are *motivated* to process the brand placement in the first place. That is, for narrative transportation to exert an impact, be that positive or negative, a certain amount of elaboration is required. However, it has been shown that people differ in their *need for cognition* (NFC) – a personality trait that reflects one’s chronic tendency to engage in and enjoy effortful cognitive activities (Cacioppo and Petty 1982). We therefore posit that NFC will further moderate the (interactive) effects of brand name repetition and narrative transportation on brand attitude.

**Need for cognition**

Need for cognition has been established as a consistent moderator of *rhetorical persuasion* effects (see e.g., Cacioppo et al., 1996; Petty et al., 2009). The classic finding is that those high (vs. low) in NFC are more strongly affected by the quality of arguments in persuasive communication due to their propensity to scrutinize the message more carefully. Evidence regarding the effects of NFC in the context of *narrative persuasion*, however, has been inconsistent. While some studies have failed to find an effect of NFC on narrative persuasion (e.g., Green and Brock, 2000; Wheeler et al., 1999), suggesting that elaboration level does not drive persuasion, other work has documented moderation effects (Green et al., 2008; Owen and
Riggs, 2012; Thompson and Haddock, 2012; Zwarun and Hall, 2012). For instance, Green et al., (2008) compared narrative persuasion effects across media and found that low NFC individuals were more transported into film (supposedly a less demanding medium), whereas high NFC individuals were more transported by the written version of the same narrative (which supposedly requires more mental effort). Furthermore, Thompson and Haddock (2012) showed that high (vs. low) NFC readers were more persuaded by a narrative appeal.

Based on these findings, we propose that NFC will play a moderating role in the context of brand placement effects in fiction. Specifically, high NFC will be associated with deeper scrutiny of the narrative content (Wheeler et al. 1999), yet cognitive effort will be invested differently by highly and lowly transported readers: As discussed above, highly transported readers will be more likely to engage in narrative elaboration, embedding the unfamiliar brand in the story context and thereby creating a richer associative network and more positive attitudes with increasing repetition. Lowly transported readers, on the other hand, will be more likely to process the brand analytically, whereby high repetition will trigger irritation and tactic-inappropriateness thoughts, resulting in more negative brand attitudes (see Homer, 2009). Since high NFC will elicit more extensive processing in all cases, it will amplify both the beneficial effects of high transportation, as well as the detrimental effects of low transportation. In contrast, we expect that – due to their propensity to exert less mental effort and to process information in a more superficial manner – low NFC readers will be less prone to engage in either narrative, or analytical elaboration of brand-related information. As a consequence, narrative transportation (or, the lack thereof) will exert a weaker (or no) moderating effect on the relationship between placement repetition and brand attitudes under low NFC.

**H2:** The interaction effect between transportation and placement repetition on attitudes towards an unfamiliar brand (H1) will be stronger for individuals who score higher on NFC than for those who score lower on NFC.

A graphical representation of the hypothesized three-way interaction for the unfamiliar brand can be found in Figure 2.1.
Finally, we predict that need for cognition will not moderate the relationship between repetition and transportation in the case of placements for familiar brands. More specifically, we do not expect NFC to influence elaboration of familiar brands, as brand-related associations are likely to be highly accessible for both high and low NFC readers. Thus, we posit that familiar brands will be processed less extensively with increasing repetition irrespective of NFC level. As a consequence, and as hypothesized above, narrative transportation will not moderate the effects of repetition on attitudes towards familiar brands. Hence, NFC will not have an impact on brand attitudes.

**METHOD**

**Study design and experimental manipulations**

We conducted an experiment, where we systematically manipulated brand name repetition (i.e., the number of times a target brand is mentioned) and brand familiarity (i.e., whether the target brand is familiar or unfamiliar) within a fictional narrative. The resulting design was a
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3 (Repetition: 2, 6, 11) x 2 (Brand familiarity: familiar, unfamiliar) full-factorial between-subjects experiment. In addition, we measured readers’ narrative transportation and need for cognition.

We used the short-story *Checkmate* (1988) by bestselling British author Jeffrey Archer as stimulus material (see Appendix 1A). Besides the literary merit of Archer’s fiction, this particular story was selected for practical reasons as well. Specifically, the text was not too long, so it was feasible that study participants read the full story, rather than just an excerpt from it (cf. Olsen and Lanseng, 2011). At the same time, the text was long enough to permit multiple (up to 11) placements to be inserted. The characters in the original story were depicted as drinking alcohol on several occasions, allowing us to integrate an alcoholic beverage as our target product (vodka) quite seamlessly. The original text (in English) was translated into Dutch (2,545 words) by a professional translator. The author of the story was not disclosed to participants, but the title of the story was included. This (first) part of the study was presented as research on readers’ perceptions of literature. The narrator in the story—a chess club captain—recounts the events of an evening at the chess club, where he meets a very attractive young woman. When the tournament is over, he invites her at his place for a quick drink and a game of chess. They play several games, as the narrator doubles his bet after each match, while the woman agrees to take off another piece of clothing every time she loses a game. After a series of losses, just as many drinks, and suspense at its peak, the woman unexpectedly beats the narrator with flying colors, takes his money and leaves. Although the narrator has a couple of drinks himself (one at the bar and one at home), in the course of the evening he keeps pouring drinks for the young woman. We used a brand of vodka as our target product placement.

*Brand familiarity* was manipulated by inserting either a familiar or an unfamiliar brand of vodka in the text. Based on a pretest (*n* =15), we selected a brand that students were highly familiar with (*Eristoff®*: $M = 3.87$, $SD = .74$; on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from *not at all familiar* to *very familiar*). Another pretest (*n* =53) helped us identify an unfamiliar brand (*Posolskaya®*; it was not available on the Belgian market and 92.5 % of respondents indicated they did not know the brand on the item “Do you know the brand Posolskaya?”*, Yes/No).

*Brand name repetition* was manipulated by inserting the (familiar or unfamiliar) brand name 2, 6, or 11 times within the story. Our choice of repetition levels was based on past work in
audiovisual media, where frequency ranged between 1 and 13 exposures (e.g., Homer, 2009; Matthes et al., 2007; Van Vaerenbergh et al., 2011), as well as on practical considerations. Specifically, we aimed to compare the impact of a relatively low repetition rate (2 mentions being the minimum), a relatively high repetition rate (11 being the maximum number of placements we could insert in the story without disrupting the flow or significantly changing the plot), and what represents moderate repetition in this context (6 mentions).

In the 2 repetition condition, the brand was mentioned once in the beginning (on p.2 of the story, as printed in our A5 booklet, appearing after 680 words), and once in the end (p.6, after 2,203 words). These two placements appeared in all experimental conditions. In the 6 repetition condition, four additional placements were inserted at roughly equal intervals in-between the other two placements (resulting in approximately one brand mention per page). In the 11 repetition condition, five more placements were added to the six that were present in the moderate repetition version, such that the brand appeared eleven times in total (i.e., about two brand mentions per page).

Whenever some placements were ‘absent’ in the lower repetition conditions, we also took out any reference to alcohol and drinking. Our rationale was that references to concepts that are strongly related to the target brand (e.g., alcohol/ bottle/ pouring/ drinking) could activate the brand name in memory. Given that the brand name is mentioned at least once in the beginning, readers could spontaneously infer that whenever the woman gets ‘another drink’, or the narrator brings ‘the bottle’, it is the same brand that is referred to. In that way, we ensured that the product category (or other cues) did not prime the brand name in memory and thus serve as an additional, subtle reminder.

Archer’s original story mentioned two car brands, which were meaningfully related to the plot of the story. We decided to keep these brands in the text (in all conditions) in order to stay close to the original, and because the presence of these ‘filler’ brands also made the target brand less salient.
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Participants and procedure

One hundred and fifty-two students at a Flemish university took part in the study (52.1% female, $M_{age} = 19.65, SD_{age} = 1.78$). Participants were randomly assigned to conditions. The study was administered as a pencil-and-paper survey during regular classes. The research was briefly introduced as ‘a series of separate, unrelated studies, which includes a literature study, a consumer behavior study, and some personality questionnaires’. Participants received a booklet with the short-story, containing the manipulations and measures. Each ‘part’ of the experiment featured a different title, introduction, task instructions, and layout. Participants were asked to read the story (which took about 9 min on average) and answer the questions at their own pace, and were assured of their anonymity. They were also informed they could enter a sweepstake to win one of 3 bookstore vouchers (each worth 25 euro) if they were willing to leave their email address. Several weeks after the experiment, participants were carefully debriefed regarding the nature and purpose of the research via email.

Moderators and dependent variable

All constructs were measured on 7-point Likert or bipolar scales. Narrative transportation was based on Green and Brock’s (2000) Narrative Transportation Scale (10 items, $M = 4.30, SD = .82$ Cronbach’s $\alpha = .78$). Need for cognition (NFC) was measured with the original 18-items of Cacioppo and Petty (1982) ($M = 4.35, SD = .76$; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .87$). Our key dependent variable, brand attitude, was measured with four 7-point bipolar scales (negative/positive, unattractive/attractive, don’t like/like, low/high quality; $M = 4.44, SD = 1.18$; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .94$; see e.g., Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009).

Control variables

After reading the short-story, participants reported their attitude towards the female character (7-point scale anchored by bad/good; unpleasant/pleasant; unattractive/attractive; unlikeable/likeable; $M = 4.74, SD = .94$, Cronbach’s $\alpha = .78$; e.g., Russell and Stern, 2006). They subsequently rated perceived fit between the target brand and the female character (indicating their agreement with the following statements using a 7-point scale: [Target brand] fits her personality; [Target brand] fits her lifestyle; It’s logical that she drinks [Target brand]; $M = 4.54$,
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$SD = 1.25$, Cronbach’s $\alpha = .86$; see Verhellen et al., 2015). We also measured participants’ product involvement (7-point scale, For me, vodka… is unimportant/ important; means nothing/means a lot; doesn’t matter/ matters a lot; $M = 2.66$, $SD = 1.51$; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .93$; e.g., Dens and De Pelsmacker, 2010).

We treated these three variables as covariates in our analysis, since past research suggests that they may influence brand attitudes (e.g., Kamleitner and Jyote, 2013; Russell and Stern, 2006; Schemer et al., 2008; Van Vaerenbergh et al., 2011). We focused on the female character because she is the primary user of the target brand. Finally, as a manipulation check, we also measured familiarity with the target brand (7-point scale, ranging from not at all familiar – very familiar).

RESULTS

To ensure that our brand familiarity manipulation was successful and that repetition did not in itself affect familiarity (thereby confounding our manipulation), we first conducted a 3(Repetition) X 2(Target Brand) analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the target brand familiarity ratings. Only the main effect of the target brand was significant, $F(1,146) = 213.94, p < .001, \eta^2 = .59$ (all other $p$’s $> .14$). Comparison of the means confirmed that participants were more familiar with the brand Eristoff® ($M = 4.43$, $SD = 1.97$) than with the brand Posolskaya® ($M = 1.15$, $SD = .40$).

Our main analysis, using multiple regression, proceeded in several steps. First, we regressed brand attitude on all four predictors (repetition, brand familiarity, narrative transportation and need for cognition), their interactions, and the three covariates. Brand familiarity was coded 0 for the unfamiliar brand and 1 for the familiar brand. Since brand name repetition had 3-levels, we created two dummy variables to code for group membership (see below). The two continuous moderator variables were mean-centered, and the products of all predictor variables were computed to form the two-way, three-way, and 4-way interaction terms. Following the recommendations in the literature on testing interactions between multi-level categorical and continuous predictors (see Hayes, 2012; West, Aiken, and Krull, 1996), we first estimated the model setting the 2-repetition group as the reference group. Thus, the two dummy variables in the model coded the contrast between exposure to 11 vs. 2 repetitions (Dummy11-2) and the contrast
between 6 vs. 2 repetitions (Dummy6-2). Next, we reversed the coding (by setting the 6-repetition group as the reference), so we could also compare the effects of exposure to 11 vs. 6 repetitions (Dummy 11-6). Finally, we recoded brand familiarity, such that the familiar brand was coded as 0, and repeated the procedure described above to compare all levels of repetition in the familiar brand condition.

The model accounted for a significant amount of variance in brand attitude ($R^2 = .51$, $F(26, 125) = 5.09, p < .001$). Two of the covariates had a significant effect, namely higher product category involvement ($b = .219, t = 4.149, p < .001$) and higher perceived fit between the brand and the character ($b = .253, t = 3.82, p < .001$) were associated with more positive brand attitudes. Next, the results showed that none of the interactions were significant for the comparison between 11 vs. 6 or 6 vs. 2 repetitions for either of the two brands (all $p$’s > .15). Therefore, we only report further analyses on the effects of repetition with regard to the 11- vs. 2-repetition groups. Furthermore, the simple effect of brand familiarity was significant: The familiar brand was rated higher than the unfamiliar brand in all repetition conditions (all $b$’s > .75, $p$’s < .01).

Critically, the four-way interaction between repetition (Dummy 11-2), brand familiarity, narrative transportation, and NFC was significant ($b = -1.36, t = -2.18, p = .031$). As predicted, neither the simple effect of repetition (all $p$’s > .07), nor the two-way (repetition * narrative transportation) or three-way interactions (repetition * narrative transportation * NFC) were significant for the familiar brand (coded as 0; all $p$’s > .3). In contrast, and as expected, the three-way interaction between repetition (Dummy 11-2), narrative transportation, and NFC was significant for the unfamiliar brand (when this was coded as 0; $b = .81, t = 2.64, p = .009$).

To test our directional hypotheses regarding the interactive effects of brand name repetition, narrative transportation, and NFC on brand attitude towards the unfamiliar brand (i.e., H1a, H1b, and H2), we conducted a spotlight analysis (see Spiller et al., 2013; West et al., 1996), examining the conditional effects of repetition across different levels of the two continuous moderators. Specifically, using the ‘pick-a-point’ option integrated in Model 3 of the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2012), we tested the effects of repetition at 1 standard deviation (SD) above and below the mean values of both narrative transportation and need for cognition for the unfamiliar brand ($n = 78$). Although identical results are obtained based on analyses of the full dataset, we
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opted for this approach for the sake of clarity and brevity in exposition. The results are summarized in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Conditional effect of Repetition on Brand Attitudes towards Posolskaya® (unfamiliar brand) at low (-1SD), mean, and high (+1SD) values of Narrative Transportation (NT) and Need for cognition (NFC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NFC</th>
<th>NT</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Std. Err.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>.239</td>
<td>.452</td>
<td>.529</td>
<td>.599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>.315</td>
<td>.344</td>
<td>.916</td>
<td>.363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>.391</td>
<td>.506</td>
<td>.773</td>
<td>.436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>-.203</td>
<td>.315</td>
<td>-.646</td>
<td>.521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>.349</td>
<td>.218</td>
<td>1.605</td>
<td>.113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>.902</td>
<td>.313</td>
<td>2.879</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>-.646</td>
<td>.390</td>
<td>-1.656</td>
<td>.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>.382</td>
<td>.293</td>
<td>1.306</td>
<td>.196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>1.412</td>
<td>.370</td>
<td>3.816</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Coefficients in the table are unstandardized regression coefficients.

First of all, our analysis revealed that the interaction between repetition (11 vs. 2) and narrative transportation was significant for participants who scored at the mean ($b = .63$, $t = 2.44$, $p = .018$) or 1SD above the mean on NFC ($b = 1.17$, $t = 4.26$, $p < .001$), but not for those who scored 1 SD below the mean ($b = .09$, $p = .821$), in line with our proposal regarding the amplifying effect of NFC in the case of an unfamiliar brand placement (H2).

To break down the two-way interaction between repetition and narrative transportation and thus test Hypotheses 1a and 1b, we used the same approach and tested the effects of repetition at low, medium, and high levels of narrative transportation within mean and high levels of NFC (i.e., the levels at which the two-way interaction was significant; the interaction was not significant for those low in NFC at any level of transportation, all $p$’s > .36). At mean NFC, higher repetition (exposure to 11 vs. 2 brand mentions) was associated with more positive brand attitudes for
highly transported participants ($b = .90, t = 2.88, p = .005$), but not for moderately or lowly-transported participants ($b = .35, t = 1.61, p = .11$, and $b = -.20, t = -.65, p = .521$, respectively).

Among high NFC participants, higher repetition had a positive impact on brand attitudes of highly-transported readers ($b = 1.41, t = 3.82, p < .001$), but not of moderately transported readers ($b = .38, t = 1.31, p = .196$). Repetition had a negative impact on attitudes of lowly-transported readers, but this effect did not reach conventional levels of significance ($b = - .64, t = - 1.66, p = .103$). An interaction plot based on the mean estimates is depicted in Figure 2.2.

![Figure 2.2: Interaction between repetition and narrative transportation on attitude towards the unfamiliar brand at (A) mean and (B) high (+1 SD) levels of NFC](image)

In sum, the results regarding the effects of repeated exposure to an unfamiliar brand support Hypothesis 1a (i.e., higher repetition enhances brand attitudes of more highly transported readers), but only provide directional support for Hypothesis 1b (i.e., higher repetition leads to lower brand attitudes at lower levels of narrative transportation). In addition, Hypothesis 2 was supported, as the interaction effect between repetition and narrative transportation was only significant for readers who were relatively high on NFC.

**DISCUSSION**

The present research demonstrates that repeated exposure to a brand name in a fictional narrative can affect readers’ brand attitudes, and further establishes important boundary conditions for this
effect. Specifically, increased brand name repetition affected attitudes towards an *unfamiliar* brand, but did not influence evaluations of a familiar brand. Moreover, the degree to which readers were transported into the narrative moderated the impact of repetition, such that exposure to 11 (vs. 2) placements enhanced brand evaluations of *highly*, but not lowly, transported respondents. Finally, readers’ need for cognition (NFC) further qualified these effects, as the interaction between repetition and narrative transportation only emerged for people who were *moderate to high* in NFC.

Our work contributes to the extant literature on product placement in several important respects. First of all, it provides the first empirical evidence for the effects of brand name repetition on brand attitudes in the context of fiction and thus complements past work on placement repetition in audiovisual media (Homer, 2009; Matthes et al., 2007; Van Vaerenbergh et al. 2011), as well as work on other placement effects in written text (Bhatnagar and Wan, 2011; Brennan and McCalman, 2008; Olsen and Lanseng, 2012). Second, we show that brand familiarity is a key determinant of the impact of placement repetition on brand attitude. Notably, the pattern we observed diverges from the one documented in the domain of traditional advertising. Specifically, whereas Campbell and Keller (2003) found that advertising wearout occurred sooner for unfamiliar than for familiar brands, in the present study repetition had a *positive* impact on brand attitude for the *unfamiliar* brand, and no effect for the familiar brand. In our view, this discrepancy can be attributed to some fundamental differences in how repeated product placements (in fiction) are processed as compared to advertisements. In addition, our findings are consistent with studies in other media showing that attitudes towards unfamiliar brands are more likely to be affected by exposure to brand placement than attitudes towards familiar brands (Mau et al., 2008; see also Kamleitner and Jyote, 2013; Verhellen et al., 2015).

A further contribution of the present study is that it is the first to empirically explore how narrative transportation moderates placement repetition effects. Past work has shown that reader *involvement* moderates the effects of plot connection on readers’ brand attitudes (Olsen and Lanseng, 2012). However, (high) involvement was manipulated by warning participants that they would have to answer detailed questions about the story later on. Hence, these instructions could have also prompted more systematic processing of the text, higher attention to detail, or a
stronger performance goal, rather than (only) increasing transportation. Similarly, *immersion* has been shown to moderate the effects of self-character similarity on readers’ attitudes towards a brand placed in a mock magazine travel article (Bhatnagar and Wan, 2011). However, also in this study, (high) immersion into the story was manipulated by instructing readers to ‘try to understand what might be going through the writer’s mind…what the writer is thinking and feeling during the trip’ (p.49). It is thus likely that perspective-taking and/or empathy were actually unintendedly manipulated as well. Although perspective-taking and empathy are strongly related to transportation, past research suggests that these may reflect different types, aspects, or intensities of involvement, and thus differentially predict responses to a narrative (e.g., Murphy et al., 2011; Tal-Or and Cohen, 2010; see Tukachinsky, 2014, for an extensive discussion of different types of media involvement and their effects). In fact, transportation into a TV drama, rather than involvement with a specific character, has been shown to be the best predictor of cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral effects (Murphy et al., 2011), and transportation seems to be more coherent and unambiguous than the broad construct of involvement (Appel and Richter, 2010).

Finally, our work advances current knowledge on brand placement effects by introducing an important personality variable, namely need for cognition. Although NFC has been widely studied in the fields of social psychology (see Petty et al., 2009, for an overview), consumer behavior (e.g., Haugtvedt et al., 1992; Martin et al., 2003), and narrative persuasion (e.g., Appel and Richter 2010; Green et al. 2008; Thompson and Haddock 2012), its impact on brand placement effectiveness had not yet been explored. The present findings show that the positive impact of repetition under high transportation only emerged for moderate and high NFC readers. It is critical to note that narrative transportation and NFC were not correlated in our sample ($r = .06, \ p > .5$). Thus, it was the particular combination of moderate/high NFC, on the one hand, and high narrative transportation, on the other, that yielded the positive effect of repetition on brand attitude. This suggests that at least some degree of elaboration of the repeated brand name (as predicted by high NFC readers’ chronic propensity to engage in deeper processing) may be necessary for transportation to exert its impact. This interpretation is in line with evidence showing that high (vs. low) NFC individuals, who typically engage in deeper processing, are more susceptible to subtle primes (e.g., Petty et al., 2008); more strongly affected by implicit (vs.
explicit) conclusions in the context of advertising (Martin et al., 2003); and more effectively persuaded by narrative appeals (Thompson and Haddock, 2012).

**Managerial implications**

The present research has a number of practical implications. First, it highlights the potential of an alternative promotional platform by demonstrating that placing unfamiliar (but not familiar) brands in fictional texts can be an effective means of creating a positive brand image – an outcome that has been under question (see Brennan, 2008; Shin and Kim, 2011). Concrete recommendations with regard to placement execution can also be derived from our results. Specifically, mentioning a brand name repeatedly seems to be a prerequisite for attitudinal effects to emerge. Although consumers would typically read the genres and authors they like, and would thus often be transported into a text they read for leisure (vs. under experimental instructions), a recent meta-analysis (Van Laer et al., 2014) identifies a number of story (e.g., identifiable characters, verisimilitude) and consumer-related (e.g., attention, transportability) antecedents of narrative transportation that could be taken into account (see also Martin et al., 2003).

Our findings with regard to the role of need for cognition are especially relevant here: Targeting readers high in NFC would be advisable when the brand is featured in a (potentially) transporting text; lower transportation, however, may render placements ineffective, or may even backfire, with this audience. Past research has identified a plethora of demographic (e.g., education), cognitive (e.g., verbal reasoning skills), and personality factors (e.g., openness to experience) that correlate with (high) NFC (e.g., Cacioppo et al., 1996; Fleischhauer et al., 2010; Sadowski and Cogburn, 1997). Moreover, the types of media people prefer tend to be reliably associated with NFC (Cacioppo et al., 1996; Green et al., 2008), and entertainment genre preferences across media are related to a number of demographic and personality factors linked to NFC (Rentfrow, Goldberg, and Zilca, 2011). Given that digital book publishers and retailers nowadays have unprecedented access to detailed consumer data (see Alter, 2012), these insights into the relationships between text, placement execution, and reader-related variables can be used to optimize the effects of brand placement in fiction.
Admittedly, brand placement in books, albeit on the rise, is still not as common as in other media. This might be changing, however — due to strong market pressures, fast technological advances, and authors’ and publishers’ increasing receptivity to the practice (see Jacobs, 2012; Orden, 2011). Most notably, the rise of digital books (Alter, 2012; Author Earnings, 2015) allows for better segmentation and targeting by making book purchase history, genre preferences, and even the reading experience itself more measurable and predictable, and thus brand placement in books less risky. Major players in e-book publishing and retail, such as Amazon, Google, Barnes & Noble, and Apple can now track not only which books readers buy, but also how far they get into a book, how much time they spend reading it, and which passages they find most appealing (e.g., through interactive features such as text highlighting on Amazon’s Kindle; Alter, 2012, 2014). When combined with rich demographic data (which these platforms can collect), such analytics would provide valuable insights for publishers, authors, and marketers, helping them assess a book’s potential to engage, transport, and eventually persuade. In addition, digital books may allow writers to insert specific brand names after a work has been published — and thus after the audience profile and sale numbers are already known, or can be reliably predicted (Orden, 2011). In fact, some publishers have started “piloting” books digitally before publishing a print version, collecting feedback from readers, and others have adopted computer gaming-like software which allows readers to customize the plot and characters (Alter, 2012). In light of these developments, it seems that the “infrastructure” already exists that could make brand placement in fiction a viable promotion strategy.

**Limitations and future research**

The present research has some limitations. First of all, we tested the impact of three specific levels of repetition (2, 6, and 11), but only found significant effects with respect to the 11- vs. 2-repetition comparison. Future research might manipulate repetition in fictional texts at different (and finer) intervals to establish more precisely the point at which attitudes shift, as well as the point at which wearout eventually occurs (see Cacioppo and Petty, 1979; Nordhielm, 2002). Studying the effects of brand placement in longer texts (e.g., novels) would provide a further test of our findings. Most probably, a higher number of repetitions would be necessary to produce similar effects (to the extent that “low” and “high” repetition are defined relative to the length of
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the text). Importantly, a novel, unlike a short-story, is typically read in portions (e.g., chapters), rather than in one sitting. Thus, the reading experience, and exposure to the brand, is spread over time (similar to watching episodes of a sitcom over several days or weeks). Whether the interactive effects of repetition, narrative transportation, and NFC replicate in such a context is an empirical question that merits further attention.

There is an aspect of our manipulation which could raise some concern, namely our decision to remove references to the product (vodka; including words like alcohol, drinking, bottle), along with the brand references, in the lower-repetition conditions. Although we took utmost care to make the story versions as similar as possible across the 3 repetition conditions, one could still argue that perceptions of the character may have been affected as a function of her drinking behaviour (i.e., being portrayed as drinking more in the higher repetition conditions). In fact, we controlled for attitude towards the character in all analyses, and a 3(repetition) x 2(brand familiarity) ANOVA on this variable further confirmed that there were no differences across conditions ($F < 1, \text{ ns.}$). Moreover, retaining generic product references in the text would have compromised our repetition manipulation in a more fundamental way, namely by making it difficult to disentangle the effects of brand name vs. product category repetition (given that the product category could prime an earlier presented brand name). Although our choice was deliberate, the impact of product (vs. brand) placement repetition and category salience is an intriguing and practice-relevant issue that future research should pursue (see also Kamleitner and Jyote, 2013).

A potential limitation of our study is that we only placed one product in the text, which scored rather low on product category involvement. Past research has shown that product category involvement moderates the influence of placement repetition in the context of repeated exposure to advergames (i.e., more negative attitudinal effects for high vs. low involvement products; Cauberghe and De Pelsmacker, 2010), hence replicating our results using a high-involvement product would provide a fuller picture of these effects.

Furthermore, one could argue that alcohol is a special kind of product, as some research has shown that placements of ethically-charged products in film and TV programs are less acceptable for consumers (Gupta and Gould, 1997; Gould, Gupta, and Grabner-Kräuter, 2000). The
generality of these findings has been questioned, however, since recent work has indicated that (non-student) attitudes towards alcohol placements may be more neutral, and that such perceptions vary as a function of consumers’ own age and a film’s target audience (i.e., alcohol less acceptable in children- and youth-oriented movies; e.g., Sung, De Gregorio and Jung, 2009). In any case, notwithstanding the ethical question of whether harmful products should feature in any type of entertainment content, it is a fact that alcohol is ubiquitous across media, and across the globe: from US prime-time TV programs (Russell and Russell, 2009) and song lyrics (Christenson, Roberts, and Bjork, 2012), to music videos in the UK, the US, and France (Cranwell et al., 2015; Primack et al., 2015; Russell et al., 2015). Critically, it has been found that specific brand names appear in 44% of the 70 most popular alcohol-related music videos in the US (Primack et al., 2015) and in 19% of the top 100 videos in France (Russell et al., 2015), with hard liquor being the most common type of alcohol.

Books are certainly no exception to this pattern. Friedman’s (1985) content analysis of brand mentions in American bestsellers in the post-war period revealed that ‘beer, wine, and liquors’ represent the 4th most common product category. As a recent case in point, Bill Fitzhugh stroke a deal with Seagram, inserting references to their alcohol products in his novel ‘Cross-dressing’ in return for PR of his book (Fitzhugh, 2000). In fact, alcohol is a quintessential characteristic of many famous literary characters, most notably James Bond (Gaughran, 2012). In a sense, then, the present study’s findings – which concern the effects of placements for a product that features so strongly in popular culture – are both timely and relevant. Still, empirical work on the impact of exposure to (alcohol) placements in fiction on intentions to buy and consume the product, as well as on actual behavior, is essential.

Although the present research provides evidence for the predicted interaction between brand name repetition and narrative transportation, future investigations might look closer at the mechanisms underlying these effects. We would speculate that high narrative transportation engendered the formation of associative links between the brand and the story context through eliciting narrative (vs. analytic) elaboration and reducing critical scrutiny of the story content (Green and Brock, 2000; Slater and Rouner, 2002). Since repeated exposure to the brand name permits more diverse and/or stronger links to be created, it facilitates meaning transfer from the
highly engaging story context to the placed (unfamiliar) brand and thereby improves brand attitudes. This account is supported by our finding that the positive impact of transportation emerged only among moderate/high NFC readers, as discussed above. The positive attitude shift we observed is thus also less readily attributed to a mere exposure effect, at least one that is driven by implicit processing and misattribution (cf. Matthes et al., 2007).

Notably, and contrary to expectations, attitudes of low-transported participants were not significantly reduced at high (vs. low) repetition levels (cf. Matthes et al., 2007). One likely cause is the low power of the present study: It is possible that the predicted differences are obtained if a larger sample is employed. Power issues notwithstanding, the null effect is also consistent with two alternative explanations: On the one hand, unabsorbed readers may have engaged in more analytic processing (Tukachinsky, 2012), which triggered tactic inappropriateness thoughts and trumped the (positive) effect of repetition (Homer, 2009; Russell, 2002). On the other hand, low transportation may have simply prevented readers from processing the placements, due to a lower interest in the story as a whole. Since we did not find a significant decrease in attitudes even for those with high NFC (and low transportation) – the readers who would be expected to engage in more extensive elaboration – the second scenario seems more plausible. In addition to increasing power by utilizing a larger sample, future research may attempt to disentangle these competing accounts by measuring potential mediating variables, such as story- and brand-related thoughts, persuasion knowledge activation, and irritation (wearout). However, measuring persuasion knowledge in a reliable way may be especially challenging, given the wide variety of conceptualizations and operationalizations of this construct and the lack of a validated scale that would also allow comparing results across studies (see Ham, Nelson, and Das, 2015). In addition, administering such measures along with brand attitude measures (within the same study), can be problematic (e.g., raise respondents’ awareness and suspicion) or at least not as informative (e.g., responses on earlier measures biasing those on subsequent measures). Employing implicit measures and/or measuring potential mediators in a series of studies would hence be more promising in this specific context.

An interesting parallel can be drawn between our findings and recent work of Matthes et al. (2011) on the impact of individual differences in *field dependence-independence* (FDI) on brand
placement effects in audiovisual media. These researchers manipulated the number of times a brand logo appeared in a TV program and measured participants’ FDI – the propensity to separate or ‘extract’ an object from its surrounding visual field (Witkin, 1950). Matthes et al. proposed that visual placements will be more salient (i.e., will ‘pop up’ more) for people who are relatively field-independent. In support of this idea, they demonstrated that (especially at high repetition levels – 15 brand appearances) field-dependence was associated with lower persuasion knowledge, and more positive brand attitudes. These findings indicate that the tendency to perceive specific elements (such as a branded product) as parts of a coherent whole could make brand placements ‘blend’ with the context more, thereby increasing brand liking. Applied to the present study, we would speculate that the effect of narrative transportation is conceptually similar to that of field-dependence: Highly transported readers were arguably more likely to perceive and interpret the placed brand in a context-dependent manner. The findings of Green et al. (2004), who showed that highly transported people tend to generate many story-related thoughts (vs. thoughts related to the persuasion issue) further support this conjecture. Future research might look into whether transportation itself leads to more context-dependent processing and which elements of the story context are linked to the brand (e.g., characters, physical setting, plot), as well as whether the strength and stability of these links varies as a function of brand name repetition.

Although transportation has been conceptualized to entail attentional, cognitive, and emotional responses (Busselle and Bilandzic, 2009; Green and Brock, 2000), which of these factors is most crucial for brand placement effects still needs to be tested. Future research may also investigate the attitudinal impact of brand placements in other genres of written narratives. Although some studies suggest that readers may be equally persuaded by fact and fiction (e.g., Green and Brock, 2002), other research has shown that genre expectations may affect the neurocognitive processes involved in reading the same text in a fictional (vs. factual) mode (Altmann et al., 2012), as well as higher order information-processing and memory for textual information (Zwaan, 1994). An intriguing possibility is that – through shifting attentional focus and eliciting different processing styles – different types of texts may give rise to different brand placement effects.
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Chapter 3

Brand placement in text: The short- and long-term effects of placement modality and need for cognition†

Brand placement effectiveness has traditionally been studied in the context of **audiovisual** media, such as movies and TV programs (e.g., Dens et al., 2012; Matthes et al., 2007; Russell, 2002), computer games (e.g., Cauberghe and De Pelsmacker, 2010), and music videos (e.g., Schemer et al., 2008). Recently, however, interest within both academia and the industry has been shaken and stirred by placements in **books**. Brand names have populated novels for decades (Friedman 1985), and the marketing potential of this “low-tech” traditional medium, as well as its high-tech version (e-books), is increasingly recognized by advertisers, book publishers, and authors alike (e.g., Alter, 2014a; Flood, 2014; Orden, 2011). Popular examples of (traditional) novels featuring paid placements include Fay Weldon’s *The Bulgari Connection* (2001; Bulgari) and Carole Matthews’ *The Sweetest Taboo* (2006; Ford Fiesta), while William Boyd’s short-story *The Vanishing Game* (2015; Land Rover) appears on a dedicated website providing (optional) multisensory experiences. Similarly, the producer of the artificial sweetener Sweet’N Low invested about $1.3 million in Hillary Carlip’s e-book *Find Me, I’m Yours* (2014), with a series of websites, web TV shows, and paper cards (with individual download codes that allow tracking reading behavior and online activity; Alter, 2014a).

Albeit still scarce, empirical evidence has now also started accumulating to show that exposure to brand names within written narratives may indeed affect readers’ responses to these brands. For instance, brand attitudes improve when a placed brand is closely connected to the story plot and readers are highly involved in the text (e.g., Olsen and Lanseng, 2012), and brand name repetition enhances transported readers’ attitudes towards unfamiliar brands (Avramova, De Pelsmacker, and Dens, 2016a). An intriguing question with important theoretical and practical implications that has not yet been addressed, however, pertains to how the stylistic devices employed in the text where the brand is placed, affect placement effectiveness. That is, marketers and authors interested in this practice would inevitably face the decision of whether they should integrate a brand in the *narration* (i.e., as part of the narrator’s description of a scene or character) or in the *dialogue* of a story (i.e., as part of characters’ direct speech). Consider, for instance, the following references to Audi in E. L. James’ bestselling trilogy *Fifty Shades of Grey* (2012-2015), which features the brand both within the narration (1) and the dialogue (2):

Parked outside is a red hatchback car, a two-door compact Audi. (1)
In the present research, we advance the idea that, although consumers would read the written text in both cases, the brand will be more prominent, or vivid, when placed in the dialogue than in the narration of a fictional text – a “modality effect” analogous to the one documented by prior placement research with regard to auditory and visual placements in the context of audiovisual media (e.g., Homer, 2009; Russell, 2002). Critically, we propose that the impact of placement modality on brand evaluations will depend on readers’ processing style, with modality effects being more likely to emerge for readers who process the placements more extensively. To test this prediction, we study the moderating role of dispositional differences in need for cognition (NFC), which reflects a person’s chronic propensity to engage in deep and effortful thought (Cacioppo and Petty, 1982). Inspired by evidence showing that NFC interacts with prime prominence to determine the magnitude and direction of priming effects (Petty et al., 2008), we test the novel hypothesis that NFC will moderate placement modality effects in fiction. Furthermore, unlike prior work which has mainly focused on brand recall and (less) on brand attitudes, we study the impact of placement modality in text on both brand attitudes and purchase intentions, the latter being a powerful predictor of consumer behavior, and thus a highly relevant outcome variable (e.g., Spears and Singh, 2004). Finally, we test the interplay of placement modality and NFC on brand outcomes both directly after exposure, as well as at a two-week delay, thereby providing evidence for the long-term effects of the practice.

**LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT**

**Modality in text: narration or dialogue**

The present research introduces the concept of placement modality in written text by making the novel distinction between inserting brands in the narration (i.e., the narrator’s description of a scene or character) versus the dialogue (i.e., characters’ quoted speech) of a fictional text. Our key premise is that the narration and the dialogue will stimulate (predominantly) visual and auditory processing, respectively. As a result, a brand name placed in the text will also be processed within the activated modality, approximating the experience of actually seeing or hearing the brand. This idea is supported by evidence from cognitive psychology, neuroscience, and linguistics. Most notably, embodied cognition theories (e.g., Barsalou, 2008; Fischer and
Zwaan, 2008) posit that language comprehension is grounded in bodily perception and action. That is, during narrative processing readers engage in (unconscious) perceptual simulation of the objects, characters, and events depicted in the story – a process which gives rise to experiences that closely mirror those resulting from engaging with the real world. Critically, it has been shown that modality-specific brain areas are activated during language comprehension (e.g., Kurby and Zacks, 2013; see e.g., Fischer and Zwaan, 2008; Zwaan, 2009, for reviews). Behavioral evidence is consistent with these findings. For example, readers categorize real sounds (e.g., a crackling campfire) faster when those sounds match a concept previously activated during reading a sentence (e.g., “The campfire crackled as the kids prepared for story time”; Brunyé et al., 2010). Furthermore, sequential processing of stimuli that pertain to different modalities has been found to incur switching costs (Scerrati et al., 2015). Specifically, participants first read sentences describing a light or a sound's perceptual property (e.g., "The light is flickering", "The sound is echoing") and then performed a property-verification task on a target sentence that implied either the visual ("Butter is yellowish") or the auditory modality ("Leaves rustle"). The results showed that responses were slower when the stimulus and target sentences referred to different (vs. the same) modalities, indicating that sensory modalities can be pre-activated by linguistic stimuli describing visual or acoustic perceptual properties.

With regard to the present research, these findings suggest that readers’ mental representations of a placed brand may carry modality-specific perceptual information, such as how the brand (or product) looks, or what the brand name sounds like. Critically, we propose that certain *stylistic features* of a text, such as whether a brand is integrated in the narration or in the dialogue, may serve as subtle cues that determine which modality will be dominant in processing the placed brand. Support for this idea comes from research on auditory perceptual simulation. It has been argued that readers automatically generate an “inner voice” during silent reading of reported speech, which involves phonological representations and thus reflects some perceptual aspects of actual speech (e.g., Zhou and Christianson, 2016). For instance, words of a purported “slow speaker” are read more slowly than the words attributed to a “fast speaker” (Alexander and Nygaard, 2008). Importantly, how speech is represented in text seems to be key, a fundamental distinction being whether the words are reported via direct speech (e.g., He said, ‘I’ll come back tomorrow’) or indirect speech (e.g., He said that he would come back the following day). For
instance, direct – but not indirect – speech is read faster when the character is described as talking fast (Stites, Luke, and Christianson, 2013), suggesting that exposure to dialogue, in particular, may facilitate auditory imagery.

Moreover, research has demonstrated that readers encode the modality in which an interaction between the characters in a story takes place, just as they encode other aspects of the situation (Drumm and Klin, 2011). That is, if character A is depicted as reading a note written by character B (i.e., visual modality), readers’ mental representation of a phrase contained in the note involves visual imagery, whereas if A is described as hearing the same message being spoken by B (i.e., auditory modality), readers’ representation of the same phrase recruits auditory imagery. Drumm and Klin’s conclusion was that by engaging in visual and auditory simulation readers get to “see” what a character is described as seeing and “hear” what the character is described as hearing. In line with this, Kuzmicova (2014) posits that a narrator’s description of objects or characters typically evokes “description imagery”, whereby the reader takes the role of a visualizer. In contrast, characters’ speech is more likely to elicit “speech imagery”, where the reader is a vicarious listener. This is consistent with the view that literary texts may prompt different types of mental imagery depending on the stylistic devices employed.

Taken together, these findings provide converging support for the notion that readers simulate linguistic content within the sensory modality implied in the text, and that different stylistic devices may evoke different types of mental representations. They further imply that readers will be more likely to recruit visual imagery and thus “see” a branded product, if it is mentioned in the narration, whereas they will be more likely to employ auditory imagery and thus “hear” the brand name, when it is reportedly spoken by a character.

**Modality and prominence**

Crucially, we contend that the brand will be more vivid, or prominent, when placed in the dialogue than when placed in the narration of a fictional text. In line with our proposal, work in psycholinguistics suggests that stylistic devices, such as whether an utterance is reported using direct or indirect speech, may influence perceived text vividness. Specifically, direct speech has been argued to be more attention-grabbing and perceptually vivid than other parts of text, as it
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allows readers to directly experience the speech act, bypassing the narrator (Clark and Gerrig, 1990). Consistent with this, greater neural activity in voice-selective areas in the auditory cortex has been recorded during silent reading of direct, relative to indirect, speech (Yao et al., 2011). These findings suggest that direct speech is likely to activate perceptually richer mental representations, as compared to other types of text. Subjective ratings of mental imagery have shown the same pattern, with auditory images being rated as more vivid than visual images (e.g., Tinti and Comoldi, 1997). Finally, subtle changes in the wording of a sentence are more reliably detected by readers when they occur within direct, rather than indirect, speech, indicating superior verbatim memory and more extensive elaboration of direct speech (e.g., Eerland, Engelen, and Zwaan, 2013), in line with evidence that vivid information is typically processed more extensively than pallid information (e.g., Kisielius and Sternthal, 1986).

Interestingly, research on brand placement in audiovisual media corroborates these findings. In line with the observation that auditory information is more intrusive and memorable than visual information (e.g., Cowan et al., 2002; Gathercole and Conway, 1988), a number of studies have documented modality effects, such that placements containing an auditory component (i.e., a verbal reference to a brand) exhibit higher recall and recognition than purely visual placements (i.e., a branded product or logo is shown on screen; e.g., Cowley and Barron, 2008; Gupta and Lord, 1998). Taken together, these findings lend strong support to the idea that a brand name will be more attention-grabbing when placed in the dialogue than in the narration of a story. If that is indeed the case, an important consequence which the present research directly tests is that dialogue and narration placements will have divergent effects on brand responses.

The impact of placement modality on evalulative brand outcomes

Past work on brand placement in audiovisual media has typically assumed, and sometimes found, a negative relationship between level of prominence and brand evaluations (e.g., Cowley and Barron, 2008; Homer, 2009; Russell, 2002). This has been attributed to the fact that prominent placements are more likely to activate persuasion knowledge (Friestad and Wright, 1994) and hence trigger counterarguing, whereas subtle placements are often processed more implicitly, thereby averting reactance. However, a closer look at the evidence reveals a more nuanced picture, with a number of studies showing that placement prominence is not detrimental across
the board, but its effects rather depend on processing style. For instance, Homer (2009) found that brand attitudes were lower after exposure to prominent than after subtle placements in a TV program, but this difference only emerged at repeated (and not at a single) exposure. Homer argued that placement repetition provides more opportunities for brand elaboration, and an already vivid (auditory) placement is thus more likely to elicit thoughts of tactic inappropriateness. Similarly, Cowley and Barron (2008) found that brand attitude was negatively influenced by prominent (but not subtle) placements for highly-involved viewers, who supposedly processed the embedded placements more extensively, while prominence did not affect brand attitudes of low-involved viewers. Finally, Matthes et al. (2007) demonstrated that increasing placement frequency had a positive impact on brand attitudes of highly-involved viewers with low persuasion knowledge, but decreased brand attitudes of lowly-involved viewers with high persuasion knowledge. In sum, evidence suggests placement prominence may have opposite effects depending on the level of elaboration.

Building on these findings, the present research posits that modality effects in written narratives will not arise to the same extent for all readers, but will rather be contingent on one’s processing style. Critically, we adopt an individual difference approach by investigating the moderating role of need for cognition (NFC), which reflects one’s chronic propensity to engage in effortful cognitive activity (Cacioppo and Petty, 1982).

Need for cognition

To describe the role of NFC, Cacioppo and colleagues used the metaphor of a magnetic field, where individuals can be seen as magnets, information from the environment as iron filings, and individual differences in NFC as the relative strength of the magnetic fields (Cacioppo et al., 1996). Thus, individuals high in NFC are characterized by having explorative minds, enjoying relatively complex and challenging tasks, and being highly motivated to acquire, scrutinize, and remember information. A vast body of work spanning more than three decades has garnered empirical evidence for a strong and reliable relationship between dispositional differences in NFC and processing style across a wide variety of domains, tasks, and participant samples (see Petty et al. 2009, for a review). For example, individuals with high (vs. low) NFC found an extremely boring task more enjoyable when they had to use a more complex and effortful rule
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(Cacioppo and Petty, 1982), recalled more information from expository texts (e.g., Kardash and Noel, 2000), and were more likely to distinguish between strong and weak arguments (see Cacioppo et al. 1996, for a review).

Most relevant for the present study, research in social psychology has found that NFC interacts with prime prominence to determine the magnitude and direction of priming effects (Petty et al., 2008). Specifically, Petty et al. (2008) showed that whereas low-NFC participants’ judgments were not affected by prime prominence, high-NFC participants exhibited stronger assimilation effects after subtle primes (i.e., judgments become more consistent with the prime), and reverse, or contrast, effects after blatant primes (i.e., judgments move away from the implied semantic or affective content of the prime). They attributed this pattern to high-NFC individuals’ knowledge structures (i.e., network of associated constructs) being better developed, more integrated, and more frequently activated, as well as their tendency to engage in more judgment-relevant thought, once constructs are activated. Thus, a subtle prime can still activate related constructs and bias the content of thoughts for high (but not low)-NFC individuals, without making them aware of the source of the bias. In contrast, a salient prime is more likely to trigger correction (discounting) of the prime’s biasing influence. Since this typically requires effortful elaboration (e.g., Campbell and Kirmani, 2000), those with high NFC are more likely to engage in correction. Hence, in the case of blatant primes, contrast effects become more likely as NFC increases.

These findings can be readily applied to the present setting, where dialogue and narration placements could be seen as analogous to prominent and subtle primes, respectively, and thoughts of tactic inappropriateness and counterarguing could be construed as correction mechanisms aimed at removing the persuasive influence of a brand placement. Therefore, we propose that dialogue and narration placements will exert divergent effects on brand evaluations as a function of readers’ NFC. Our reasoning is as follows: High (vs. low) NFC readers will tend to process brand placements more extensively in the first place, in keeping with their chronic tendency to engage in deeper and more effortful thought. If brand placements are relatively prominent when they feature in the dialogue, and relatively subtle when they feature in the narration, as we argue, high-NFC readers should be more likely to consider ulterior motives for the brand mentions and to correct for their potentially biasing impact in the former case, resulting
in more negative brand evaluations (corresponding to a contrast effect). In contrast, high NFC should be associated with more positive brand responses after exposure to narration placements (i.e., an assimilation effect). For low-NFC readers, placement modality will have a weaker (if any) impact on brand evaluations, in line with the lack of priming effects in the studies of Petty et al. (2008). We thus formulate the following hypotheses:

**H1**: Placement modality and need for cognition (NFC) will interact to affect (a) brand attitudes and (b) purchase intentions for a brand placed in a written text, such that brand attitudes will be more positive after exposure to placements in the narration than in the dialogue and this effect will be stronger for high- than for low-NFC readers.

**Long-term effects of placement modality**

In the current research, we argue that the effect of placement modality (and its interaction with NFC) that we hypothesized above will have a long-lasting influence on readers’ brand evaluations. In fact, if modality effects are driven by differences in prominence and extent of elaboration, and thus more likely to emerge for high- than for low-NFC readers, as we predict above, it is also more likely that they persist over time. This is consistent with research showing that high-NFC individuals tend to form more persistent and resistant attitudes (Haugtvedt and Petty, 1992). These effects were attributed to high-NFC people’s greater propensity to engage in message-relevant thought and to integrate new, message-consistent information. Thus, given that we expect dialogue (vs. narration) placements to have a negative impact on brand attitude and purchase intentions for high- (but not low-) NFC readers, it is reasonable to expect that modality effects will also manifest after a delay.

**H2**: Placement modality and NFC will interact to affect (a) brand attitudes and (b) purchase intentions at a two-week delay, such that brand evaluations will be more positive after narration placements than after dialogue placements and this effect will be stronger for high- than for low-NFC readers.

Interestingly, previous research has demonstrated that effects of exposure to a fictional text on development of story-consistent attitudes are stronger over time (e.g., Appel and Richter, 2007). And yet, neither these studies, nor past research on the delayed effect of product placement (e.g.,
Storm and Stoller, 2015) measured whether and how attitudes changed over time: Immediate and delayed effects were tested in separate experiments or in different samples, where the measurement point was a between-subjects variable. In contrast, the present research investigates whether brand responses actually change (or remain stable) over time by re-contacting the same participants and administering the same dependent measures two weeks after initial exposure to the brand placements. Notably, although some findings suggest that high (vs. low) NFC is associated with greater persistence and resistance of brand attitudes (Haugtvedt and Petty, 1992), implying that modality effects will remain stable (i.e., no change from Time 1 to Time 2), other evidence indicates that the attitudes of high NFC individuals are more likely to polarize over time, as they tend to engage in more thought (e.g., Smith, Hugtvedt, and Petty, 1994), implying stronger effects at Time 2. Therefore, we formulate the following research question:

**RQ1:** Does the (interaction) effect of placement modality and NFC on (a) brand attitudes and (b) purchase intentions change over a two-week period?

### METHOD

**Study design and experimental manipulation**

We conducted an experiment with a two-group between-subjects design, where we systematically manipulated placement modality, that is whether the target brand was mentioned in the narration or in the dialogue of a short-story. The text in which we inserted the brand placements was written in Dutch (about 2,900 words) by a professional writer for the purposes of our research. We used the clothing brand Esprit® as our target brand.

The story is set in a café, where several young people meet and chat about a party that had taken place several days earlier. At some point, another friend, Olivier, joins them and it becomes clear that he went shopping earlier. Depending on condition, Esprit was then mentioned four times either in the narration, or in the dialogue (see Appendix 1B for the stimuli and manipulations). Apart from this difference, the text of the story (including the placement scenes) was the same across conditions. For instance, in the last placement scene Olivier comes back from the bathroom, finding an awkward silence at the table, and the following exchange takes place:
“Don’t you also think it’s a bit cold in here? I will put on my new sweater”. He takes the Esprit bag from the chair, but stops halfway, as he sees Kevin’s expression [in response to someone entering the café]. (narration placement condition)

“Don’t you also think it’s a bit cold in here? I will put on my new Esprit sweater”. He takes his backpack [he had put the Esprit bag in it earlier], but stops halfway, as he sees Kevin’s expression. (dialogue placement condition)

Thus, the reader obtains the same information in both conditions, but the brand name is either mentioned by the narrator, or is reportedly uttered by the character himself. The story was written in the present tense and all direct speech in the story was reported in italics and enclosed by quotation marks. The brand was mentioned twice on page 3 and twice on page 4 in both versions of the story, which spanned across 5 consecutive pages (i.e., screens) in our online survey.

**Participants and procedure**

Participants were recruited through a professional online panel agency and data were collected at two waves (two weeks apart), henceforth Time 1 and Time 2. At Time 1, a random sample of Flemish men and women aged 18-30 were emailed with an invitation to fill in an online survey (programmed in Qualtrics®). This age group was deemed most suitable given the content of the story. The research was briefly introduced as ‘a series of separate, unrelated studies, including a study on perceptions of a short-story, a consumer behavior study, and a personality questionnaire. Upon clicking the survey link, participants were automatically and randomly assigned to one of the two experimental conditions, namely the story version with either the dialogue or the narration placements. Each ‘part’ of the experiment featured a different title, introduction, task instructions, and layout in order to reduce the chance that respondents will (immediately) see the link between the manipulation and the dependent measures. At Time 1, no mention was made regarding the follow-up (Time 2) study. Participants were recontacted two weeks later, always counted from the moment when they had received the first invitation to participate at Time 1. They were invited to take part in a short follow-up study. At Time 2, only the dependent measures were administered (see below).

Given that we conducted the study online and thus had little control over participants’ environment, we took some steps to ensure the quality of our data. First, the “next” button (i.e., to
proceed to the next page) only appeared after a preset time interval on the pages displaying the story (i.e., between 60-120 seconds/page, based on an initial reading by 4 students). Next, we explicitly asked participants if they read the whole text, and those who answered “no” were automatically excluded. In order to eliminate random clicking, we also embedded a “control question”, which asked participants to enter a specific number on the respective scale. Again, respondents who did not follow instructions were automatically redirected to the end of the survey. Finally, two multiple-choice questions checked whether participants had a basic understanding of the story plot. Only participants who answered both questions correctly were retained (resulting in the elimination of 5 participants, who got one or both questions wrong).

The final sample only included respondents who had satisfied all these criteria. In total, 93 respondents took part at Time 1 (61.3 % female, $M_{age} = 24.25, SD_{age} = 3.36; n = 49$ in the narration condition), 55 of whom also participated at Time 2 (58.2 % female, $M_{age} = 24.13, SD_{age} = 3.25; n = 29$ in the narration condition).

**Measures**

Our main dependent variables were brand attitude and purchase intention. The same brand measures were administered at both Time 1 and Time 2. First, *brand attitude* was measured using four 7-point bipolar scales (negative/positive, unattractive/attractive, don’t like/like, low/high quality; see e.g., Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009). *Purchase intention was* measured with one item (How likely are you to consider Esprit next time you shop for clothing?) on a 7-point scale (not at all likely/very likely; e.g., Storm and Stoller, 2015; see also Bergkvist and Rossiter, 2009). In addition, we measured *brand familiarity* (How familiar are you with Esprit?) on a 7-point scale (not at all familiar/very familiar) to use as a covariate in our analysis. Table 3.1 reports the descriptive statistics for all measures. Although it exerted a positive effect on brand attitude, including brand familiarity, as well as gender and age as covariates in the model did not affect the results. Therefore, we do not discuss these variables further and only report the analyses without the covariates.
Table 3.1: Descriptive statistics for all measured variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th># items</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Cronbach’s α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand familiarity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for cognition Time 1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand attitude Time 1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intention Time 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand attitude Time 2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.93</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intention Time 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Brand attitude, purchase intention, and brand familiarity were also measured for two filler (competitor clothing) brands (i.e., Zara and WE) using the same items in order to make the link between the story (manipulation) and the measures less obvious. The measures pertaining to Esprit appeared second (in-between the two filler brands) at Time 1, and last at Time 2.

Need for cognition – our hypothesized moderator – was measured at Time 1 using the NFC scale (Cacioppo, Petty, and Cao, 1984) on 7-point Likert scales (fully disagree-fully agree). Due to technical error, one item was omitted from the questionnaire, hence the average NFC scores were based on 17 items. The questionnaire for Time 1 started with demographic questions, followed by the text of the story and some filler items related to story and character liking. As part of an ostensibly different study, the brand attitude and purchase intention measures (for both target and filler brands) were then administered. Finally, NFC was measured. The questionnaire for Time 2 only contained the (same) dependent measures (again, for both target and filler brands).

RESULTS

General analytical approach

The analyses pertaining to Time 1 were based on the full sample (n =93), while the analyses with regard to Time 2 used the sub-sample of participants who also completed the follow-up questionnaire (n = 55). A comparison of participants who only participated at Time 1 with those who completed the measures at both phases revealed no significant differences in terms of age, gender, NFC and distribution across experimental conditions (i.e., participants were not more
likely to drop out from one of the conditions, all p’s > .5). Moreover, adding a variable coding for whether a respondent participated at Time 1 only vs. at both Time 1 and 2 as a covariate in the regression models (see below) did not affect the results. Further, although brand familiarity was a significant covariate, controlling for its influence did not influence the results. Therefore, we only report the analyses based on the model including placement modality, NFC, and their interaction. Finally, since we were also interested in whether brand responses changed over time (RQ1), we also performed a repeated measures analysis using the subsample of participants who completed the measures at both measurement points (n = 55).

To test H1 and H2, namely that the effect of placement modality on brand attitude and purchase intention is moderated by NFC, we estimated a series of regression models using Hayes’ (2013) PROCESS macro for SPSS (Model 1). That is, we regressed our two dependent variables on modality (coded 0 for the narration placement condition and 1 for the dialogue placement condition), NFC (mean-centered), and their interaction. Hayes’s approach has become standard procedure in moderation analyses, and it grants the additional benefit of the Johnson-Neyman (J-N) technique (Hayes 2013; Johnson and Neyman, 1936). Instead of performing a “spotlight analysis”, where the conditional effect of the focal predictor is tested at some arbitrary values (e.g., +/- 1 SD away from the mean) of the moderating variable, this technique allows for a “floodlight analysis”, where the effect of the focal variable is tested across the entire range of the values on the moderator (Spiller et al., 2013). As a result, regions of significance (i.e., within which any spotlight test would be significant) and the specific points at which the effect becomes (non-) significant are identified.

Time 1

The first model accounted for a significant amount of variance in brand attitude immediately after exposure ($R^2 = .10, F(3, 89) = 3.12, p = .03$). The interaction between modality (narration = 0, dialogue = 1) and NFC (min = 2.94, max = 6.12) was significant ($b = -.81, t = -3.57, p = .011$). To probe this interaction, we used the J-N technique, which revealed a significant negative effect of modality for participants whose NFC scores were above 4.5 ($B_{JN} = -.41, SE = .21, p = .05$; 37.6% of the sample). Thus, as predicted, for readers who scored relatively high on NFC, brand attitudes were lower after exposure to dialogue than to narration placements, while modality did
not significantly affect readers who scored relatively low on NFC (see Figure 3.1). Therefore, H1a was supported. Moreover, looking at the simple slope of NFC within each modality condition revealed that this effect was mainly driven by a decrease in brand attitudes in the dialogue placement condition, where NFC and brand attitude were significantly and inversely related ($b = -.49$, $t = 2.34$, $p = .021$). The relationship, albeit positive, was not significant in the narration placement condition ($b = .32$, $t = 1.39$, $p = .169$).

We performed the same analysis with regard to purchase intentions, but the model was not significant ($R^2 = .05$, $F(3, 89) = 2.98$, $p = .241$), nor was the interaction between modality and NFC ($b = -.83$, $t = -1.5968$, $p = .116$). Therefore, H1b was rejected.

*Figure 3.1: Interaction effect of placement modality and need for cognition (NFC) on brand attitude at Time 1: Floodlight analysis using the J-N technique*

Note: Shaded area represents the region of significance of the simple effect of placement modality. N = 93. Brand attitude and NFC were both measured on a 7-point scale.
Time 2

In order to test H2, which pertains to the impact of placement modality on brand outcomes two weeks after exposure to the placements, we conducted the same analyses using the sub-sample of participants who completed the measures at Time 2. The model accounted for a significant amount of variance in brand attitude ($R^2 = .22, F(3, 51) = 4.7, p = .006$) and revealed a significant interaction between modality and NFC emerged ($b = -1.34, t = -3.21, p = .002$). To probe the interaction, we used the J-N technique, which again revealed a significant negative effect of modality for participants whose NFC scores were above 4.38 ($B_{JN} = -.55, SE = .28, p = .05$; 38.18% of the sample). Thus, the negative effect of dialogue (vs. narration) placements on brand attitudes for readers who scored relatively high in NFC was still evident two weeks after exposure to the placed brands. As at Time 1, placement modality had no impact for readers who were relatively low in NFC (see Figure 3.2). These results support H2a. In addition, the simple slope of NFC was significant and negative in the dialogue placement condition ($b = -.67, t = -2.38, p = .021$), while it was significant and positive in the narration placement condition ($b = .67, t = 2.18, p = .034$).

We performed the same analysis on purchase intentions to test H2b ($R^2 = .26, F(3, 51) = 6.09, p = .001$). The interaction between modality and NFC was significant ($b = -2.25, t = -3.98, p < .001$). The results from the J-N analysis showed that, as expected, exposure to dialogue (vs. narration) placements had a negative effect for readers who were relatively high in NFC. The effect was significant for NFC scores above 4.47 ($B_{JN} = -.76, SE = .38, p = .05$; 36.36% of the sample). In addition, an unpredicted positive effect of dialogue (vs. narration) placements on purchase intention emerged for participants with scores below 3.65 on the NFC scale ($B_{JN} = 1.1, SE = .55, p = .05$; 12.73% of the sample). Hence, these findings provide partial support for H2b. Further, simple slopes analysis showed that NFC was negatively related to purchase intentions in the dialogue placement condition ($b = -1.21, t = -3.19, p = .002$) and positively related in the narration placement condition ($b = 1.04, t = 2.49, p = .016$).
Figure 3.2: Interaction effect of placement modality and need for cognition (NFC) on brand attitude at Time 2: Floodlight analysis using the J-N technique

Note: Shaded area represents the region of significance of the simple effect of placement modality. N = 55. Brand attitude and NFC were both measured on a 7-point scale.

Change in brand responses from Time 1 to Time 2

In order to address RQ1, namely whether the effect of placement modality on brand attitude and purchase intention actually changed in the course of the two weeks, we performed a repeated-measures analysis using the sub-sample of participants who took part in both waves (n = 55). Specifically, we conducted a 2 (dialogue vs. narration) X 2 (Time 1 vs. Time 2) mixed-design ANCOVA with modality as a between-subjects factor, time as a within-subjects factor, and (mean-centered) NFC as continuous predictor (covariate) on each of the dependent measures. This full-factorial ANCOVA included all interaction terms between modality, NFC, and time in
order to test whether the relationship between modality and NFC, documented above, changed as a function of time (see e.g., Baguley, 2012).

The results concerning brand attitude showed that neither the main effect of time, nor its interaction with modality and NFC, were significant (all $F$’s < 1, $p$’s > .341). There was only a marginal main effect of modality ($F(1,51) = 3.59$, $p = .064$), qualified by a significant modality*NFC interaction ($F(1,51) = 14.5$, $p < .001$), showing the same pattern as the results from the separate analyses reported above. The lack of a significant 3-way interaction (with time) implies that the interactive effect of modality and NFC on brand attitudes remained unchanged two weeks after exposure. With regard to purchase intentions, the results showed a main effect of time ($F(1,51) = 5.42$, $p = .024$), indicating that purchase intentions (of readers who took part in both waves) increased from Time 1 to Time 2, but that was the case in both modality conditions and the effect did not vary with NFC (all $p$’s > .2). The interaction between modality and NFC (collapsed across time) was again significant ($F(1,51) = 13.38$, $p = .001$). Again, the lack of a 3-way interaction indicates that, at least for the sub-sample of respondents who took part in both waves, the interactive effects of placement modality and NFC on purchase intentions persisted (rather than increased or decreased) over a two-week delay.

**DISCUSSION**

The present research demonstrates that brand placements in fictional narratives can affect brand responses. Moreover, the direction of placement effects is a function of something very literary, namely whether the brand is mentioned in the narration or in the dialogue of the story, and on something very personal, namely whether one finds thinking enjoyable. In line with our hypotheses, encountering a brand in the dialogue, as compared to the narration, of a story was associated with lower brand attitudes for readers with relatively high NFC, both immediately and at a delay. With regard to purchase intentions, the same pattern was obtained, although the effect only reached significance at Time 2 (i.e., it was only significant for the sub-sample who took part in both waves). In contrast, brand responses of readers with relatively low NFC were generally unaffected by placement modality, although dialogue placements were found to enhance purchase intentions for participants with very low NFC at Time 2.
Our findings contribute to the extant literature in several important ways. First of all, they provide the first empirical evidence for placement modality effects in written text. Thus, we demonstrated that although readers encode the brand name visually (i.e., on the page or screen) in both cases, reading the brand name in the narration vs. in the dialogue produces divergent effects, analogous to the modality effects documented in the context of audiovisual media (e.g., Homer, 2009). The present experiment also identified an important moderator, namely individual differences in NFC, suggesting that one’s chronic disposition to adopt a particular processing style is an important determinant of how placement execution will ultimately affect consumer responses to text placements. These findings corroborate and extend prior work on brand placement in text, where involvement was experimentally manipulated and the impact of placement plot connection (Olsen and Lanseng, 2012) and self-character similarity (Bhatnagar and Wan, 2012) were only obtained for high- (but not low-) involved readers.

Critically, the interaction between placement modality and NFC indicates that prominence in itself is not a reliable predictor of brand outcomes in response to placements in text. Instead, readers’ (chronic) propensity to engage in placement elaboration is decisive for whether high prominence will be detrimental or irrelevant (cf. Homer, 2009; Russell, 2002). This is consistent with work in audiovisual media (e.g., Cowley and Barron, 2009; Matthes et al., 2007), showing that program involvement – which is associated with deeper processing – moderate the effects of placement prominence on brand attitudes. Moreover, it is in line with recent evidence demonstrating that sponsorship disclosures in a TV program (which arguably make the presence of brand placement more salient) make viewers more easily recognize sponsored content as a form of advertising, which in turn triggers critical processing, ultimately leading to lower brand attitudes (Boerman et al., 2012, 2014). Crucially, Boerman et al. found that disclosures only prompted critical processing when viewers had the opportunity to engage in such processing, that is when the disclosure was sufficiently long and when it was presented prior to (vs. after) the program. These findings imply that some degree of elaboration, rather than prominence per se, is necessary for critical processing to take place. Given that high (vs. low) NFC individuals are more likely to engage in such (fairly extensive) elaboration, this prior work provides additional support for our proposal that dialogue, relative to narration, placements led to more negative brand attitudes by triggering more critical processing among high-NFC readers.
Chapter 3: Brand placement modality

The interaction between modality and NFC could also be interpreted from another angle. That is, NFC was negatively related to brand evaluations in the dialogue placement condition (with attitudes at both Time 1 and Time 2; with purchase intentions at Time 2), while it was positively related to brand attitude and purchase intentions in the narration placement condition (for both measures at Time 2). This pattern is consistent with evidence for the moderating impact of NFC on priming effects, indicating that high NFC leads to contrast effects after prominent primes, but to assimilation effects after subtle primes (Petty et al., 2008). Thus, unlike what is typically assumed in the product placement literature, deeper processing is not always detrimental, and positive effects on brand evaluation need not necessarily be due to mere exposure (cf. Matthes et al., 2007). Instead, a narration (i.e., subtle) placement can have a positive influence on both affective and conative outcomes for those likely to engage in more, rather than less, thought (see also Petty et al., 2008).

Interestingly, past work in persuasive communication has garnered somewhat conflicting findings regarding the role of NFC on narrative persuasion effects: While some studies have found no effect of NFC on attitude change (e.g., Appel and Richter, 2007), others have demonstrated that it moderates the effect of medium on transportation (Green et al., 2008), and leads to greater persuasion in response to narrative appeals (e.g., Zwarun and Hall, 2012). The present research, consistent with the latter group of studies, shows that NFC may also guide brand placement effects in fictional narratives.

The present research also established that modality may exert an impact on both affective and conative outcomes. In fact, our study is among the few that have used behavioural intentions (see Van Reijmersdal et al., 2009) as measures of product placement effectiveness. This allowed us to tap into different facets of consumer preferences and gain insight into the proximal antecedents of actual behavior (Spears and Singh, 2004). Finally, a key contribution of the present study lies in adopting a longitudinal approach: Unlike most previous studies, which have focused on the short-term impact of brand placement, we also investigated how the factors of interest influence responses of the same consumers both in the short-term and in the long-term, demonstrating that placement effects in books do not dissipate immediately after exposure. Specifically, we showed
that the interactive impact of modality and NFC remained stable even after a two-week delay (cf. Appel and Richter, 2007).

**Managerial implications**

Our results have a number of practical implications. First of all, they show that an ostensibly minor feature, such as whether a brand name is integrated in the narration or in the dialogue of a fictional text, may have a long-lasting impact on consumer responses to the placed brand. The data suggest that, everything else being equal (or unknown), placing brands in the narration seems to be the safer option. However, knowledge of the target audience can aid marketers in choosing a more effective placement strategy. That is, we demonstrate that for readers high in NFC, integrating a brand in the narration actually enhances brand responses at a two-week delay, while dialogue placements have a negative effect on both affective and conative outcomes both immediately and in the long-term. Critically, research indicates that the thoughts of high (vs. low) NFC individuals are better predictors of their attitudes, and that high NFC is associated with greater attitude persistence and resistance to change (e.g., Haugtvedt and Petty, 1992), as well as with higher attitude-behavior consistency (e.g., Cacioppo et al., 1986). In fact, the same extent of attitude change (in terms of extremity) has been found to lead to higher certainty and stronger impact on intentions when elicited under high (vs. low) thinking conditions (e.g., Shoots-Reinhard et al., 2014). Hence, it is important that marketers take NFC into account when designing brand placements for text. Fortunately, consumers with high NFC seem to be the prototypical readers: Research has shown that people with high (vs. low) NFC tend to be more highly-educated, prefer more intellectually challenging activities, rely more on newspapers than on TV for news, and are more transported into books than into film (see e.g., Cacioppo et al., 1996; Green et al., 2008).

Although the recommendation to take consumer personality into account is hardly new in the field of advertising (see e.g., Haugtvedt, Petty, and Cacioppo, 1992), it is quite novel in the area of product placement. To our knowledge, only one paper so far has looked at the role of stable individual differences (i.e., field-dependence/independence, Matthes et al., 2011). The advantage of using NFC over other individual difference variables is that it is one of the most widely researched personality traits (Petty et al., 2009) and a myriad of correlates of NFC have been
documented ranging from demographics (e.g., educational level) to political perceptions, media preferences, and actual behaviors (see e.g., Martin et al., 2005; Petty et al., 2009; Sohlberg, 2015). Notably, the unprecedented amount and richness of consumer (and, specifically, reader) data and advanced analytics techniques available nowadays (e.g., Alter, 2012; Alter and Russell, 2016) allow online retailers, (e-)book publishers, and marketers to more efficiently identify and segment a brand’s potential target audience. In fact, the company Jellybooks recently developed software that can be embedded in e-books and thus unobtrusively record (even offline) various aspects of reading behavior, such as pace, completion rate, and engagement, as well as demographic and other variables. Thus, data on who is reading (e.g., also available through reader profiles and online activity, which can all be used to identify high-NFC readers, as described above) can be matched with how one is reading (including measures of progress, engagement, sentiment, and social media activity). With such insight, a book’s reach and impact can be assessed much more accurately, and – as controversial as this may be – changes to the content can be made in light of pilot readers’ responses, before it is even published (Alter and Russell, 2016). Placing the “right” brand in the “right” book in the “right” way and reaching the “right” readers is thus anything but far-fetched.

**Limitations and future research**

The present study also has some limitations, which would hopefully inspire future work. First, although our results are consistent with the proposal that dialogue placements were more prominent than narration placements, and that this difference was especially consequential for those high in NFC, additional data is necessary to make a strong claim about the process driving the observed effects. This task is challenging for a number of reasons. Measuring perceptions of the placement before the dependent variables (which would arguably be the preferable way of measuring the underlying process) always hides the risk of influencing those measures, and the very act of measurement may also obscure any differences in brand prominence (by drawing attention to what might have otherwise been a subtle, implicitly processed placement). One way to tackle this problem is to conduct a series of studies, where the effects of dialogue vs. narration placements on perceived prominence are measured in a first experiment, and the mediating role of prominence is further tested in a separate study.
And yet, explicit self-report measures of a placement’s relative prominence or its ability to evoke imagery within different modalities may not necessarily capture subtle differences between mental representations of brands appearing in the narration vs. the dialogue of a story. In fact, Yao and Scheepers (2015) note that, in contrast to studies that use on-line methods (i.e., functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and eye-tracking, e.g., Stites et al., 2013; Yao et al., 2011; Zhou and Christianson, 2016) and thus track the ongoing processing of speech, studies using off-line methods (e.g., probe-reaction after reading of target sentences; e.g., Eerland et al., 2013) have proven less sensitive in detecting differences between direct and indirect speech. This is not surprising, given recent evidence that readers are not aware of what they are perceptually simulating and even lose information from their simulations when asked to engage in conscious inspection. Specifically, Connell and Lynott (2016) demonstrated that people are unable to reliably rate the true extent to which a concept is based on sensory experience (i.e., the perceptual content of a simulation), and neglect and distort some sensory aspects of their simulation (e.g., auditory and haptic experience), supposedly as a result of the limited capacity of working memory. Critically, they argue that the lack of conscious awareness does not indicate a lack of perceptual experience; it just precludes conscious introspection, although it may still have downstream consequences on other responses.

Hence, finding a suitable and reliable method of measuring modality-specific mental imagery and perceived brand prominence in studying responses to narration vs. dialogue placements is in itself an important task for future research. One approach that could eventually circumvent the need to rely on explicit self-report measures of prominence and modality-specific mental simulation is to use a probe-recognition task, where response times to words (e.g., a brand name) following exposure to the stimuli (narration or dialogue containing brand names) are recorded (see e.g., Eerland et al., 2013). Shorter response times are usually interpreted as evidence that the respective information is more accessible or vivid. Further, such a task can be adapted using visual and auditory probes in order to test whether participants who encountered narration and dialogue placements activated visual and auditory imagery, respectively. That is, shorter response times (and greater accuracy) would be expected in conditions where the probe and the stimulus modalities match (vs. not).
Another aspect of the present findings that deserves further attention pertains to the moderating role of NFC. We proposed that individual differences in NFC were associated with different processing styles during reading, which made people with high and low NFC differentially susceptible to modality effects. Yet, it is not entirely clear what thoughts or feelings mediated the observed differences in brand responses. One explanation, which is consistent with the findings of Petty et al. (2008) in the context of semantic priming, is based on the idea that exposure to subtle placements is sufficient to activate brand-related constructs for high-NFC individuals, without making them aware of the source of this increased accessibility, thereby enhancing brand evaluations. In contrast, a prominent mention (even if one doesn’t consciously perceive it as such, as argued above) is more likely to draw attention to the placement itself and thus trigger thoughts of tactic inappropriateness, pertaining to the (hidden) motives of the author (e.g., Why is this brand mentioned? Does it aim to manipulate my opinion?), and thereby producing more negative evaluations (e.g., Boerman et al., 2014; Campbell and Kirmani, 2000).

However, an alternative (or maybe complementary) explanation for the decline in brand evaluations for high-NFC readers that future research could directly investigate may be that the prominent placements elicited negative thoughts about the character placing the brand. Specifically, it could be that dialogue placements violated conversational norms (Grice, 1975; Schwarz, 1994). Since recipients expect that communicators share information that is relevant, not redundant, and appropriate for the particular social context and circumstances, “hearing” the character repeatedly referring to the brand name (rather than just using the generic product name, or mentioning the brand name just once) can be seen as violating some of these norms. It is likely that people with high NFC would be more sensitive to such violations, since they process the narrative more extensively. In support of this account, past research has found that the “avoid redundancy” conversational norm in a survey context is not automatically applied by all respondents, but only by those with high NFC (McCabe and Brannon, 2004).

If perceived violations of conversational norms are driving the observed effects, one could also expect that perceptions of the character placing the brand would also be affected (i.e., being more negative in the dialogue placement conditions). We conducted some additional analyses to address this question, albeit indirectly and in a post-hoc manner. Specifically, at Time 1 we had
also measured character liking using 3 bipolar 7-point scales (attractive/ unattractive, kind/unkind, reliable/unreliable; Cronbach’s alpha = .77). We used these as filler items (along with questions about the story) that followed the text of the short-story as part of our purported study on “perceptions of literature”. This allowed us to check whether perceptions of the character differed across conditions and whether NFC had an impact by running a regression analysis with modality, NFC, and the modality x NFC interaction as predictors, and character-liking as the dependent variable. The results showed that perceptions did not differ: Neither the main, nor the interaction effects were significant (all p’s > .24), and the character was perceived relatively positively ($M = 4.74, SD = .84$). We also tested whether modality interacts with character-liking to affect brand evaluation. The interaction effect was not significant on either brand attitude or purchase intention (at either Time 1 or Time 2, all p’s > .34). Thus, it seems that character-liking – at least in the way it was measured – was not related to modality effects in the present study. Still, future studies could measure readers’ specific inferences about story characters (e.g., personality traits, acceptability of behavior) and perceptions of whether dialogue placements comply with conversational forms, in addition to persuasion knowledge and tactic (in)appropriateness, in order to test (and eventually disentangle) these different accounts.

It must be noted that although brand responses of low NFC readers were mostly unaffected by placement modality, in line with our predictions, dialogue placements were found to enhance purchase intentions for participants who scored on the lower end of NFC at Time 2. Despite the fact that this relationship was only obtained on one measure and was significant for NFC scores that only represented 13% of our (relatively small) sample, it indicates that NFC might be associated with different effects if it is sufficiently low, so future studies might consider using participant samples that feature greater variance in terms of this construct. In addition, adding a control condition which allows comparing the effects of dialogue vs. narration placements to a baseline would be advisable. Although this was not of primary interest in the current study, as it aimed to investigate the relative impact of each type of placement modality, comparing these to a baseline (e.g., a no-placement condition) would provide additional insight into the nature of these effects.
Further, the present research only tested the impact of placement modality for a familiar brand (Esprit). In light of evidence for the moderating effect of brand familiarity on advertising (e.g., Campbell and Keller, 2003) and brand placement effects (Mau, Silberer, and Constien, 2008), it would be interesting to investigate whether modality exerts the same effect for unfamiliar brands. Another potential moderator that could be studied in the future is placement frequency. Based on past work on placement repetition in audiovisual media (e.g., Matthes et al. 2007) and written narratives (Avramova et al., 2016), a higher number of exposures to dialogue placements would be expected to lead to even greater decline in brand evaluations among high-NFC readers. However, it is not clear whether increasing exposure to narrative placements will further strengthen the positive effects that we obtained in the present study, or if those placements would lose their subtlety, resulting in wearout. In addition, it could be that low-NFC readers are also affected by placement modality at higher repetition levels (see Petty et al., 2008).

Finally, an interesting issue that future research could address is the role of grammatical person, namely whether employing 1st person narration (I) produces similar effects as the ones observed in the present study, which used (objective) 3rd person narration (s/he). Specifically, past work suggests that the grammatical person of a narrative influences the perspective adopted by the reader, and thus how the events and scenes are mentally represented. For instance, whereas 3rd person narratives typically induce an external perspective (i.e., of an observer), 1st person narratives are more likely to elicit an internal perspective (i.e., of the narrating character), especially in longer discourse contexts (Brunyé et al., 2009; see also Caracciolo, 2016). To the extent that adopting the narrator’s perspective is likely to make some elements of the story (e.g., a branded product s/he describes or uses) more salient to readers, it could also influence the magnitude of modality effects. That is, the difference in prominence between dialogue and narration placements, proposed to underlie the effects in the present study, might be reduced if a 1st person is employed, thereby making brand mentions in the narration as prominent as the ones in the dialogue.
Chapter 4
Brand placement in fiction: The role of stylistic devices in placement effects on attitude towards familiar and unfamiliar brands
The line between editorial and commercial content, and thus between entertainment and persuasion, is becoming increasingly blurred as novel marketing communication strategies are developed to reach consumers (Cain, 2011; Shrum, 2012; Van Reijmersdal, Tutaj, and Boerman, 2013). *Brand placement* is one such tool, which capitalizes on the idea that embedding a brand in the context of a meaningful narrative may more effectively persuade an immersed audience than traditional advertising. Although it is traditionally associated with audiovisual media, such as movies, TV programs, computer games, and music videos, brand placement has been recently transgressing these boundaries to also appear in books (e.g., Alter, 2014a; Flood, 2014; Friedman, 1985; Orden, 2011). For instance, the jewelry designer Bulgari paid Fay Weldon to integrate the brand in a novel (“The Bulgari Connection”, 2001), Land Rover commissioned William Boyd to write a short-story featuring the vehicle (“The Vanishing Game, 2015), and Sweet’n Low sponsored Hillary Carlip’s recent e-book (“Find Me, I’m Yours”, 2014).

Although studies on brand placement effects in books are still relatively scarce, evidence is already emerging to show that placements in text may influence readers’ memory (Brennan, 2008), attitudes (Avramova et al., 2016a; Bhatnagar and Wan, 2011; Olson and Lanseng, 2012), and purchase intentions (Avramova et al., 2016b; Storm and Stoller, 2015) with regard to the placed brand. For instance, research has shown that the degree to which the brand is connected to the story plot (Olson and Lanseng, 2012), as well as placement frequency and readers’ narrative transportation (Avramova et al., 2016a) influence brand attitudes. Interestingly, recent work has also highlighted the importance of another placement execution characteristic, namely how, or where, a brand is integrated in the text. Inspired by research on placement modality in audiovisual media such as film and TV programs, showing that *audio* placements (i.e., those containing a verbal reference to a brand) are more prominent than *visual* placements (i.e., where a branded product is shown on screen; Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009; Russell, 2002), Avramova et al. (2016b) proposed a similar distinction in the context of written narrative. Specifically, they studied the consequences of exposure to brands within the narrator’s description of a scene or character (i.e., *narration* placement) compared to brands within the story dialogue (i.e., *dialogue* placement) and found that the latter is associated with lower brand evaluations for readers who are relatively high in need for cognition (NFC; Cacioppo and Petty, 1982).
The goals of the current research are twofold. First, it aims to extend past work by further exploring the impact of a text’s stylistic features on brand attitudes. Specifically, we focus on different types of *speech representation* and distinguish between placements appearing in the *direct* vs. the *indirect speech* of a fictional narrative. Thus, whereas previous studies in both audiovisual and print media have tested placement modality effects in terms of contrasting audio/dialogue with visual/narration placements, the present research takes a different approach by zooming in on how brands are integrated in what story characters say. That is, a character’s utterance could be quoted verbatim using direct speech (e.g., “*We’ll go to Bulgari and buy the necklace*”), or by indicating that this utterance was delivered using indirect speech (e.g., *He said that they’ll go to Bulgari and buy the necklace*). Although the information conveyed in both cases is equivalent, past research has shown that direct and indirect speech are perceived and processed in a different manner: Direct speech is typically more vivid, memorable, and more extensively elaborated than indirect speech (e.g., Clark and Gerrig, 1990; Yao and Scheepers, 2015). Drawing on evidence that high placement prominence has a negative effect on brand evaluations (e.g., Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009), we propose that brands featuring in characters’ direct (vs. indirect) speech will decrease attitudes towards the placed brand.

Furthermore, the present study explores the moderating role of *brand familiarity*. A number of studies have demonstrated that brand placement effects are more likely to emerge, or are more pronounced, for unfamiliar than for familiar brands (e.g., Avramova et al., 2016a; Storm and Stoller, 2015; Wei Fischer, and Main, 2008). Moreover, research in advertising has shown that unfamiliar brands typically undergo more extensive elaboration than familiar brands (e.g., Campbell and Keller, 2003; Sujan, 1985). Based on evidence suggesting that deeper processing may facilitate the negative impact of placement prominence on brand attitudes (Avramova et al., 2016a, Homer, 2009; Matthes et al., 2007), we therefore propose that the effects of speech type will be stronger for unfamiliar than for familiar brands.

**LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT**

The current study draws on research findings from several different disciplines. First of all, we build on empirical evidence from the fields of communication, (neuro-)linguistics and cognitive science, demonstrating that direct and indirect speech are processed and perceived differently
during silent reading. Second, we draw on the product placement literature which has investigated the role of placement prominence in brand placement effects. Integrating these findings with research in advertising and brand placement, showing that brand familiarity is an important determinant of how consumers process brand-related information, we generate specific predictions regarding the interactive impact of speech type and brand familiarity on brand evaluations in the context of written narrative. In the next sections, we review relevant findings from each of these research streams and develop specific hypotheses.

**Processing of direct and indirect speech during silent reading**

According to embodied cognition theories (e.g., Barsalou, 2008; Fischer and Zwaan, 2008), language comprehension is “grounded” in bodily perception and action. Thus, readers engage in (unconscious) perceptual simulation of the objects, characters, and events depicted in a text – a process which gives rise to experiences that closely mirror those resulting from engaging with the real world (see e.g., Zwaan, 2009, for a review). In line with this, neuroimaging studies have shown that such simulations are (sensory) modality-specific. For instance, verbal descriptions of smells activate olfactory brain areas (González et al., 2006), and descriptions of sounds activate auditory brain areas (e.g., Brunyé et al., 2010; Scerrati et al., 2015).

Research on auditory perceptual simulation further suggests that readers automatically generate an “inner voice” (Huey, 1908/1968), which involves phonological representations and thus reflects some perceptual aspects of actual speech (e.g., Zhou and Christianson, 2016). For example, research using tongue-twister sentences (e.g., The tired dentist dozed, but he drilled dutifully) has observed slower reading times and poorer comprehension of tongue-twisters relative to matched control sentences, supposedly driven by interference of similar phonetic representations activated during reading (e.g., Hanson, Goodell, and Perfetti, 1991; Keller, Carpenter, and Just, 2003). Moreover, Kosslyn and Matt (1977) demonstrated that the words of a purported “slow speaker” were read out loud more slowly than the words attributed to a purported “fast speaker” and Alexander and Nygaard (2008) replicated these effects with regard to silent reading.
Critically, a growing body of evidence from cognitive psychology and linguistics suggests that the (strength of) activation of our “inner voice” may depend on stylistic features of the text. Specifically, authors use different speech representation styles to depict the content of story characters’ speech and thought, a fundamental distinction being that between direct and indirect speech (Bortolussi and Dixon, 2003; Leech and Short, 2007). Direct speech is presented through a verbatim quote of the character’s words, often graphically denoted by dashes or quotation marks. In contrast, indirect speech indicates that an utterance (or a thought) has occurred, but the exact wording is not provided. Clark and Gerrig (1990) proposed that direct speech serves the pragmatic function of demonstration, allowing readers to directly experience the speech act, whereas indirect speech only serves as description. As a consequence, indirect discourse is associated with greater distance between the reader and the character, as the narrator intervenes to report what was said, while direct speech results in the foregrounding of the utterance, thereby creating the impression that one hears the character’s voice (e.g., Prince, 1982; Sanders and Redeker, 1996; Semino, 2004).

In line with this idea, studies using oral reading tasks have shown that readers spontaneously adjust their voice to “act out” the emotional state of the character implied in direct speech, whereas indirect speech is delivered in a more neutral tone, indicating that direct speech has a more “dramatic” or theatrical nature (Yao and Scheepers, 2015). More importantly, research employing functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and eye-tracking demonstrates that auditory perceptual simulation is more pronounced during silent reading of direct than of indirect speech. For instance, direct – but not indirect – speech is read faster when the character is described as talking fast (Stites, Luke, and Christianson, 2013; Yao and Scheepers, 2011). Direct speech has also been found to elicit stronger neural activity in brain areas that are selectively sensitive to human voices (Brück et al., 2014; Yao, Belin, and Scheepers, 2011). Taken together, these findings lend strong support to the idea that direct speech renders a richer and more elaborated representation of the text (Zhou and Christianson, 2016).

An important consequence of direct speech being more likely to elicit auditory imagery than indirect speech is that it is also more attention-grabbing and is processed more extensively. Clark and Gerrig (1990) indeed posited that characters’ quoted speech is perceived as more
perceptually vivid than indirect speech. Empirical evidence comes from research showing that subtle changes in the wording of a sentence are more reliably detected when they occur within direct, rather than indirect, speech, indicating superior verbatim memory and more extensive elaboration of direct speech (e.g., Eerland, Engelen, and Zwaan, 2013). This pattern corroborates prior work demonstrating that vivid information typically undergoes deeper elaboration than pallid information (e.g., Kisielius and Sternthal, 1986).

In sum, the research reviewed above suggests that direct speech is more likely to elicit auditory imagery, it is more vivid and attention-grabbing, and seems to be more extensively processed than indirect speech. With regard to the present research, these findings imply that readers’ mental representations of a brand placed in a passage of direct (vs. indirect) speech will also exhibit these features: Encountering a brand within a character’s quoted speech will be more likely to activate a phonological representation of the brand name, render it more prominent, and trigger deeper elaboration of the placement than when the content of the utterance is reported by the narrator. We discuss the downstream consequences of such text processing differences for brand attitudes next.

The impact of speech type on brand attitude

Previous studies on brand placement in audiovisual media have provided converging support for the notion that (high) placement prominence has a negative influence on brand attitude (e.g., Cowley and Barron, 2008; Homer, 2009; Russell, 2002). Exposing participants to placements in different sensory modalities has been the most common way of manipulating prominence. In light of evidence that auditory and audiovisual placements (which contain a verbal reference to the brand) typically exhibit better recall than visual placements (e.g., Brennan and Babin, 2004; Gupta and Lord, 1998; Russell, 2002), it has been argued that auditory placements are more extensively processed and, as a result, more likely to activate persuasion knowledge and elicit thoughts related to tactic inappropriateness (Friestad and Wright, 1994; Campbell and Kirmani, 2000). Thus, individuals exposed to prominent placements would start questioning the motives behind the (conspicuous) brand integration, which would in turn prompt them to “correct” for the biasing influence of the placement when evaluating the target brand.
Chapter 4: Placements in direct vs. indirect speech

The detrimental impact of auditory, relative to visual, placements on brand attitudes was conceptually replicated in the context of written narratives: Exposure to placements within the dialogue, as compared to the narration, of a story was associated with lower brand attitude and purchase intention for readers who were relatively high in need for cognition (Avramova et al., 2016b). The researchers suggested that, analogous to the effect of placement modality in the domain of film and TV, placements appearing in the dialogue – i.e., in direct speech – of a text are more prominent than those embedded in the narration and thus more likely to undergo deeper processing and trigger thoughts about tactic inappropriateness than narration placements. Building on these findings from both audiovisual and print media, the current study takes a step further by exploring the consequences of integrating a brand name within direct vs. indirect speech – which past research has found to differ in terms of prominence – for brand evaluations. More specifically, we posit that although in both cases the brand name is written, and the brand mention pertains to what the character says, exposure to placements in direct speech will be associated with more negative attitudes than exposure to placements in indirect speech.

**H1:** Brand attitudes will be more positive after exposure to placements in indirect than in direct speech.

Furthermore, the present study investigates a potential moderator of this effect, namely brand familiarity.

**The moderating role of brand familiarity**

*Brand familiarity* refers to the brand-related knowledge and experiences accumulated by a consumer (Alba and Hutchinson, 1987). There are several reasons for expecting brand familiarity to moderate the effects of speech type on brand evaluations. First, although some studies employing (only) familiar brands have shown that brand attitudes shift as a result of exposure to product placement in film, TV programs, or computer games (e.g., Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009; Mau, Silberer, and Constien, 2008), other studies – which systematically manipulated or measured brand familiarity – only found placement effects for unfamiliar, but not for familiar, brands (e.g., Avramova et al., 2016a; Verhellen, Dens, and De Pelsmacker, 2015; Wei, Fischer, and Main, 2008). Importantly, the latter group of studies specifically shows that brand familiarity
moderates the impact of *placement prominence* on brand attitudes. For instance, in a field study on brand placement in film, Verhellen and colleagues (2015) showed that brand familiarity moderates the effects of placement prominence and plot connection on brand attitudes: Prominent plot-connected placements enhanced brand attitudes relative to subtle plot-connected placements, but only when brand familiarity was low (neither prominence, nor plot connection influenced brand attitude when brand familiarity was high). Consistent with these findings, an experiment using written narratives demonstrated that high (vs. low) placement repetition (which arguably also increases brand prominence; see Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009) led to more positive attitudes towards an unfamiliar brand (for readers who were highly transported into the story), whereas repetition did not influence evaluations of a familiar brand (Avramova et al., 2016a). Similarly, a series of studies using short narrative texts found that the positive impact of placement frequency on purchase intentions was stronger for unfamiliar than for familiar brands (Storm and Stoller, 2015).

One explanation for why familiar brands are relatively impervious to brand placement effects pertains to the notion that they are readily linked to brand knowledge stored in memory, including pre-existing brand attitudes. Thus, the content of the narrative in which the familiar brand is placed, and the specific aspects of the placement’s execution (such as modality or repetition), are less likely to influence brand attitudes (see e.g., Avramova et al., 2016a; Kamleitner and Jyote, 2013; Verhellen et al., 2016). In contrast, unfamiliar brands are per definition novel stimuli for which a new mental representation needs to be formed. Thus, encountering an unfamiliar brand name triggers more effortful processing, aimed at interpreting the novel stimulus. In line with this, previous work in advertising has demonstrated that novel brands are processed more extensively than familiar brands (Campbell and Keller, 2003; see also Britton and Tesser, 1982; Sujan, 1985). Moreover, recent neuroscientific evidence provides insight into the underlying processes driving these differences. Specifically, Reimann et al. (2012) measured the neurophysiological activation, response latency, and actual brand choice with regard to novel and familiar brands. Using fMRI, they demonstrated that prior to choosing novel brands (compared to familiar brands), brain areas associated with executive control and the reward system were activated. According to the researchers, such a pattern indicates that the choice of novel brands involves weighing and risk assessment, as well as the appeal of a potential
reward, in line with prior research on risky decision making (e.g., Xue et al., 2009). Furthermore, choosing novel brands was associated with longer response times than choosing familiar brands, implying deeper, more effortful processing.

Taken together, the findings reviewed above strongly suggest that unfamiliar brand placements in text will undergo more extensive elaboration than familiar brand placements. In the present study, we propose that, as a result of these processing differences, speech type will be more consequential for unfamiliar than for familiar brands. That is, whether a brand name appears in direct or in indirect speech, which supposedly differ in terms of prominence, will more strongly influence attitudes towards unfamiliar than familiar brands. Past research provides indirect support for this hypothesis, as a number of studies show that the impact of placement prominence is more pronounced (or only emerges) under conditions of high (vs. low) elaboration. For instance, audiovisual (i.e., prominent) placements were found to decrease brand attitudes relative to visual (i.e., subtle) placements only when exposure frequency was high, and thus more opportunities were provided for viewers to process the placement and generate counterarguments (Homer, 2009; see also Matthes et al., 2007). Furthermore, placement repetition in a fictional text had a negative impact on brand attitudes when readers were highly transported in the narrative and were high (vs. low) in NFC (Avramova et al., 2016a). Consistent with this, exposure to placements in the story dialogue (vs. narration) decreased brand evaluations for high- but not for low-NFC readers (Avramova et al., 2016b). Given prior evidence that high-NFC individuals are more likely to engage in careful and effortful processing (see Cacioppo, Petty, Feinstein and Jarvis, 1996; Petty, Briñol, Loersch, and McCaslin, 2009), these results suggest that deeper processing was a prerequisite for these effects. Integrating the evidence above, we thus formulate the following hypothesis:

**H2:** Brand familiarity will moderate the effect of speech type on brand attitude, such that the negative impact of placements in direct (vs. indirect) speech will be stronger for unfamiliar than for familiar brands.
METHOD

Design and experimental manipulation

To test the hypotheses, we conducted an experiment with a 2(speech: direct, indirect) x 2(brand: familiar, unfamiliar) full-factorial between-subjects design. We systematically manipulated type of speech by inserting the target brand in either a character’s direct or indirect speech, and brand familiarity – by placing either a familiar (Orangina®, a lightly carbonated beverage made from water and citrus pulp marketed by Schweppes®) or an unfamiliar soft-drink brand (Cedevita®, a Croatian brand of orange-flavored instant drink that is not available on the market in Belgium, where the study was conducted).

The experimental stimulus was a suspense short-story, written by a professional author. The original short-story (http://old.radio1.be/programmas/midi-crimi/kortverhaal-van-jo-claes-man-met-kap) was adapted for the purposes of the present study by inserting the target brand and a few sentences that link the placement scenes to the story plot. In all conditions, the target brand was mentioned four times, appearing twice on page 1, and once on page 3 and page 4 of the story, which occupied 4 pages (i.e., screens; about 3,000 words) in our online survey. Apart from the difference in speech type, the placement scenes were essentially the same across conditions. For instance, during a phone conversation with his brother, the protagonist mentions that he is very thirsty and his brother recommends him: “Drink another [Orangina/Cedevita] before you go to bed” (direct speech); alternatively, the same content is reported: “He recommended him to drink another [Orangina/Cedevita] before going to bed” (indirect speech). The text was written in Dutch, in the past tense, and all dialogue (direct speech) appeared on a new line and enclosed by quotation marks, while indirect speech was not marked in any way (i.e., it did not differ visually from the rest of the narration; see Appendix 1C for the stimuli and manipulations).

Participants and procedure

One hundred and two respondents were recruited through convenience sampling. Two of them were removed from the analyses, since they were under 18 years old (14 and 15), leaving us with 100 respondents (61% male, $M_{\text{age}} = 26.45$, $SD_{\text{age}} = 9.58$). Participants were emailed an invitation to fill in an online survey, programmed in Qualtrics®, and were told they could take part in a
lottery to win a double-admission movie voucher. Upon clicking the survey link, participants were automatically and randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions. The survey was presented as a series of unrelated studies. Each ‘study’ featured a different title (e.g., “study on reading”, “consumer behavior study”), introduction, task instructions, and layout in order to reduce the chance that respondents will (immediately) see the link between the manipulation and the dependent measures. Readers could spend as much time as they wanted to read the story and complete all questions.

**Measures**

The dependent variable, *brand attitude*, was measured using four 7-point bipolar scales (negative/positive, unattractive/attractive, don’t like/like, low/high quality; see e.g., Avramova et al., 2016a; Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009) for both the familiar (Cronbach’s alpha = .93, $M = 4.90$, $SD = 1.14$) and the unfamiliar brand (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .94$, $M = 3.87$, $SD = 1.07$). *Brand familiarity* for both brands was measured in both conditions on a 7-point scale using the item “How familiar are you with [Orangina/Cedevita]?” *(not at all familiar – very familiar)* as a manipulation check. In addition, *story-liking* was measured as a control variable (immediately after the text) on a 7-point scale using 5 items (e.g., “The story was enjoyable”, “The story was interesting”, “I would recommend the story to a friend”; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .85$, $M = 5.00$, $SD = 1.17$; see Dens et al., 2012). Controlling for gender, age, and story-liking did not affect the results, hence we only report the analyses without these covariates.

**RESULTS**

Since participants’ *familiarity* with both brands was measured in all conditions, we conducted a paired-samples *t*-test to compare participants’ familiarity ratings of the two brands (within participants) and thus check that our brand familiarity manipulation was successful. As intended, the familiar brand was rated as significantly more familiar ($M = 4.99$, $SD = 1.62$) than the unfamiliar brand ($M = 1.45$, $SD = 1.24$), $t(99) = -17.73$, $p < .001$.

To test our hypotheses, we conducted a 2(speech: indirect, direct) x 2(brand: unfamiliar, familiar) analysis of variance (ANOVA) on brand attitude. The ANOVA revealed a significant main effect of speech, $F(1,96) = 5.65$, $p = .019$, $\eta^2 = .06$. Readers’ brand attitudes were higher when the brand
was placed in indirect ($M = 4.69$, $SD = 1.19$) than in direct speech ($M = 4.14$, $SD = 1.20$), thus confirming H1 (see Figure 4.1). The main effect of brand familiarity was also significant, $F(1,96) = 14.86$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .13$, with the familiar brand ($M = 4.84$, $SD = .89$) being rated higher than the unfamiliar brand ($M = 3.96$, $SD = 1.35$). However, contrary to predictions, the interaction effect was not significant ($F < 1$, $p = .706$). Thus, exposure to the brand in the indirect, relative to direct, speech was associated with more positive brand attitudes regardless of brand familiarity, thereby rejecting H2.

**Figure 4.1: The impact of type of speech on brand attitude towards the unfamiliar and familiar brand.**

DISCUSSION

The present experiment investigated the effects of brand placement in a fictional text by comparing readers’ evaluations of a familiar and an unfamiliar brand placed in either direct or indirect speech. Our findings show that, as predicted, exposure to brands in indirect (vs. direct) speech was associated with more positive brand attitudes. However, our hypothesis regarding the moderating role of brand familiarity did not receive support: The impact of speech was the same for the unfamiliar and the familiar brand.
The current research makes a contribution to the extant literature on several fronts. First of all, being the first empirical investigation of the consequences of placing brands in direct and indirect speech in a written narrative, it advances our knowledge about this marketing communication strategy in a medium that has been largely neglected by product placement researchers. Our findings show that a subtle stylistic feature such as speech type influences the effectiveness of a placement in text. Further, our results extend recent work on the impact of placement modality on readers’ responses to brands placed in a fictional text (Avramova et al., 2016b). Specifically, it was found that attitudes and purchase intentions for a familiar brand are more positive after exposure to placements in the story narration (i.e., the narrator’s description of a scene or character), as compared to placements in the story dialogue, and this effect was stronger for readers who score relatively high in need for cognition (NFC; Cacioppo and Petty, 1982). The current findings demonstrate that placing a brand within direct speech (i.e., dialogue) also leads to lower brand attitude than placing the brand within indirect speech.

These results speak to the widely-studied relationship between placement modality and prominence. In fact, prior work that used audiovisual materials to test the impact of placement prominence on brand evaluations has most often operationalized prominence in terms of placement modality (e.g., Cowley and Barron, 2008; Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009). Notably, Russell (2002) suggested that the negative influence of auditory, relative to visual, placements may be due to the higher intrusiveness of information encoded via the auditory channel. That is, unlike visual placements, which often feature branded products as props, the auditory channel transmits the script of the story, which is typically (expected to be) more central and meaningful. Hence, if a character verbally mentions a brand (i.e., in dialogue), this information is more likely to be extensively elaborated than when the product is simply displayed on screen without any explicit reference to it. Albeit useful in studying the effects of prominence in audiovisual media (i.e., comparing auditory and visual placements), this account is less relevant when it comes to the context of print media, where one is always exposed to the brand names via the visual channel (i.e., through reading; see Avramova et al., 2016b), or when the influence of prominence within the same modality is of interest. As the present study demonstrates, placements in a written text can be analyzed on a rich prominence continuum, while keeping the “modality” of the placement constant (i.e., placements in direct and indirect speech are both speech-related).
other words, different types of written speech presentation influence readers’ brand attitudes differently despite the fact that in both cases the brand is part of a character’s (reported) utterance and thus supposedly carrying equivalently meaningful information.

The present study failed to find the predicted effect of brand familiarity. Specifically, we had proposed that the impact of speech type (direct vs. indirect) on brand attitude would be stronger for an unfamiliar than for a familiar brand. Given that unfamiliar brands typically undergo deeper elaboration than familiar brands (e.g., Campbell and Keller, 2003; Reimann et al., 2012), we expected the unfamiliar brand placements to be processed more extensively and differences in speech type to be more consequential. However, speech type affected attitudes towards the familiar and the unfamiliar brand in a similar manner. The lack of a significant interaction effect could be due to the relatively small sample and thus low power of the study. It could also be due to the fact that the familiar brand was not highly, but rather moderately familiar ($M = 4.68$), and encountering a moderately familiar brand in a text could trigger deeper processing than a highly familiar brand. Alternatively, the obtained pattern may imply that evaluations of (relatively) familiar brands – albeit unaffected by placement repetition (Avramova et al. 2016a) – may still be influenced by other factors that supposedly modulate placement prominence. In fact, the results of the present study are consistent with the finding of Avramova et al. (2016b) that readers report lower attitudes towards a familiar brand (in that case, Esprit) after exposure to dialogue, relative to narration, placements. Thus, the impact of placement modality and speech type seem to be strong enough to even shift evaluations of familiar brands, and thereby to also override potential familiarity-driven depth-of-processing differences.

**Limitations and future research**

The present work has several limitations, which also highlight intriguing avenues for future research. First of all, we did not directly measure the processes underlying the reported effects. Although the results are in line with our proposal that placements within direct and indirect speech differ in terms of prominence, more direct evidence for reader’s perceptions of the placements would provide a stronger test of this hypothesis. Moreover, the manner in which (high vs. low) prominence influences placement processing and brand evaluations also needs to be more directly studied. For instance, based on our results it’s not clear whether the relative
differences between indirect and direct speech placements are due to an increase in brand attitude in the former case, a decrease in the latter, or both. One theoretical framework that could parsimoniously explain both types of effects is that of perceptual fluency (e.g., Lee and Labroo, 2004). Specifically, research has demonstrated that repeated exposure increases perceived ease of processing (fluency), which in turn elicits positive affect (Winkielman and Cacioppo, 2001), resulting in more favorable evaluations, provided that the source of fluency is not identified (Winkielman, Schwarz, Fazendeiro, and Reber, 2003). Applied to the present study, this account would imply that readers who were repeatedly (i.e., 4 times) exposed to the brand within indirect speech (i.e., supposedly a relatively subtle placement) experienced processing ease and positive affect, which caused an increase in their brand evaluations. In contrast, encountering the brand name in the direct speech (i.e., supposedly a more prominent placement) raised awareness of the biasing influence of the placement and triggered correction processes, thereby decreasing brand evaluations. Future research could employ both implicit measures and thought-listing procedures to tap into the relative contribution of implicit (e.g., fluency, affect) and explicit processes (e.g., tactic inappropriateness-related thoughts, counterarguing) to the observed effects. In addition, measuring response latencies to target brands (after exposure to brand placements) may provide valuable evidence as to whether responses are memory-based (i.e., faster reaction times) or constructed during judgment (slower reaction times; e.g., Bizer, Tormala, Rucker, and Petty, 2006; Cronley, Mantel, and Kardes, 2010; Reimann et al., 2012).

Another important question pertains to the role of brand familiarity in the present, as well as in previously documented, effects. That is, brand familiarity has sometimes been found to moderate placement effects (e.g., Avramova et al., 2016a, Verhellen et al., 2016), yet studies using familiar brands in text have also shown those to be affected by placement manipulations (Avramova et al., 2016b; Storm and Stoller, 2015). In line with the former, speech type affected brand attitude towards both the unfamiliar and the familiar brand in the present study. Thus, future work may attempt to systematically investigate the circumstances where brand familiarity is consequential. Further, different aspects of brand familiarity may be relevant in different cases. For instance, the number or strength of brand-related associations, the amount of personal experience, or the frequency with which a brand is purchased or used may influence how readers process brand placements in text to a different extent. Moreover, it has been argued that brand knowledge may
reflect different kinds of information linked to the brand, such as awareness, attributes, benefits, thoughts, images, feelings, attitudes, and experiences (Keller, 2003). Finally, it is possible that the degree of unfamiliarity (e.g., low familiarity vs. non-familiarity) is crucial. Future studies could thus use more specific and sensitive measures of brand familiarity and investigate whether various dimensions are differentially relevant for brand placement, and when and how they moderate placement effects in written text.

Last but not least, an intriguing avenue for future research lies in exploring the brand placement potential of audiobooks. With relation to the present study, the question arises as to whether the effects of speech type in written text replicate in the context of audiobooks. We would speculate that even though the content (i.e., direct and indirect speech, narration) would be encoded aurally, listeners would still engage in auditory, visual, and other sensory imagery, just like they do when reading a written text (see also Kuzmičová, 2016). It is possible, however, that listening to an audiobook differs from reading print in some other important ways, which could in turn influence how brand placements are processed. For instance, audiobooks are not self-paced, and people typically play them while simultaneously engaging in some other task, such as physical activity or travel (Rubery, 2011). Thus, it could be that deep and careful processing of the text and the placements is less likely in this context – even for unfamiliar brands. In fact, a recent study found that listening to (vs. reading) a passage was associated with more mind-wandering and poorer memory (Sousa, Carriere, and Smilek, 2013).

In any case, to our knowledge no empirical work exists on the effectiveness of brand placement in this medium. This is quite surprising, given that audiobook sales have doubled in the last five years, with British readers, for instance, spending £10million on audiobooks in 2014 (Furness, 2015; see also Alter, 2013), and some podcasts being streamed or downloaded up to 5 million times (Alter, 2014b). Notably, besides the growing number of audiobooks available through both traditional publishers and dedicated platforms, some audiobook producers and retailers like Audible (owned by Amazon) have started commissioning original works that are only available in this format. This booming market calls for systematic empirical research into the possibilities and consequences of brand placement in audiobooks, especially since some, like BMW, have long recognized the power of listening to stories on the move. Already in 2006, BMW
commissioned four authors to write short-stories featuring the brand, which could be downloaded in MP3 format from the automaker’s website (Flood, 2014).

**Practical implications**

The present study has important implications for marketing and communication practitioners. Specifically, our findings show that the effectiveness of integrating a brand in a fictional text is contingent on whether it is placed within a character’s reported (indirect), rather than direct, speech. Moreover, this seems to hold for both an unfamiliar and a familiar brand. Combined with the results of previous work (Avramova et al., 2016b), these results suggest that marketers and authors should place brands in the indirect speech or in the narration of a story to prevent negative responses.

More generally, there are strong indications that (paid) brand placement in books is on the rise and that the practice is likely to become increasingly attractive to advertisers. This seems to be a logical consequence of the growing placement clutter in audiovisual media, such as film and TV programs (Alter, 2014a; Gaughran, 2012). In fact, data show that top US blockbusters from recent years often feature more than 60 brands, and up to 44% of the UK audience are aware of product placement on TV (Chahal, 2015). Young consumers, in particular, seem to have sophisticated knowledge of the technique, and thus expect and actively interpret brand appearances in movies and digital games (DeLorme and Reid, 1999; Molesworth, 2006). This high level of saturation and habituation urges marketers to search for alternative communication outlets, and books might provide just such an opportunity (Alter, 2014a; Jacobs, 2012). Furthermore, it seems that writers are more accepting of this kind of collaboration than many would intuit. Some, like Carol Matthews, whose novel *The Sweetest Taboo* (2004) was sponsored by Ford and featured Ford Fiesta, or Bill Fitzhugh, who mentions Seagrams products in his novel *Cross Dressing* (2000), have admitted that such tie-ins greatly enhance the author’s visibility though increased publicity for their work (Jacobs, 2012; Fitzhugh, 2000). Other authors have argued that being commissioned to write a story (featuring a certain brand) is to be approached like a regular “writing project” (Flood, 2014). And some writers go even further, actively pursuing both a creative and a marketing role. For instance, Hilary Carlip, who received $1.3 million from Sweet’N Low to integrate the brand in her e-book *Find Me I’m Yours* (2014) also
contacted a number of other potential sponsors. Apparently, the prospect of inserting numerous brand names in her novel did not present a dilemma, as she sought to reach an audience of “brand conscious consumers who won’t be put off by copious mentions of products” (Alter 2014a).

In sum, the time is ripe for marketers to consider placing brands in fictional narratives. Notably, from a consumer protection perspective it also seems to be crucial that policy makers and educators assess the implications and consequences of product placement, given that brands populate educational materials – from textbooks in Marketing, Management, or Statistics (see Brennan and McCalman, 2011) to “educational” books for children, such as The MandM’s Brand Counting Book, Hershey’s Kisses Addition Book, and Twizzler’s Shapes and Patterns Book. The present work, as well as other recent findings, suggest that the potential impact of brand placement in books, just as that of other hybrid advertising formats (see e.g., Verhellen, Oates, De Pelsmacker, and Dens, 2014; Waiguny, Nelson, and Terlutter, 2014), should be discussed in advertising literacy programs.
Chapter 5

How reading in a foreign vs. native language moderates the impact of repetition-induced placement prominence on placement responses and brand attitude
Published more than 30 years ago, a content-analysis of American bestsellers from the postwar era (1946-1975) has pointed to the emergence of “word-of-author advertising” – the practice of fiction authors using real brand names in their texts (Friedman, 1985). That research showed, for instance, that Coca Cola was mentioned 59 times across 18 novels, followed by Cadillac, Ford, and Buick with 21 to 57 occurrences in 13 to 16 different books. It also noted an exponential growth during the studied period with regard to both the number of different brands that appeared in the novels, as well as the number of times each brand was repeated within the same novel. In light of these findings, Friedman (1985; see also Bhatnagar, Aksoy, and Malkoc, 2004; Brennan, 2008) urged for further research on the impact of word-of-author advertising on consumers, who may be particularly susceptible to persuasive messages embedded within a traditionally non-commercial medium, such as books. Although work on brand placement in written narratives has started accumulating in recent years (Brennan, 2008; Avramova et al., 2016a; Bhatnagar and Wan, 2011; Olsen and Lanseng, 2012; Storm and Stoller, 2015), our knowledge on this topic is still quite limited. Therefore, the present research sets out to achieve several goals, namely 1) to investigate the effects of repetition-induced placement prominence on brand evaluation; 2) to directly test the mediating role of persuasion knowledge and critical processing in these effects; and 3) to explore text language (native vs. foreign) as a potential moderator of (some of) these relationships.

In the age of iPhone7, Facebook, Snapchat, and Pokémon Go – when our lives seem to run on digital devices and our existence materializes through social media – *reading books* may strike some as an archaic, if not an obsolete, activity. In fact, when it comes to print, the *looks* of books may become as (or more) relevant in our brave new world as their content. New York’s iconic Strand Book Store, for instance, has recently come up with an ingenious service, namely Books By The Foot, which helps you “curate a library that matches both your personality and your space” by selecting books – priced by the foot – based on “color, binding, subject, size, height, and more to create a collection that looks great”. And yet, although screen addiction seems rampant (e.g., Brody, 2015) and many worry that reading is on the decline (e.g., PEW, 2014), recent survey data from the US shows that 27% of respondents aged 15-20 selected reading as their favorite spare time activity, second only to listening to music (37%), and thus topping other media such as TV (23%), social media (17%), and online games (16%; Nielsen, 2015).
Moreover, data from the publishing industry shows that the book market is thriving. The number of books with ISBNs registered in the Bowker Books In Print® database in the US has grown between 2008 and 2013 with 292% for print and 1770% for e-books (Bowker, 2014). A recent analysis of print, e-book, and audio book sales on Amazon.com (including both traditionally and non-traditionally published titles) indicates that in January 2016, e-book sales were running at a rate of 1,064,000 paid downloads a day (bringing about $5,755,000 daily revenue, or a run rate of over $2.1 billion a year), in addition to the daily sales of 969,000 print books and 119,000 audiobooks (Author Earnings, 2016).

In this context, it is not surprising that marketers turn towards books as a promising promotion platform. Specifically, brand placement— the integration of branded products in editorial content – which is most common in TV and film productions, but also features in computer games and music videos, has started gaining ground in the book world. Given the placement clutter in traditional audiovisual media, with top blockbusters featuring more than 60 brands, and growing consumer awareness of product placement on TV (Chahal, 2015; see also Alter, 2014a; Gaughran, 2012), advertisers seek alternative ways to effectively engage consumers with their brands. In fact, recent years have seen numerous examples of authors weaving brand names in their narratives in return for cash or free publicity (see Alter, 2014a; Fitzhugh, 2000; Flood, 2014; Jacobs, 2012; Orden, 2011). For instance, the famous jewellery designer Bulgari commissioned Fay Weldon’s novel The Bulgari Connection (2001), Ford sponsored Carole Matthew’s novel The Sweetest Taboo (2004), Sweet’N’Low invested heavily in Hillary Carlip’s e-book Find Me I’m Yours (2014), and bestselling author William Boyd’s short-story The Vanishing Game (2015) pays homage to his sponsor Land Rover.

Academic research on reader responses to brand placement in written text has also started accumulating, demonstrating that – under certain circumstances – books may be an effective medium for increasing brand awareness (Brennan, 2008; Brennan and McCalman, 2011), as well as brand attitudes and purchase intentions (Avramova et al., 2016a, 2016b; Bhatnagar and Wan 2011; Olson and Lanseng, 2012; Storm and Stoller, 2015). Notably, however, studies on brand placement in written narrative to date have only explored placement effects using texts in participants’ native language. Thus, it is not clear whether brand placement exerts the same
impact on consumers reading in a foreign language. This gap in current knowledge is remarkable in light of the increasing internationalization of the book market: Sales of English-language e-books in non-English-speaking countries (as well as foreign-language e-books in English-speaking countries) have grown dramatically over the last years (Digital Book World, 2013; Jones, 2011; McIlroy, 2015; Ralph, 2015). For instance, recent estimates indicate that English-language exports represent 10% of all books sold in the Netherlands (Johnson and Cox, 2016), while readers in Sweden and Denmark are now more likely to read an English-language book in original than translated in their mother tongue (Craighill, 2015). In addition to the fact that about 750 million people worldwide speak English as a second language, other factors, such as the rising education levels in large emerging markets (e.g., the BRIC countries), the growing penetration rate of e-reading devices, and an expanding digital distribution network also contribute to an increasing demand for English-language titles (e.g., Amazon, Kobo; De Campo, 2012; McNeill, 2014; PEW, 2014).

These market dynamics raise an important question for companies interested in using brand placement in books as a marketing tool, namely whether our knowledge on placement effectiveness is transferable to an international setting, where a large number of readers could be exposed to (unfamiliar) brands through reading in a foreign language. Foreign language refers to a non-native language that is usually learned in a classroom setting, and in which people are typically less proficient (Keysar, Hayakawa, and An, 2012; Pavlenko, 2012). The current research represents the first attempt to address this question by investigating how a fundamental placement characteristic, namely placement prominence (induced via brand name repetition), influences reader responses to a brand placed in a foreign, as compared to a native, language text. On the one hand, we build on previous work showing that high (vs. low) placement frequency in written narratives (presented in the native language) enhances brand evaluations (Storm and Stoller, 2015), as well as on research suggesting that these effects are contingent on readers’ processing style (Avramova et al., 2016a, 2016b). On the other hand, we draw on evidence that reading in a foreign language influences processing-style, thereby affecting judgment and decision-making (e.g., Costa et al., 2014a; Costa et al., 2014b; Keysar et al., 2012) and responses to advertising messages (e.g., Puntoni, De Langhe, and Van Osselaer, 2009). Integrating these findings, we propose that language may similarly affect responses to brand placements in text.
Notably, we go beyond testing the interactive impact of prominence and language and set out to uncover the processes underlying these effects. Past studies using audiovisual media show that high placement prominence may activate viewers’ persuasion knowledge (Friestad and Wright, 1994), which could in turn elicit more critical processing of the placements (e.g., Boerman et al., 2012, 2014). Surprisingly, however, no research to date has tested whether prominence within written narrative activates persuasion knowledge or critical processing. Furthermore, although it has often been argued (e.g., Russell, 2002; Van Reijmersdal, 2009) and sometimes found (Boerman et al., 2012, 2014) that persuasion knowledge activation has a detrimental impact on brand attitude, some studies using both audiovisual (Matthes and Naderer, 2016) and print materials (Storm and Stoller, 2015) have failed to find evidence for such a link. Therefore, the present experiment manipulates brand name repetition and text language, and measures perceived prominence, persuasion knowledge, critical processing, and brand attitude. It is thus the first study to 1) directly test the full sequence of (potential) causal relationships between these constructs in the context of a fictional narrative, and 2) test whether reading in a foreign vs. native language moderates any of these (direct or indirect) effects.

**LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT**

In the present research, we test the novel prediction that repetition-induced placement prominence in written text will lead to more positive brand evaluations when readers are exposed to placements in their native, as compared to a foreign, language. In essence, we formulate a moderated mediation hypothesis: Whereas increasing placement prominence will have a direct positive impact on brand attitude (regardless of conceptual persuasion knowledge activation) in the native language, in line with previous findings in the context of written text (Storm and Stoller, 2015), higher prominence (and the ensuing persuasion knowledge) will be more likely to trigger critical processing of the placement and thereby lead to more negative evaluations in the foreign language. Figure 5.1 presents our conceptual model. In the following paragraphs, we review the relevant literature and formulate specific hypotheses for each of these relationships.
**Figure 5.1. Conceptual model**

Note: Dashed arrow corresponds to the prediction that conceptual persuasion knowledge will not affect brand attitude. H4 tests the moderating impact of language on the link between conceptual persuasion knowledge and critical processing.

**Placement frequency and placement prominence**

Prominence refers to how attention-grabbing, or noticeable, a placed brand is (Cowley and Barron, 2008; Gupta and Lord, 1998). Given that prominence has been almost exclusively studied in the context of audiovisual media, such as TV programs and movies, researchers have most often operationalized this construct in terms of placement modality, namely whether a placement is purely visual, purely auditory, or a combination of both (i.e., audiovisual), with visual being considered as the least prominent and audiovisual as the most prominent. The classic finding is that placements containing an auditory element enhance brand memory, but decrease brand attitude, relative to purely visual placements, suggesting that the former tend to receive more attention and undergo deeper processing (e.g., Brennan and Babin, 2004; Cowley and Barron, 2008; Dens et al., 2012; Russell, 2002). Placement frequency (i.e., the number of times a brand name is shown or mentioned) has also been proposed to contribute to a brand’s relative prominence (e.g., Avramova et al., 2016a; Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009; Matthes et al., 2007). However, also here the evidence has mostly been indirect in that it is based on brand recall and/or
brand attitude measures instead of on prominence measures. Moreover, some of the findings raise doubts as to whether frequency is equivalent to prominence. For instance, increasing the number of brand placements in a TV program decreased brand attitude if the placements were prominently placed (i.e., audiovisual), but not when they were subtly placed (i.e., visual; Homer 2009). Furthermore, high (vs. low) placement frequency has been found to improve the brand attitude of viewers with high program involvement and low persuasion knowledge, although those readers demonstrated the poorest levels of brand recall (Matthes et al., 2007). These findings indicate that placement repetition per se may not necessarily lead to higher perceived prominence, leaving open the question of whether prominence drives the observed (positive or negative) effects.

In the context of written narrative, the role of placement frequency is even more central than in audiovisual media, as varying the number of times a brand is mentioned within a text seems to be the most direct (and arguably, easiest) way of manipulating brand prominence in a print medium. Surprisingly, research on the effects of placement frequency in text on brand responses is still quite scarce, with only two empirical papers on the subject. In the studies of Storm and Stoller (2015), higher brand name repetition was consistently associated with higher purchase intentions. The work of Avramova et al. (2016a) showed that the impact of repetition on brand attitude was moderated by the degree to which readers are transported into the story, as well as by individual differences in need for cognition. Importantly, also in these studies, the role of placement prominence in the observed effects was not directly tested. Therefore, the first goal of the present study is to empirically establish whether increasing the number of brand mentions in a fictional text leads to a corresponding increase in perceived brand prominence. Based on the literature reviewed above, we expect that this will indeed be the case.

**H1:** Higher (vs. lower) placement frequency will be associated with higher perceived placement prominence.

**Placement prominence, persuasion knowledge, and brand attitude**

The second, more central objective of the present experiment is to investigate the downstream effects of repetition-induced prominence on placement processing and brand evaluation, and to
test whether language plays a moderating role at any stage of the underlying process. Past evidence on the attitudinal impact of placement prominence has been mixed. On the one hand, a number of studies using TV programs (Matthes et al., 2007; Van Reijmersdal et al., 2007), song lyrics (Van Vaerenbergh et al., 2011), and written narratives (e.g., Avramova et al., 2016a; Storm and Stoller, 2015) have found that increasing placement frequency, which arguably increases brand prominence, may (at least under some circumstances) exert a positive effect on brand evaluation. The dominant explanation for this pattern (e.g., Matthes et al., 2007; Storm and Stoller, 2015; Van Vaerenbergh et al., 2011) relates to the notion of increased fluency: The relative ease experienced while processing repeated stimuli enhances their subsequent evaluation—a mechanism thought to (partly) explain mere exposure effects (Alter and Oppenheimer, 2009; Lee and Labroo, 2004; Reber, Winkielman, and Schwarz, 1998).

On the other hand, some work using film and TV programs has shown that prominent (i.e., audiovisual and/or more frequent) placements may decrease brand evaluations relative to more subtle (i.e., visual and/or less frequent) placements (e.g., Cowley and Baron, 2008; Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009; Russell, 2002). These authors have argued that exposure to prominent placements makes consumers more easily recognize (or infer) that brands have been inserted with a commercial motive. That is, by activating persuasion knowledge (Campbell and Kirmani, 2000; Friestad and Wright, 1994), prominent (vs. subtle) placements supposedly trigger thoughts about tactic inappropriateness and counterarguing, ultimately leading to more negative brand evaluations (e.g., Russell, 2002; Van Reijmersdal, 2009). Surprisingly, however, the full causal sequence underlying this hypothesis has not yet been tested directly (see also Wei, Fischer, and Main, 2008). Instead, the claim that persuasion knowledge drives the effects of (modality- or repetition-based) prominence on attitudinal outcomes has been mainly based on indirect evidence, for instance by using persuasion knowledge as a moderator (but not as a mediator; e.g., Cowley and Baron, 2008; Matthes et al., 2007; Matthes et al., 2011), or by simply assuming it underlies the observed (negative) effects (e.g., Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009; Russell, 2002). In addition, even studies that did investigate its effect conceptualized, operationalized, and measured persuasion knowledge in various ways, creating some confusion as to what this construct actually represents (see Ham et al., 2015).
Drawing on recent research on disclosures in TV programs (Boerman et al., 2012, 2014), we currently propose that one way to reconcile the conflicting findings with regard to the impact of placement prominence on brand evaluation is to decompose the broader construct of persuasion knowledge into two separate (albeit related) components, namely *conceptual persuasion knowledge* and *critical processing*, and investigate the individual impact of these components on brand attitude. Moreover, we develop hypotheses regarding the moderating effects of language on these relationships.

### Conceptual persuasion knowledge and critical processing

In the present work, we try to disentangle the activation of persuasion knowledge, which refers to the cognitive process of distinguishing editorial from commercial content (i.e., recognition of advertising) – henceforth *conceptual persuasion knowledge* – from any further cognitive, affective, or behavioral response (e.g., critical processing, irritation, counterarguing) that may, or may not, emerge as a consequence of persuasion knowledge activation (see Boerman et al., 2014; John 1999; Rozendaal et al., 2011). With regard to the former, we propose that higher placement prominence in a written narrative will increase the chances that readers recognize brand placements as a form of advertising. Recent research in other media provides suggestive support for this idea. Specifically, it has been demonstrated that the presence (vs. absence) of a sponsorship disclosure at the start of a TV program, which represents one way of drawing attention to the placed brand, makes viewers more likely to recognize the sponsored content as advertising (Boerman et al., 2012, 2014). Similarly, Matthes and Naderer (2016) found that exposure to a placement disclosure before a music video featuring visual placements is associated with higher awareness that brands have been intentionally inserted in the video. Moreover, this latter study also manipulated the number of times the branded product was shown on screen and found that higher (vs. lower) placement frequency also led to stronger persuasion knowledge activation, regardless of exposure to the disclosure. Building on these findings, we predict that increasing placement prominence in a fictional text (by means of brand name repetition) will similarly heighten readers’ conceptual persuasion knowledge.

**H2:** Increasing perceived placement prominence will lead to higher conceptual persuasion knowledge.
Importantly, we contend that identifying commercial content may be a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for applying persuasion knowledge to resist a perceived persuasion attempt. Put differently, conceptual persuasion knowledge is not inherently harmful to brand evaluation, nor is it an insurmountable obstacle to attitude change. In line with this view, the positive impact of brand name repetition in Storm and Stoller’s (2015) studies emerged even when participants had read an anti-product placement article, warning them that product placement endangers consumers’ freedom of choice. Thus, even when people are aware of the biasing impact of placements (and thus recognize the source of fluency), they may lack the motivation and/or ability to correct for it, resulting in no, or insufficient, adjustment of their brand responses (e.g., Epley and Gilovich, 2004; Wegener and Petty, 1995, 1997). Consistent with this, it has been demonstrated that explicit placement disclosures preceding music videos and radio shows may sometimes fail to affect (e.g., Matthes and Naderer, 2016) or even improve (Wei et al., 2008) brand evaluations, respectively. Finally, support for the idea that persuasion knowledge need not be detrimental comes from evidence from both marketing and psychology that – instead of inhibiting mere exposure effects (see e.g., Auty and Lewis, 2004; Matthes et al., 2007) – recognition of previously presented stimuli (which supposedly activates persuasion knowledge) actually enhances evaluation (e.g., Newell and Shanks, 2007; Stafford and Grimes, 2012; Wang and Chang, 2004; Yagi, Ikoma, and Kikuchi, 2009). For instance, Stafford and Grimes (2012) demonstrated that both correctly and incorrectly recognized brand logos were evaluated more positively than unrecognized logos, in line with proposals that stimulus recognition aids in reducing the uncertainty associated with unfamiliar stimuli (Lee, 1994; Sawyer, 1981).

Taken together, the findings reviewed above imply that conceptual persuasion knowledge activation may not in itself be a reliable predictor of evaluative brand outcomes. This seems to be particularly relevant in the context of fiction, where brand references are probably even less suspicious (i.e., less strongly associated with manipulative intent) than in mainstream audiovisual media (see e.g., Friedman, 1985), so cognitive defenses may not be as well developed and may not always be employed. Thus, we expect that conceptual persuasion knowledge will not affect brand evaluation and that increasing placement prominence will exert a positive impact on brand attitude (that is not mediated by conceptual persuasion knowledge).
**H3:** Increased perceived placement prominence will have a positive direct effect on brand attitude.

Nevertheless, it is still possible that under certain circumstances conceptual persuasion knowledge *indirectly* affect brand evaluation by triggering *critical processing* – the second component in our conceptualization of persuasion knowledge (see also Boerman et al., 2012, 2014). That is, increasing placement prominence may activate conceptual persuasion knowledge, which may in turn prompt readers to deliberate on the (manipulative) motives behind the brand placements, resulting in stronger criticism of the marketing tactic, and ultimately, to lower brand evaluations. Importantly, such a process would require deeper elaboration. Put differently, critical processing is unlikely to ensue if readers do not engage in systematic (but only in shallow) processing of the placements.

Support for this view comes from several sources. First, evidence shows that counterarguing is an active cognitive process that requires “cognitive work” (Wyer, 1974; see also Petty and Cacioppo, 1986; Pfau, Tusing, Koerner, et al., 1997). Consistent with this, applying persuasion knowledge in evaluating a message or a persuasion agent is apparently not automatic, but is instead contingent on the ulterior motive being highly accessible, as well as on sufficient cognitive capacity (e.g., Buijzen et al., 2010; Campbell, 1995; Campbell and Kirmani, 2000). Furthermore, studies that measured both conceptual persuasion knowledge and critical processing in response to a sponsorship disclosure in a TV program established that the duration and timing of the disclosure are key: Only when disclosures were sufficiently long (6 vs. 3 sec.) and were presented before (vs. after) the program, thus providing viewers with an opportunity to process their implications, did they elicit distrust and skepticism (Boerman et al., 2012; 2014). These findings suggest that prominence may not in itself elicit a negative reaction; rather, deeper elaboration of the prominent placement may be necessary to trigger critical processing.

The idea that level of elaboration could moderate the effects of placement prominence on brand evaluations is also consistent with prior work on placements in written narratives. Specifically, increasing brand name repetition in a fictional text has been shown to negatively affect brand attitudes of readers who are lowly (vs. highly) immersed in the story and who score relatively high (vs. low) on need for cognition (Avramova et al., 2016a). Conceptually similar results were
obtained using a different prominence manipulation, namely inserting the placement in the
dialogue (supposedly more prominent) versus the narration (more subtle) of a short-story:
Readers with high (vs. low) need for cognition showed a larger decrease in brand evaluations
after exposure to dialogue, as compared to narration, placements (Avramova et al., 2016b). Given
prior evidence that high need for cognition is associated with the tendency to engage in more
careful and effortful information processing (see e.g., Cacioppo, Petty, Feinstein, and Jarvis,
1996; Petty, Briñol, Loersch, and McCaslin, 2009, for reviews), these findings support our
proposal that the direction and magnitude of prominence-driven effects is determined by how the
placements are processed.

In sum, the present research posits that placement prominence will enhance brand evaluation
directly when elaboration is relatively low (despite concurrent conceptual knowledge activation),
while it will trigger critical processing (via conceptual persuasion knowledge) and thus decrease
brand evaluation when elaboration is relatively high. If processing differences underlie the impact
of prominence-induced conceptual persuasion knowledge on critical processing and, ultimately,
on brand evaluation, as we currently suggest, factors that alter processing style should moderate
the effect of prominence on brand attitude. In the current work, we test the novel hypothesis that
text language is one such factor. Specifically, we argue that increasing placement prominence in
a text that one reads in a foreign, as compared to one’s native, language will result in more
negative brand attitudes through eliciting more critical processing of the placements.

The moderating role of text language

Our proposal is inspired by previous work on the “foreign-language effect” (Keysar et al., 2012)
– the finding that using a foreign language reduces decision-making biases. Specifically, in a
series of experiments Keysar et al. (2012) showed that the typical asymmetry in risk preferences
(i.e., people being more risk averse in the domain of gains and more risk seeking in the domain of
losses, Kahneman and Tversky, 1979), as well as loss aversion (i.e., people anticipating that the
negative impact of a potential loss will outweigh the positive impact of a potential gain,
Kahneman and Tversky, 1979) were mitigated when participants made decisions in a foreign
language (while the classic patterns emerged in the native language conditions; see also Costa et
al. 2014a). Keysar et al. (2012) attributed these effects to the reduced emotionality and the
adoption of a more systematic processing style when using a foreign language. That is, in line with evidence for weaker emotional responses to stimuli presented in a foreign language (e.g., swear and taboo words, Dewaele, 2004; advertising slogans, Puntoni, de Langhe, and van Osselaer, 2009), Keysar at al. (2012) argued that making decisions in a foreign language relies to a greater extent on analytical (vs. intuitive or affective) processes. Moreover, due to being less automatic and more effortful, using a foreign language supposedly reduces processing fluency (e.g, Costa et al. 2014b; Segalowitz 2010), which has been shown to induce a more systematic processing style (Alter, Oppenheimer, Epley, and Eyre, 2007; Koch and Forgas, 2012; Rand, Greene, and Nowak, 2012). Further support for this account comes from the research of Costa et al. (2014b), who found that when people were presented with a moral dilemma in a foreign (vs. native) language, moral judgments became more utilitarian (i.e., favoring the greater good, regardless of the consequences for the individual; see e.g., Côté, Piff, and Willer, 2013; Paxton, Ungar, and Greene, 2011). The authors proposed that by dampening emotional responses and decreasing fluency, the foreign language made cost-benefit considerations more salient and promoted more deliberative processing than the native language, thereby leading to more utilitarian decisions.

Applied to the present context, these findings suggest that readers will adopt a more systematic processing style when reading the narrative text in a foreign, as compared to their native, language. As a result, they will also process the placements integrated in the foreign-language text more carefully. Critically, we do not expect language to affect the strength of conceptual persuasion knowledge activation, as higher prominence is likely to increase conceptual persuasion knowledge in both languages (H2). However, we predict that language will determine what readers do with this knowledge. Specifically, we contend that people reading in a foreign (vs. native) language will be more likely to take the extra step to consider tactic inappropriateness and generate counterarguments. In other words, they will engage in critical processing. Based on this reasoning, we formulate the following hypothesis:

**H4:** Language will moderate the impact of conceptual persuasion knowledge on critical processing, such that conceptual persuasion knowledge will be associated with more critical processing of the placements in the foreign than in the native language.
Finally, unlike conceptual persuasion knowledge, which could in itself leave brand evaluations unaffected, critical processing is likely to be detrimental to brand attitude (Boerman et al., 2012, 2014).

**H5**: Critical processing will be negatively related to brand attitude.

Since we predict critical processing to only ensue in the foreign (but not in the native) language, we essentially propose a moderated mediation model of the effect of placement prominence on brand attitude. That is, in the native language increasing prominence will only have a direct positive effect on brand attitude, whereas in the foreign language prominence will exert both a direct positive effect and an indirect negative effect through (sequentially) conceptual persuasion knowledge and critical processing (competitive mediation; Zhao, Lynch, and Chen, 2010).

In sum, the present study tests a series of hypotheses regarding the effects of repetition-induced placement prominence in written narratives. First, we expect that high (vs. low) placement frequency will increase perceived prominence (H1), and higher prominence will lead to stronger conceptual persuasion knowledge activation (H2) in both the native and the foreign language. Furthermore, since conceptual persuasion knowledge is unlikely to affect brand attitude, we posit that increasing placement prominence will have a direct positive impact on brand attitude (H3). However, language will play a moderating role at the next step of the process, namely reading in a foreign, as compared to the native, language will be associated with more critical processing following conceptual persuasion knowledge activation (H4). Critical processing will in turn decrease brand attitude (H5).

**METHOD**

**Study design and experimental manipulations**

We conducted an experiment, in which we systematically manipulated *brand name repetition* (i.e., the number of times the target brand is mentioned in the text) and *language* (i.e., whether participants read the text in their native (Dutch) or in a foreign language (English)). This resulted in a 2(repetition: 2, 11) x 2(language: native, foreign) full-factorial between-subjects design.
We borrowed the stimulus materials from a prior study on the impact of placement repetition in fiction on brand attitudes (Avramova et al., 2016a). Specifically, Avramova et al. (2016a) used the full text of the short-story *Checkmate* (1988) by bestselling British author Jeffrey Archer with only slight adaptations for the purposes of the present study. Since the characters in the original story were depicted as drinking alcohol, a branded alcoholic beverage could be easily integrated. An unfamiliar vodka brand (*Posolskaya*®) was mentioned either 2 or 11 times in the text (henceforth “low” and “high” repetition, respectively; see Avramova et al., 2016a). We chose to use an unfamiliar brand, since previous work suggests that placement effects are more likely to emerge (and are stronger) for unfamiliar than for familiar brands (e.g., Avramova et al., 2016a; Storm and Stoller, 2015).

The original text (in English) was translated into Dutch (2,545 words) by a professional translator. The author of the story was not disclosed to participants, but its title was included. It recounts the events from an evening of a chess club captain (the narrator), who meets an attractive woman at the club and then takes her to his place for a drink and a game of chess, the story ending with an unexpected twist. Since they drink the entire evening, the vodka brand could be inserted repeatedly without drastically changing the plot (see Avramova et al., 2016a for more details). In the low-repetition condition, the brand was mentioned once in the beginning (after about 680 words), and once in the end (after about 2,200 words). In the high-repetition condition, nine more placements were added, resulting in about two brand mentions per page. Archer’s original story also referred to two automobile brands, which were related to the plot of the story, hence we kept these brands in the text (in all conditions) to stay close to the original, and to reduce the salience of the target brand (see Avramova et al., 2016a; see Appendix 1A for the stimuli).

**Participants and procedure**

One hundred and eighteen respondents, recruited through convenience sampling, took part in the study. Twenty-two respondents indicated that their mother tongue is not Dutch (11 other languages were listed). Although these respondents seemed to be proficient in Dutch, as they filled in the survey in Dutch, it was deemed important for the purposes of the current study that our sample only included participants whose mother tongue was Dutch (see Costa et al., 2014).
Chapter 5: The impact of text language

Thus, these twenty-two respondents were removed from the data. The remaining sample \((n = 96)\) was predominantly female (62.5%) and age ranged from 18 to 32 \((M_{age} = 21.95, SD_{age} = 2.29)\).

Participants were emailed with an invitation to fill in an online survey (programmed in Qualtrics®). The research was briefly introduced as ‘a series of separate, unrelated studies, including “a study on literature” and a “consumer behavior study”. Upon clicking the survey link, participants were automatically and randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions. Each “study” featured a different title, introduction, task instructions, and layout in order to reduce the chance that respondents will (immediately) see the link between the manipulation and the dependent measures. Participants were asked to read the story and answer the questions at their own pace. They were assured of their anonymity, yet they were offered to enter a sweepstake to win one of 3 bookstore vouchers (each worth 20 euro) or one of 3 double cinema tickets (of similar value), if they were willing to leave their email address (all but 2 respondents provided an email address).

**Measures**

Before reading the story, respondents completed the demographic questions, indicated their native tongue, and rated their level of proficiency in English (the foreign language) on a 7-point bipolar scale (almost no knowledge /as good as my mother tongue; e.g., Costa et al., 2014b; Keysar et al., 2012). Ratings ranged between 2 and 7, \(M = 4.89, SD = 1.15\). Adopting the approach from past work on the foreign language effect, this proficiency score was used as a covariate in all analyses.

Readers were asked several questions about their perceptions of the story immediately after reading the text. These served as filler items, boosting the impression that the first “study” is independent and unrelated to the second “study”. Our main dependent variable, brand attitude, was measured with four 7-point bipolar scales (negative/positive, unattractive/attractive, don’t like/like, low/high quality; \(M = 3.29, SD = 1.33\); Cronbach’s \(\alpha = .95\); see e.g., Boerman et al., 2012; Dens et al., 2012). To further mask the connection between the dependent measures (collected within an ostensibly unrelated survey of consumer opinions of different vodka brands) and the preceding short-story, we also measured attitudes towards three filler brands – one other
unfamiliar brand (Sibirskaya®) and two familiar brands (Absolut® and Smirnoff®) using the same scales (the target unfamiliar brand was always rated second). Readers also rated their **familiarity** with the target brand on a 7-point scale (not at all familiar/very familiar, \( M = 1.34, SD = .99 \)). We used this measure to confirm that the brand was indeed unfamiliar for participants in our sample.

*Perceived prominence* was measured with three items (Posolskaya attracted attention in the story; Posolskaya was prominently present in the story; I had the feeling that Posolskaya came up frequently in the story; \( M = 4.09, SD = 1.62, \) Cronbach’s \( \alpha = .91 \)) on a 7-point Likert scale (I fully disagree/fully agree). *Conceptual persuasion knowledge* was measured with one item (I think that references to the brand Posolskaya in the story is a form of advertising; \( M = 4.73, SD = 1.56 \); Boerman et al., 2012, 2014; van Reijmersdal, Neijens, and Smit, 2005). *Critical processing* was measured with two items (While reading the story, I criticized the references to the brand Posolskaya; While reading the story, I was skeptical towards the references of the brand Posolskaya; \( M = 3.27, SD = 1.67, r = .83 \); Boerman et al., 2014; Moyer-Guse and Nabi, 2010). Participants indicated their agreement with these statements on 7-point Likert scales.

**RESULTS**

Missing data from two respondents on some of the measures were imputed using the sample median. We used the self-reported English proficiency scores as a covariate in all analyses. Although it was a significant covariate in some cases, it did not affect any of the main results. Therefore, we do not discuss this variable further. Table 5.1 contains the correlations between all measured variables. These show that brand attitudes towards the different vodka brands are positively related, most likely reflecting attitudes towards the product in general. Moreover, perceived placement prominence (of the target brand Posolskaya) is positively related to attitudes towards all four brands. One tentative explanation of this pattern is that not just the brand, but also the product becomes more salient upon repeated exposure to the placement, thereby enhancing attitudes towards various exemplars of the product category.
Table 5.1: Correlations between all measured variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Perceived prominent</th>
<th>Conceptual PK</th>
<th>Critical processing</th>
<th>Ab Posolskaya</th>
<th>Ab Sibirskaya</th>
<th>Ab Smirnoff</th>
<th>Ab Absolut</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.391**</td>
<td>.406**</td>
<td>.349**</td>
<td>.264**</td>
<td>.277**</td>
<td>.238*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prominence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual PK</td>
<td>.391**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.481**</td>
<td>.099</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>-.013</td>
<td>-.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical</td>
<td>.406**</td>
<td>.481**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.186</td>
<td>.150</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>.144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>processing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ab Posolskaya</td>
<td>.349**</td>
<td>.099</td>
<td>.186</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.892**</td>
<td>.804**</td>
<td>.684**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ab Sibirskaya</td>
<td>.264**</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.150</td>
<td>.892**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.802**</td>
<td>.677**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ab Smirnoff</td>
<td>.277**</td>
<td>-.013</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>.804**</td>
<td>.802**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.791**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ab Absolut</td>
<td>.238*</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>.144</td>
<td>.684**</td>
<td>.667**</td>
<td>.791**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: PK = persuasion knowledge; Ab = Brand attitude; Posolskaya = target brand (unfamiliar); Sibirskaya = filler brand (unfamiliar); Smirnoff/Absolut **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

To test H1, we conducted a 2(Placement frequency: 2, 11) x 2(Language: native, foreign) ANOVA on perceived prominence. Only the main effect of placement repetition was significant, $F(1, 92) = 37.36, p < .001, \eta^2 = .29$ (all other $F$’s < 1, p’s > .5). As expected, participants exposed to 11 placements perceived the brand as more prominent ($M = 5.01, SD = 1.37$) than those exposed to only 2 placements ($M = 3.29, SD = 1.37$), and this pattern emerged in both language conditions. Thus, H1 was confirmed.

To test H2-H5, we used partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) as implemented in the software tool SmartPLS 3 (Ringle, Wende, and Becker, 2015). PLS is a robust statistical technique for modeling linear relationships between latent constructs using measured variables (i.e., indicators). Notably, PLS allows complex causal networks of relationships to be tested simultaneously, rather than in a piecemeal manner, estimating both direct and indirect effects of multiple independent and dependent variables across multiple groups (Lowry and Gaskin, 2014). Thus, PLS-SEM is particularly useful for holistically testing theoretically-supported chains of cause and effect (i.e., mediation), as well as group effects (e.g., using a categorical moderator in a multi-group analysis), such as in the present study. Moreover,
PLS-SEM can handle relatively small samples better than other statistical techniques, while providing a sensitive test for interactions, and it allows all indicators of every measured construct (e.g., every item from a scale) to be represented and analyzed within the model, thereby reducing the likelihood of Type II errors (see e.g., Hair et al., 2012; Henseler, Ringle, and Sinkovics, 2009; Lowry and Gaskin, 2014; Wong, 2013).

We used SmartPLS 3 to model the relationships between placement prominence (exogenous variable), conceptual persuasion knowledge, critical processing, and brand attitude (endogenous variables). Our model only contained reflective indicators. To investigate whether language has a moderating effect on any of the paths, we took advantage of the integrated multi-group analysis feature, which tests if pre-defined data groups (e.g., the two language conditions in the present experiment) differ in their parameter estimates (e.g., path coefficients; see Sarstedt, Henseler, and Ringle, 2011 for more details). In other words, using a parametric significance test, we directly assessed if the path coefficients (for all direct and indirect effects in the model) differ across the two languages.

Following the recommendations in the literature, we first assessed overall model quality using a number of criteria (e.g., Henseler, Hubona, and Ray, 2016; Lowry and Gaskin, 2014; Wong, 2013). Convergent and discriminant validity, as well as (composite) reliability of all reflective constructs was sufficiently high (see Table 5.2 – 5.4 for a summary of the results; these are based on the complete sample, collapsed across language, the grouping variable, as none of the quality measures differed across the two language conditions, all t’s < 1.3, all p’s > .18). Model fit was evaluated using the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR): The value was lower than the proposed cut-off of .08, indicating that model fit is adequate (Henseler et al., 2016; Hu and Bentler, 1999).
Table 5.2: Results summary for the reflective measurement model (reliability and validity)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latent construct</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Loadings</th>
<th>Indicator reliability (i.e., loadings(^2))</th>
<th>Composite reliability</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placement prominence</td>
<td>prom1</td>
<td>.890</td>
<td>.792</td>
<td>.945</td>
<td>.850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>prom2</td>
<td>.929</td>
<td>.863</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>prom3</td>
<td>.947</td>
<td>.897</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual PK</td>
<td>PK</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical processing</td>
<td>crit1</td>
<td>.958</td>
<td>.912</td>
<td>.956</td>
<td>.917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>crit2</td>
<td>.957</td>
<td>.916</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand attitude</td>
<td>Ab1</td>
<td>.945</td>
<td>.893</td>
<td>.967</td>
<td>.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ab2</td>
<td>.963</td>
<td>.927</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ab3</td>
<td>.965</td>
<td>.931</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ab4</td>
<td>.874</td>
<td>.764</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conceptual PK is a single-item construct.

Table 5.3: Cross loadings of the measurement items on each latent construct

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Placement prominence</th>
<th>Conceptual PK</th>
<th>Critical processing</th>
<th>Brand attitude (Ab)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prom1</td>
<td><strong>.890</strong></td>
<td>.374</td>
<td>.337</td>
<td>.418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prom2</td>
<td><strong>.929</strong></td>
<td>.368</td>
<td>.408</td>
<td>.248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prom3</td>
<td><strong>.947</strong></td>
<td>.338</td>
<td>.377</td>
<td>.294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PK</td>
<td>.392</td>
<td><strong>1.000</strong></td>
<td>.481</td>
<td>.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crit1</td>
<td>.402</td>
<td>.465</td>
<td><strong>.958</strong></td>
<td>.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crit2</td>
<td>.373</td>
<td>.455</td>
<td><strong>.957</strong></td>
<td>.205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ab1</td>
<td>.307</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>.130</td>
<td><strong>.945</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ab2</td>
<td>.355</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>.144</td>
<td><strong>.963</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ab3</td>
<td>.365</td>
<td>.122</td>
<td>.228</td>
<td><strong>.965</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ab4</td>
<td>.275</td>
<td>.093</td>
<td>.192</td>
<td><strong>.874</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conceptual PK is a single-item construct.
Table 5.4: Discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion

(Discriminant validity is established if the square root of the AVE, shown on the diagonal, is higher than the off-diagonal values in the same row and column, representing the correlations between the variables)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Placement prominence</th>
<th>Conceptual PK</th>
<th>Critical processing</th>
<th>Brand attitude (Ab)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placement prominence</td>
<td>.922</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual PK</td>
<td>.392</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical processing</td>
<td>.405</td>
<td>.481</td>
<td>.957</td>
<td>.937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand attitude</td>
<td>.350</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>.186</td>
<td>.937</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: PK = persuasion knowledge. Conceptual PK is a single-item construct.

After establishing that the measurement model is of sufficient quality, we proceeded with testing our hypotheses by examining the links between the latent variables for each of the two language groups. Tables 5.5 – 5.8 present the results of the PLS multi-group analysis. The path coefficients indicate a significant positive relationship between perceived placement prominence and conceptual persuasion knowledge for both the native (b = .436, p = .002) and the foreign language conditions (b = .345, p = .024), thereby supporting H2. Also as expected, conceptual persuasion knowledge did not influence brand attitude directly in either the native (b = -.051, p = .729), or the foreign language(b = .031, p = .892). The multi-group analysis also confirmed that language did not moderate either of these relationships (all t’s < 1, p’s > .34).

Table 5.5: Path coefficients, t-values, and significance levels based on the PLS-SEM bootstrapping procedure (multi-group analysis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path coefficient</th>
<th>Path coefficient Native language</th>
<th>t-value Native language</th>
<th>(p-value) Native language</th>
<th>Path coefficient Foreign language</th>
<th>t-value Foreign language</th>
<th>(p-value) Foreign language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual PK → brand attitude</td>
<td>-.051</td>
<td>.346 (.729)</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.136 (.892)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual PK → critical processing</td>
<td>.202</td>
<td>1.370 (.171)</td>
<td>.550</td>
<td>5.743 (.000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical processing → brand attitude</td>
<td>.077</td>
<td>.497 (.619)</td>
<td>-.119</td>
<td>.671 (.502)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement prominence → brand attitude</td>
<td>.346</td>
<td>2.148 (.032)</td>
<td>.497</td>
<td>3.742 (.000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement prominence → conceptual PK</td>
<td>.436</td>
<td>3.035 (.002)</td>
<td>.345</td>
<td>2.265 (.024)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement prominence → critical processing</td>
<td>.203</td>
<td>1.371 (.170)</td>
<td>.391</td>
<td>3.124 (.002)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: PK = persuasion knowledge
### Table 5.6: Path coefficient differences (Native – Foreign language), t-values, and significance levels of the parametric test (multi-group analysis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path</th>
<th>Path coefficient difference</th>
<th>$t$-value</th>
<th>$p$-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placement prominence $\rightarrow$ conceptual PK</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>.443</td>
<td>.659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement prominence $\rightarrow$ critical processing</td>
<td>.188</td>
<td>.966</td>
<td>.337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement prominence $\rightarrow$ brand attitude</td>
<td>.151</td>
<td>.721</td>
<td>.473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual PK $\rightarrow$ critical processing</td>
<td>.348</td>
<td>1.942</td>
<td>.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual PK $\rightarrow$ brand attitude</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.313</td>
<td>.755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical processing $\rightarrow$ brand attitude</td>
<td>.196</td>
<td>.844</td>
<td>.401</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: PK = persuasion knowledge.

### Table 5.7: Path coefficients for the INDIRECT effects (multi-group analysis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path</th>
<th>Indirect effect Native language</th>
<th>$t$-value (p-value)</th>
<th>Indirect effect Foreign language</th>
<th>$t$-value (p-value)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placement prominence $\rightarrow$ conceptual PK $\rightarrow$ critical processing</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>1.064 (.287)</td>
<td>.190</td>
<td>1.895 (.058)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement prominence $\rightarrow$ conceptual PK $\rightarrow$ critical processing $\rightarrow$ brand attitude</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.002 (.998)</td>
<td>-.058</td>
<td>.517 (.605)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual PK $\rightarrow$ critical processing $\rightarrow$ brand attitude</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.369 (.712)</td>
<td>-.065</td>
<td>.648 (.517)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5.8: Path coefficients for the INDIRECT effect differences (Native – Foreign language), t-values, and significance levels of the parametric test (multi-group analysis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path</th>
<th>Path coefficient difference</th>
<th>$t$-value</th>
<th>$p$-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placement prominence $\rightarrow$ conceptual PK $\rightarrow$ critical processing</td>
<td>.101</td>
<td>.795</td>
<td>.429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement prominence $\rightarrow$ conceptual PK $\rightarrow$ critical processing $\rightarrow$ brand attitude</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.439</td>
<td>.662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual PK $\rightarrow$ critical processing $\rightarrow$ brand attitude</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>.780</td>
<td>.437</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: PK = persuasion knowledge.
Next, we tested H3, which pertains to the effects of prominence on brand attitude. In line with our predictions, higher placement prominence exerted a direct positive effect on brand attitude both in the native language ($b = .346, p = .024$) and in the foreign language condition ($b = .497, p < .001$), and the two language groups did not differ ($t = .721, p = .473$). Thus, H3 was supported.

Further, while recognizing the placements as a form of advertising did not trigger critical processing for the native language readers ($b = .202, p = .171$), it was positively and significantly related to critical processing for those reading in a foreign language ($b = .55, p < .001$). The multi-group analysis revealed that the difference between the two groups’ path coefficients is marginally significant ($t = 1.942, p = .055$). This pattern suggests that language moderates the impact of conceptual persuasion knowledge on critical processing, providing (marginal) support for H4.

The indirect effect of prominence on critical processing via conceptual persuasion knowledge was not significant for native-language readers ($b = .088, p = .287$). In contrast, in the foreign language conditions the direct path from prominence to critical processing was significant ($b = .391, p = .002$) and the indirect effect was marginally significant ($b = .190, p = .058$), indicating that conceptual persuasion knowledge activation partly mediates the effect of prominence on critical processing in the foreign language. However, the indirect effect (the path from placement prominence to conceptual PK to critical processing) was not different across the two language groups ($b = .101, p = .429$).

Finally, we tested the effects of critical processing on brand attitude (H5). Contrary to what we expected, this path was not significant in the foreign language condition ($b = -.119, p = .502$), nor in the native language condition ($b = .077, p = .619$). Hence, H5 was not supported. Thus, despite finding the hypothesized increase in critical processing after exposure to the prominent placements in a foreign language, this did not have any negative consequences for brand attitude.

**DISCUSSION**

The present research aimed to test how repetition-induced placement prominence in written text affects persuasion knowledge, critical processing, and brand attitude, and whether text language moderates these relationships. We expected that higher placement prominence will directly
enhance brand attitude in the native language, despite a concurrent increase in persuasion knowledge activation. In contrast, by eliciting a more systematic processing style, reading in a foreign language was hypothesized to exert an indirect negative impact on brand attitude via critical processing of the prominent placements. The results of our experiment provide (marginal) support for most (but not all) of these predictions. Specifically, we established that higher (vs. lower) placement frequency in a written narrative indeed increases brand prominence, which in turn directly enhances brand attitude (as expected). Further, perceived placement prominence was positively related to conceptual persuasion knowledge in both languages (as predicted), but it only triggered critical processing of the placements in the foreign language (as predicted), although the latter effect was only marginally significant. Yet, critical processing was not detrimental to brand evaluation (contrary to predictions).

The present findings extend previous work and advance our knowledge on brand placement effects in several important ways. First of all, they demonstrate that increasing the number of brand mentions in a fictional text is an efficient way to enhance brand prominence, which in turn positively affects brand attitudes. This pattern is consistent with some recent work, showing that increasing brand name repetition in short narrative texts improves brand evaluation (Storm and Stoller, 2015; see also Avramova et al., 2016a). Moreover, our study shows that even though higher placement frequency increases the likelihood that readers recognize the placements as a form of advertising, this does not mitigate the positive effect on brand attitude. Storm and Stoller (2015) similarly found that inducing persuasion knowledge by asking participants to read an anti-product placement article prior to reading the texts did not attenuate the positive impact of repetition. Notably, the present study shows that this was the case in both the native and the foreign language conditions, using a measure (rather than an experimental manipulation) of persuasion knowledge, testing its mediating (rather than moderating) role, and utilizing the full text of a short-story (rather than just paragraph-long excerpts). Thus, contrary to the popular assumption in placement research on audiovisual media (e.g., Homer, 2009; Matthes et al., 2007; Russell, 2002), neither prominence per se, nor the ensuing consumers’ realization that placements serve a persuasion function is necessarily fatal, or even consequential, for brand evaluation.
Further, our findings speak to past research on the link between recognition of advertising and criticism of the sponsored content. Specifically, Boerman et al. (2012, 2014) found that explicit disclosures presented before a TV program activated conceptual persuasion knowledge, which in turn triggered critical processing. In the present work, persuasion knowledge gave rise to criticism only when consumers read the text in a foreign, but not in their native, language. In addition to our processing account, on the basis of which we had predicted the observed difference between the two language conditions, at least two (possibly complementary) explanations exist for why critical processing did not ensue for those reading in their native language. First, brand name repetition is arguably a much more subtle way of drawing attention to the brand than an explicit disclosure for the presence of sponsored content. Second, the verbal nature of the placement (words on a page) in the present study is probably also more subtle than the several minutes’ long audiovisual presentation of the sponsoring brand employed in Boerman et al.’s work. Thus, in line with our hypotheses, repetition-induced prominence alone is not sufficient to elicit readers’ criticism (at baseline, i.e., in the native language); rather, deeper processing of the placements – which is more likely to take place upon exposure to explicit disclosures, as in Boerman et al.’s studies, or when people read in a foreign language, as in ours – seems to be a key prerequisite.

The novel finding that a seemingly irrelevant contextual factor, such as the language of a narrative, may determine how readers process the placements within it highlights the important role of situational variables in brand placement effectiveness. Specifically, in line with recent work on the foreign-language effect (e.g., Costa et al., 2014b; Keysar et al., 2012), our results indicate that people engage in more systematic and effortful processing when they use their foreign (vs. native) language, as they seem to adopt a more critical stance towards the placements as brand prominence increased and conceptual persuasion knowledge activation became stronger.

Interestingly, the present findings, as well as those of earlier work, are not consistent with a competing hypothesis regarding the impact of language. That is, since using a foreign (vs. native) language is more effortful and thus increases cognitive load, one might expect that it also undermines systematic processing of the placements. If that were true, foreign language readers would be expected to engage in less critical processing of the placements as a result of limited
cognitive capacity. Yet, in line with earlier work, we observed the opposite pattern, in keeping with the idea that reading in a foreign language elicits more extensive elaboration of the material at hand, including the brand placements. Moreover, the competing prediction would be based on the assumption that the placements (and brand-related information) are a priori less relevant or attention-grabbing for readers than the rest of the text (and hence undergo shallower processing when resources are limited) – which may not always be the case.

By studying a different determinant of processing style, the present findings also extend previous evidence on how individual differences in need for cognition (Avramova et al., 2016b) and field-dependent/independent cognitive style (Matthes et al., 2011) moderate the impact of placement prominence on brand evaluation by showing that text language similarly influences how placements in fiction are processed. Our results also suggest that other context variables that have been shown to affect evaluation through altering processing style, such as consumers’ mood states (e.g., positive vs. negative) or the relative fluency of a text (e.g., font size and clarity, story flow and coherence; see e.g., Koch and Forgas, 2012; Oppenheimer, 2008; Schwarz, 2004) could also be consequential for brand placement effects.

Notably, our prediction regarding the effect of critical processing on brand attitude (in the case of the foreign language) was not borne out in the data. However, the lack of such an effect is not a precedent. For instance, Storm and Stoller (2015) demonstrated that reading an article, which alerted participants to the dangers posed by product placement and encouraged them to resist its biasing influence, did not offset the positive impact of placement repetition. Similarly, Matthes and Naderer (2016) found that placement disclosures preceding music videos (which supposedly elicited critical processing of the sponsored content) did not affect brand attitude. In the same vein, disclosures presented before (vs. after) a TV program or in the beginning (vs. end) of a blog did not mitigate the positive effect of placement exposure (relative to no exposure) on brand attitude (Campbell, Mohr, and Verlegh, 2013). In light of these earlier findings, one explanation of our results could be that consumers are a priori less critical towards placements in books than in audiovisual media, and persuasion knowledge activation and critical processing have different implications in this context. This view is supported by previous proposals that different media
could exhibit different placement effects, making direct generalizations from audiovisual to print unwarranted (e.g., Avramova et al., 2016a; Bhatnagar et al., 2004).

We would further speculate that the lack of an effect of critical processing on brand attitude in the foreign language group could also be attributed to the processing style of readers in that condition. Specifically, if they indeed adopted a more systematic processing style (as suggested by prior work, and by the present finding that they engaged in more critical processing), they may have also been more likely to correct for a potential “spill-over” effect. That is, even if those readers were skeptical about the placements, they might have been more prone to discount their first (automatic) negative reaction towards the brand and redirect their criticism towards the author of the story, who must have inserted the brand in the text. Drawing such a distinction between different sources of potential bias is likely to be cognitively taxing, as is the process of correction itself (e.g., Campbell and Kirmani, 2000; Gilbert, 1989). Therefore, those who adopt a more effortful and analytic processing style (in this case, those reading in a foreign language) are more likely to engage in such correction. Future research could more directly test these different accounts.

Managerial implications

Our research has a number of implications for marketing communication and advertising practitioners. First of all, consistent with recent findings (Avramova et al., 2016a; Storm and Stoller, 2015), it provides evidence that placing brands in a fictional text might be a promising marketing strategy. Given the high level of saturation of audiovisual media (Alter, 2014a; Chahal, 2015), books might represent a fresh, alternative medium for brand promotion efforts that could also reach a vast number of consumers. Importantly, the main take-home message from the current study is that prominence is good, not bad, for brand attitudes (cf. Van Reijmersdal, 2009). Thus, unlike in audiovisual media, where prominence has been argued to be a double-edged sword – enhancing memory, but hurting brand evaluation (e.g., Dens et al., 2012; Cowley and Barron, 2008; Russell, 2002) – increasing prominence through brand name repetition in a fictional text seems to be a clear path to success. Moreover, brand name repetition is relatively easy to implement in a print medium, and would not carry (m)any additional costs.
Furthermore, we show that prominence is good both in the native, and in a foreign language context. In light of the growing internationalization of the book market and the steadily increasing sales of English-language books across the globe (e.g., Jones, 2011; McIlroy, 2015; PEW, 2014), it is important for practitioners who consider brand placement in books to know that their marketing efforts will have similar effects for readers at large, regardless of text language. Importantly, we used an unfamiliar brand in this study, since prior work has shown that brand placement effects in text tend to be smaller, or even null, for highly familiar brands (Avramova et al., 2016a; Storm and Stoller, 2015). The fact that even readers who are not familiar with the placed brand (e.g., readers abroad, reading a book in a foreign language) would be positively influenced by the placement is a key advantage of using placements in works of fiction.

**Limitations and future research**

A number of limitations of the present investigation will hopefully inspire future work on the topic. First of all, the study was underpowered, which could be one reason for the marginally significant moderating effect of language on the link between conceptual persuasion knowledge and critical processing. Similarly, the two language groups differed only marginally in terms of the indirect effect of prominence on critical processing via conceptual persuasion knowledge. Thus, these relationships need to be replicated using a larger sample. It is certainly necessary to also replicate our findings using different types of text and using different products. Placements for high-involvement products, for instance, may not exhibit the same pattern as the one obtained in this study, using a low-involvement product (vodka). In line with this, past work on the effects of repeated exposure to advergames has demonstrated that game repetition affected brand attitudes for a high-involvement more negatively than for a low-involvement product (Cauberghe and De Pelsmacker, 2010).

Further, one could argue that the present study’s conclusions are limited as a result of only comparing one native (Dutch) and one foreign language (English). The importance of replication notwithstanding, we are not aware of any reason for why the current findings would not emerge using other language combinations, especially since past work on the language effect has not found any language differences (Costa et al., 2014a; Costa et al. 2014b; Keysar et al., 2012). More importantly, however, future research may want to further examine the moderating
Chapter 5: The impact of text language

influence of language skills. Following the approach used in earlier research (e.g., Costa et al., 2014b; Keysar et al., 2012), we employed a self-report relative measure of language proficiency as a covariate in our analysis. Still, we did not measure proficiency in any objective manner, nor did we ask our participants for how long or in what context (home, school, work) they have been using English as a foreign language. Future studies may include such measures and directly test whether the increased critical processing of the placements, found in the present experiment, is indeed driven by a more systematic and effortful processing style. Strong support for this view would be provided by showing that this effect disappears for readers with native-level knowledge, as they would be expected to experience greater fluency and process the foreign-language text more automatically (and thus, similar to those who read it in the native language; see Costa et al., 2014b).

It must be noted that although the present study found that prominence enhances brand attitude in both the native and the foreign language conditions, there might be a number of boundary conditions for this (baseline) effect. For instance, past research has shown that low narrative transportation (Avramova et al., 2016a) and exposure to placements in the dialogue (vs. narration) of a story (Avramova et al., 2016b) could reduce brand evaluations for readers who are relatively high in need for cognition – and who supposedly engage in more effortful, systematic processing of the text and placements. Thus, it could still be that language interacts with individual-related variables, such as narrative transportation, and text-related features, such as stylistic devices. Therefore, future research might investigate, for instance, whether dialogue and narration placements have the same impact in a foreign, as in the native, language. In addition, text difficulty and genre might be explored as potential moderators of these effects.

Even though the present research focused on a print medium, an intriguing avenue for future research pertains to exploring the impact of language with regard to brand placement in other media. Besides publishing, the US boasts the largest global share of media and entertainment earnings for film, music, and games, and the demand for, and exposure to, English-language content is ever-growing across the globe (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2015). An interesting question is, thus, whether brand placement effects, obtained in prior research using native language materials, would replicate when consumers are exposed to content in a foreign
language. For instance, is the impact of audiovisual (vs. visual) placements in a TV program the same when the program is viewed in the original language (e.g., English) and when it is dubbed in the local language? Would placements in audiobooks have the same impact when these are listened to in a foreign language? What is the effect of hearing the brand name as part of the script of a movie vs. reading it in the subtitles (or both)? On the one hand, if using a foreign language induces a more analytic processing style across the board, one would predict the same effects across different media. On the other hand, it is possible that reading a book in a foreign language is more effortful than watching a film (where visual information could help disambiguate or enhance perception of auditory information), thereby modulating placement effects. Hopefully, the present research will stimulate future inquiries into these and other interesting issues.
Chapter 6
Brand placement across media: The interaction of placement modality and frequency in text and film
Chapter 6: Brand placement across media

Brand placement, the marketing technique of inserting branded products in editorial content, has gained entrée in media of all stripes in an attempt to capture the elusive (i.e., zipping and zapping, advertising-overloaded, marketing-savvy, media multi-tasking) consumer (Matthes et al., 2012; Williams et al., 2011). Movies, TV shows, computer and video games, song lyrics, music videos, blogs, and novels are teeming with brand names (Balasubramanian et al., 2006; Van Reijmersdal et al. 2007; Williams et al., 2011). Although some of these are only used by producers and authors to increase verisimilitude and aide characterization, many brand references are commercially motivated, aiming to promote the placed products (e.g., Balasubramanian et al., 2006; Russell and Belch, 2005; Van Reijmersdal et al., 2009). In response to this development, the last decade has seen a surge of scientific interest into the factors that determine brand placement effectiveness, and especially its impact on brand attitude. Notably, although the bulk of these studies concern placements in film and TV (e.g., Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009; Matthes et al., 2011; Russell and Stern, 2006), where the practice is most common (see Van Reimersdal et al., 2009), recent work has started exploring placement effects in other media, where brand placement is on the rise, such as music videos and song lyrics (e.g., Matthes and Naderer, 2016; Van Vaerenbergh et al., 2011), video and computer games (e.g., Cauberghe and De Pelsmacker, 2011; Mau et al., 2008), and written narratives (e.g., Avramova et al., 2016a, 2016b; Olsen and Lanseng, 2012).

And yet, despite the proliferation of studies on the topic, the evidence has remained largely disconnected in terms of the relative impact of key placement execution factors across media. Since past work has explored placement effects in different media using different content, different brands, and different placement strategies, it is hard to compare results and draw conclusions with regard to the role of medium. The lack of research on this subject is surprising, given its important theoretical ramifications. That is, it has been suggested that audiovisual and print media may induce different processing styles and elicit different responses to the content (e.g., Green et al., 2008; Hakemulder, 2011; Tukachinsky, 2014), and that the type of medium could influence how consumers process and respond to placements (e.g., Avramova et al. 2016a; Bhatnagar, Aksoy, and Malkoc 2004; Campbell, Mohr, and Verlegh, 2013; Friedman, 1985; Matthes and Naderer, 2016; Van Reijmersdal et al., 2009). Thus, a crucial question is whether the
effects that have been documented in one medium, and the processes underlying them, also emerge in other media.

Obviously, this also has broad practical implications. A notable case in point, and one that is directly relevant to the present study, is that of stories leaping from the page to the screen: A great number of movies are book adaptations, and increasingly so, with 2012 seeing five times more adaptations (from books, as well as other sources) than 1999 (Stephen Follows, 2014). In fact, literary fiction is the most common script source of US top-grossing movies, with 33% of thrillers, 36% of drama, and 42% of black comedy top 100 films between 1994-2013 being based on a novel or short-story, and the percentage of adaptations (vs. original scripts) increasing at the top of the box office chart (Stephen Follows, 2014, 2015). Given that many novels feature real brand names in the original texts (e.g., *Fifty Shades of Grey* by E. L. James, the *James Bond* novels by Ian Fleming, the *Millennium* Trilogy by Stieg Larsson, *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn), movie producers inevitably face the question of whether and how to portray these brands on the big screen most effectively, especially if these are paid integrations. Therefore, studying the interplay of fundamental placement characteristics across different media in a systematic and reliable way is essential.

The present research represents the first attempt to address this question by investigating the impact of exposure to the same brand within the same narrative content presented in textual vs. audiovisual form, thereby simulating the scenario where a work of fiction is adapted for the screen. More specifically, in a carefully controlled experiment we test how two key factors, namely placement modality and placement frequency, which have separately been shown to influence brand evaluation, interact to affect placement responses and brand attitude in the context of a short-story and a short film. *Placement modality* has been mainly studied in audiovisual media, where it refers to whether the placement is visual (product or logo is shown on screen), auditory (brand name mentioned in the dialogue), or audiovisual (combining both elements; e.g., Gupta and Lord, 1998; Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009; Russell, 2002). Recently, the concept has been applied to the context of written narrative, where a similar distinction can be made between placements in the narration and those in the dialogue of a story (the analogy being with visual and auditory placements, respectively; Avramova et al., 2016b). *Placement frequency*
(or repetition), on the other hand, refers to the number of times a placement appears within the content, be that audiovisual (e.g., Homer, 2009; Matthes et al., 2007; Matthes et al., 2011), or print (e.g., Avramova et al., 2016a).

Modality and repetition are both thought to influence brand attitude by affecting placement prominence, with placements containing an auditory element (vs. purely visual ones) and those appearing with higher (vs. lower) frequency arguably being more prominent, or attention-grabbing (Brennan and Babin, 2004; Dens et al., 2012; Gupta and Lord, 1998). However, the bulk of the evidence indicates that the evaluative impact of prominence (operationalized as either modality or frequency) is contingent on other factors, such as the degree of a placement’s plot connection (Russell, 2002), the level of involvement with the story or program (e.g., Avramova et al., 2016a; Cowley and Barron, 2008; Matthes et al., 2007), and individual differences (e.g., Avramova et al., 2016b; Matthes et al., 2011). Surprisingly, the question of whether and how placement modality and frequency interact with each other has been largely neglected. Thus, we currently do not know whether the findings with regard to modality hold at different levels of repetition, nor if the interactive effects replicate across media. This gap in current knowledge is especially noteworthy in light of the fact that the only research where modality and repetition were manipulated orthogonally showed that they indeed interact: Using film and TV programs, Homer (2009) found that increasing placement repetition has a negative effect on brand attitude when viewers are exposed to audiovisual placements, but not when the placements are purely visual.

The current study aims to extend past work in several important ways. First, it is the first to test the interactive impact of modality and repetition in the context of written text, as to date these factors were only examined in isolation (Avramova et al., 2016a, 2016b; Storm and Stoller, 2015). Second, we investigate the effect of placement modality in film by comparing purely-visual to purely-auditory (rather than audiovisual, as in Homer, 2009) placements at different levels of frequency. Some authors have suggested that verbal brand mentions are less prominent than audiovisual placements (e.g., Russell, 1998), while others have found no differences between the two types of execution (Law and Braun, 2000), raising the question of whether they would exert the same impact on placement perceptions and brand attitude, and whether repetition
moderates this relationship. Furthermore, the present experiment is the first to systematically examine whether the same (interactive) effects emerge across two different media (short-story and short film). Critically, we employ a between-subjects design (manipulating modality, repetition, and medium) and keep the narrative content (text/script), target brand, and dependent measures constant. This approach allows for high experimental control and provides a cleaner test of both the main and interaction effects of modality and repetition than would an ad-hoc comparison of past studies using different media, different materials, brands, and dependent measures.

Finally, we extend past research by measuring consumers’ affective reaction to the placement, namely level of irritation, and test if it mediates the (negative) effects of modality and repetition on brand attitude across the two media. Prior work has mainly focused on the role of cognitive variables (i.e., persuasion knowledge, critical processing) in driving placement repetition effects on brand evaluation, garnering conflicting results (e.g., Avramova et al., 2016c; Matthes et al., 2007; Matthes and Naderer, 2016). Moreover, the process (be that affective or cognitive) driving modality effects on brand attitude has not yet been directly tested. The current study is thus the first to examine the mediating role of irritation in modality and repetition effects across film and text.

**LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT**

In the following section, we review the relevant literature on the impact of placement modality and frequency on placement processing and brand evaluation. We first discuss past work in the context of written narratives. Drawing on the extant evidence, we essentially propose that placement frequency will moderate the effects of modality on irritation with the placement, such that exposure to dialogue, compared to narration, placements in text will elicit greater irritation at higher (vs. lower) levels of placement repetition. Higher irritation will in turn lead to more negative brand attitudes. We then proceed to review findings in the domain of audiovisual media. Based on this research, we predict that the effects we hypothesize with respect to text will replicate in the domain of film placements, that is exposure to auditory, compared to visual, placements in film will similarly lead to greater irritation at higher (vs. lower) levels of placement repetition. Thus, although we expect the same (interaction) effects to emerge in both media, we
develop and formulate separate hypotheses for text and film (based on the respective literature) for the sake of clarity. Figure 6.1 presents a visual depiction of our conceptual model. Medium type is not depicted in the figure, since we do not formulate specific hypotheses regarding its moderating effect. Nevertheless, we test its impact by testing the three-way interaction between modality, frequency, and medium for exploratory purposes.

**Figure 6.1: Conceptual model of the interaction between placement modality and frequency on irritation and brand attitude**

**Placement modality and placement frequency in written text**

The concept of placement modality, which typically refers to whether a placed brand is encoded via the visual or the auditory channel (or both) was recently introduced to the print medium by Avramova et al. (2016b). Specifically, they made a distinction between placements featuring in the dialogue and those featuring in the narration of a fictional text. This distinction is highly relevant to studying placement effects, as brands are mentioned in both the narration and the dialogue of works of fiction. For instance, Lee Child’s (2013) novel *Never Go Back* features the automobile brand Range Rover in both the dialogue (1), as in the narration (2), as evidenced by the following passages:

1. He said, “Go on, pick a car, any car.”
   “A Range Rover,” Turner said. “I’ve never been in one before.”
   “You’ll love it.”

2.
Similarly, Fay Weldon’s (2007) notorious novel *The Bulgari Connection*, which was commissioned by the jewelry designer, featured the brand name both in the dialogue (1) and the narration (2):

(1) “We’ll go to Bulgari tomorrow and buy the necklace,” he said.

(2) The Bulgari necklace, important and unalterable, sat serenely round the smooth neck, amidst paint mayhem.

Based on research showing that dialogue (i.e., direct speech) is perceived as more vivid and memorable and undergoes deeper processing than other types of text (e.g., indirect speech; Clark and Gerrig, 1990; Eerland, Engelen, and Zwaan, 2013; Yao et al., 2011), Avramova et al. (2016b) proposed that brands placed in the dialogue should be more prominent and will thus undergo more extensive elaboration than brands placed in the narration of a story. In line with this reasoning, and with evidence demonstrating that high placement prominence in audiovisual media could be detrimental for brand attitudes (e.g., Cowley and Barron, 2008; Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009), Avramova et al. (2016b) found that exposure to dialogue, as compared to narration, placements exerted a negative impact on brand evaluation for readers who scored relatively high on need for cognition (NFC; Cacioppo and Petty, 1982). The authors suggested that high-NFC individuals, who typically engage in more effortful and careful information-processing (as compared to those low in NFC), processed the dialogue placements in a more systematic manner than the narration placements. This supposedly elicited persuasion knowledge (i.e., recognition that the brand mentions serve commercial motives; Campbell and Kirmani, 2000; Friestad and Wright, 1994), which in turn triggered critical processing, ultimately resulting in more negative brand attitudes.

Critically, however, Avramova et al. (2016b) integrated 4 placements within the text. It could thus be that the negative effect of modality emerged as a result of exposure to a high number of dialogue placements, rather than to dialogue placements *per se*. Arguably, higher (vs. lower) levels of brand name repetition present more opportunities for elaborating on the (prominent) placement, thereby considering tactic inappropriateness and developing resistance (see also Avramova et al., 2016a; Campbell and Keller, 2003; Homer, 2009). Hence, the same effect might
not ensue at lower placement frequencies – a pattern which would be consistent with the lack of modality effects for low-NFC readers (who supposedly did not engage in deep elaboration) in that previous study. In the present research, we aim to explore this idea directly by testing the effect of placement modality on brand attitude at two different levels of placement frequency (2 and 4).

Furthermore, Avramova et al. (2016b) did not measure readers’ responses to the placements, which supposedly mediate the interaction effect of prominence and NFC on brand evaluation. Therefore, another important goal of the current experiment is to provide more insight into the process underlying modality effects. Specifically, we suggest that if dialogue placements are indeed processed more extensively than narration placements, especially when repeated, they should lead to higher levels of irritation.

**H1:** The negative impact of dialogue, as compared to narration, placements on irritation will be larger at high (vs. low) levels of frequency.

Surprisingly, although it seems reasonable to predict that irritation with the placement exerts a negative impact on brand evaluation (in any medium), this hypothesis has never been empirically tested. In fact, to our knowledge only one previous study investigated responses to placements as mediators of the impact of placement prominence on brand evaluation and it focused on the effects of repetition, rather than modality (Avramova et al., 2016d). Notably, although this work showed that higher placement frequency in written text may trigger critical processing under certain circumstances, it failed to obtain the expected negative effect of critical processing on brand attitude. Conceptually similar results were reported by Matthes and Naderer (2016) in the context of music videos, where they found that although placement disclosures elicit persuasion knowledge, the latter had no impact on brand attitude. Finally, Storm and Stoller (2015) showed that increasing placement repetition in text enhanced brand evaluation even when participants were first warned against the potentially biasing impact of product placements. Taken together, these findings suggest that persuasion knowledge and critical processing may not reliably predict brand attitude, nor do they necessarily mediate the effects of placement prominence.
We currently propose that one explanation for this pattern is that all of the above studies focused on cognitive responses to the brand placements (e.g., measuring the degree to which consumers recognized placements as a form of advertising). Cognitive responses, however, may not necessarily affect brand attitude (see also Lee, 2001; Mandler, Nakamura, and Van Zandt, 1987, for evidence on the dissociation between cognitive and affective responses). In line with such an account, persuasion knowledge has been found to moderate the effect of placement frequency in a TV program on brand attitude (i.e., positive effects of repetition at low persuasion knowledge; negative effects of repetition at high persuasion knowledge) when this construct was measured using a combination of cognitive and affective items (Matthes et al., 2007). Since the study of Matthes et al. (2007) confounded the two dimensions and did not test for mediation (but only moderation), and work using cognitive responses to placements often failed to find an effect on brand evaluation, as described above, the current research sets out to test the interactive effects of modality and repetition on irritation, an affective response, as well as on brand attitude. More specifically, we argue that frequency will moderate the impact of modality on irritation, as outlined above, which will in turn negatively influence brand attitude. In other words, we posit that irritation will mediate the interaction effect of modality and repetition on brand attitude. This reasoning leads to the following hypothesis in the print medium:

**H2:** Irritation will mediate the negative effect of exposure to dialogue vs. narration placements at high, but not low, frequency on brand attitude.

**Placement modality and placement frequency in film**

A key objective of the present research is to examine whether the interactive impact of placement modality and repetition, hypothesized above with regard to written narrative, replicates in the context of film – when a number of factors are held constant (e.g., content, target brand, measures). Placement modality has received much more attention in the domain of audiovisual, as compared to print, media. Most studies have focused on the difference between purely-visual and audiovisual placements (where the brand is both shown and verbally mentioned), consistently showing that the latter lead to better brand recall (e.g., Brennan and Babin, 2004; Cowley and Barron, 2008; Dens et al., 2012; Gupta and Lord, 1998; Law and Braun, 2000). Further, audiovisual (vs. visual) placements have been found to negatively influence brand
evaluation, although these studies confounded modality and frequency (i.e., the audiovisual placements were also presented a higher number of times, as the goal was to manipulate placement prominence, rather than modality per se; Cowley and Barron, 2008; Dens et al., 2012).

Surprisingly, only two previous studies have compared the impact of purely-auditory to purely-visual placements on affective or conative outcomes. First, Law and Braun (2000) found that auditory and audiovisual placements had a similar impact on choice, where they were both (equally) less likely to be chosen relative to visually-placed brands. Second, Russell (2002) explored how modality interacts with plot connection to influence brand attitude. She argued that different placement modalities are associated with different levels of meaningfulness, such that auditory placements are typically expected to be more relevant to the plot, as they feature in the film or show script, whereas visually placed brands are expected to be less relevant, as they are often used as props. A mismatch between expectations and placement execution is thus more likely to attract attention and raise viewers’ suspicions. Consistent with this, Russell (2002) demonstrated that when plot connection is low (as is often the case, also in the present study), auditory placements are better recalled (i.e., more prominent), yet less persuasive, than visual placements (the pattern reversing at high plot connection). She proposed that the higher prominence of auditory placements made viewers consider the motives behind the brand integrations, thereby eliciting resistance. Notably, placement frequency was not manipulated in that study: Participants were always exposed to two placements. Hence, it could be that the auditory placements become even more prominent, and viewers even more likely to resist the persuasion attempt, at higher repetition levels. In line with this prediction, Matthes et al. (2007) showed that higher (vs. lower) frequency of exposure to visual placements in a TV program was associated with lower brand attitudes for viewers who scored high on program involvement and persuasion knowledge activation.

More direct support for the idea that increasing repetition will amplify modality effects comes from Homer’s (2009) studies, where placement modality and frequency were orthogonally manipulated. Specifically, Homer tested how exposure to a repeated (3 times) vs. a single purely-visual or audiovisual placement in a film and a TV show affects brand attitude. Her findings showed that brand attitude decreased in the repeated, relative to the single, placement conditions,
but only when the placement was audiovisual. For visual placements, repetition was not consequential. However, albeit informative, these results left several important questions unanswered. First of all, Homer (2009) only compared purely-visual to audiovisual placements, hence the attitudinal impact of purely-auditory vs. purely-visual placements (which would more closely mirror the distinction between dialogue and narration placements in text) at different levels of repetition still needs to be assessed. Second, Homer (2009) did not report whether the attitudinal impact of modality was significant at different levels of repetition – a question that may be more relevant in some cases. Third, that study compared the impact of exposure to a single placement versus three placements, rather than testing the effects of low vs. high repetition (i.e., presenting one placement does not involve any repetition). Finally, although Homer’s study showed that higher placement frequency increased viewers’ perceptions of distraction and plot interference, especially in the audiovisual placement conditions, the mediating role of these responses in bringing about the effects of prominence on brand attitude was not tested.

To address these issues and extend earlier work, the present research therefore investigates how exposure to purely-auditory versus purely-visual placements in a short film affects brand attitude at low (2) and high (4) levels of placement frequency. Moreover, we test whether viewers’ irritation with the placements mediates the (interactive) effects of modality and repetition on brand attitude. Drawing on prior evidence suggesting that purely-auditory placements are more prominent than purely-visual placements (even if they are less prominent than audiovisual placements; Gupta and Lord, 1998; Law and Braun, 1998; Russell, 2002), we predict that placement modality will exert a stronger impact at higher (than lower) frequency. In addition, we posit that irritation with the placement will mediate these effects. In other words, we expect to replicate the pattern we hypothesized to emerge in the context of written text. Formally, we test the following hypotheses in the film medium:

**H3:** The negative impact of purely-auditory, as compared to purely-visual, placements on irritation will be larger at high (vs. low) levels of frequency.

**H4:** Irritation will mediate the negative impact of purely-auditory, as compared to purely-visual, placements at high, but not low, frequency on brand attitude.
Chapter 6: Brand placement across media

METHOD

Study design and experimental manipulations

We conducted an experiment with a 2 (Medium: Text, Film) x 2 (Modality: visual/narration, audio/dialogue) x 2 (Frequency: 2, 4) full-factorial between-subjects design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the 8 experimental conditions. Participants in the text conditions read a short-story of about 2,900 words, while those assigned to the film conditions watched a film version of the same narrative, which was about 9 minutes long. The short-story was written by a professional writer (see also Avramova et al., 2016b) and the film was shot by a semi-professional film crew for the purposes of the present research using Russell’s (2002) “theater methodology”.

The story is set in a café, where several young people meet and chat about a party that had taken place several days earlier. At some point, another friend, Olivier, joins them and it becomes clear that he went shopping earlier – the link to the integration of clothing brand Esprit®. Both the text and the film were in Dutch and the content was as similar as possible across the two media. That is, the dialogue was almost identical, and the narration of the story (3rd person, present tense) described the scenes and the characters’ actions in the same way as they were depicted in the film version. Placement modality was manipulated by inserting the brand in either the narration or the dialogue of the short-story (Avramova et al., 2016b), and either visually or auditorily in the film. In the dialogue (text) and auditory (film) conditions, the brand was mentioned in the conversation between the characters. In the narration (text) conditions, the brand was mentioned by the narrator who described the actions of the character associated with the brand (e.g., “Olivier took out the Esprit bag from his backpack.”). In the visual placement (film) conditions, the same actions were acted out, such that the branded product (Esprit logo on the bag) was shown on screen (i.e., Olivier is shown to take out the Esprit bag from his backpack). In this way, the short-story was similar to a script, which was being adapted to a film, with the goal of keeping it as

‡ Data from two of the experimental conditions (where participants were exposed to 4 placements in either the narration or the dialogue of a text) have already been reported in Avramova et al. (2016b).
close as possible to the original. This ensured maximum comparability across the modality conditions in the two media (i.e., a narration placement in the text being analogical to a visual placement in the film, and a dialogue placement in the text being analogical to the auditory placement in the film).

Finally, placement frequency was manipulated by inserting the brand (in either of the two modalities) either 2 or 4 times, henceforth “low” and “high” repetition, respectively. In the 2-placement conditions, the first and the last placements were used to make sure that the results were not influenced by primacy or recency effects (see Appendix 1B for the text stimuli and all manipulations).

**Participants and procedure**

Three hundred and fifty seven respondents took part in the study. Participants were recruited through a professional online panel agency and a random sample of Flemish men and women aged 18-30 were emailed with an invitation to fill in an online survey (programmed in Qualtrics®). This age group was deemed most suitable given the content of the narrative. The research was briefly introduced as ‘a series of separate, unrelated studies, including a study on perceptions of a short-story/film [depending on condition], a consumer behavior study, and a personality questionnaire [in the end, participants also filled in personality measures, which were not relevant to the present study]. Upon opening the survey link, participants were automatically and randomly assigned to one of the experimental conditions. Each ‘part’ of the experiment featured a different title, introduction, task instructions, and layout in order to reduce the chance that respondents will (immediately) see the link between the manipulations and the dependent measures.

We took several steps to ensure the quality of our data. First, in the text conditions, participants could only proceed to the next page of the short-story after a preset time interval (i.e., between 60-120 seconds/page, based on pre-reading times of 4 students). Similarly, in the film conditions, they could only proceed to the page following the film after 9 minutes had passed (i.e., the length of the film). Second, we explicitly asked participants if they read (watched) the entire text (film), and those who answered “no” were automatically excluded. To eliminate random clicking, we
also embedded a “trick question”, which asked participants to enter a particular number on the respective scale. Again, respondents who did not follow instructions were automatically redirected to the end of the survey. Finally, two multiple-choice questions checked whether participants had a basic understanding of the story/film plot. Only participants who answered both questions correctly were retained (resulting in the elimination of 20 participants, who got one or both questions wrong). The final sample thus only included respondents who had satisfied all these criteria, namely 337 participants (i.e., between 36 and 51 participants per condition).

**Measures**

Our key dependent variable, *brand attitude*, was measured using four 7-point bipolar scales (negative/positive, unattractive/attractive, don’t like/like, low/high quality; Cronbach’s alpha =.92; see e.g., Dens et al., 2012; Homer, 2009). *Irritation*, the proposed mediator, was measured using 1 item (I found the manner in which Esprit was integrated in the story/film irritating) on a 7-point Likert scale (fully disagree/ fully agree). It was deemed sufficient to use a single-item measure in this case for two reasons: First, past work has shown that single-item measures perform as well as multiple-item measures for doubly-concrete constructs (see e.g., Bergkvist and Rossiter, 2009), which we believe irritation with the placement to be; and second, we were interested in the role of irritation *per se*, which has sometimes been confounded with other (more cognitive) responses to brand placements in past research (e.g., Matthes et al., 2007). Nevertheless, we included two more items in the questionnaire that closely relate to irritation (i.e., Because of the references to Esprit, I found the story/film less pleasant; The references to Esprit must have been taken out of the story/film). Our analysis showed that the three items were highly correlated and formed a reliable scale (Cronbach’s alpha =.94). Moreover, using the average score of the 3 items as a measure of irritation yielded identical results as the analysis using the single item. However, we opted for using (and reporting) the single-item measure in all analyses, as conceptually, it is a cleaner and more specific measure of irritation with the placement, while the other two items seem to capture other (albeit related) responses. Table 6.1 reports the descriptive statistics for all measures.
### Table 6.1: Descriptive statistics for each of the measured variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand attitude</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irritation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand familiarity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards the character</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absorption in the story/film</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. All variables were measured on 7-point Likert or bipolar scales.*

In addition, we measured several variables which we used as covariates in our analyses. First, we measured *absorption* in the story/film using Kuijpers et al.’s (2014) 18-item Story World Absorption Scale (SWAS). Although we were not interested in this variable *per se* in the present study, we wanted to control for the effects of absorption, as past research has shown that narrative transportation (a closely-related construct and a dimension of the SWAS) could vary across media (Green et al., 2008) and that readers’ level of transportation moderates the effects of brand name repetition on brand attitude (Avramova et al., 2016a). The SWAS includes four dimensions (transportation, attention, emotional engagement, mental imagery) and was originally developed to measure absorption into a literary narrative, but the items can be easily adapted to measure absorption in a film (see also Busselle and Bilandzic, 2009; Green et al., 2008). We used the overall absorption score, derived from averaging all 18 items, as a covariate (Cronbach’s alpha = .95).

Second, we measured *attitude towards the character* placing the brand using four 7-point bipolar scales (not at all attractive/very attractive; not at all kind/very kind; not at all trustworthy/very trustworthy; Cronbach’s alpha = .73). To avoid raising suspicion, we told participants that we were interested in their attitude towards four different characters, but that—for the sake of keeping the questionnaire shorter—we randomly assign respondents to rate only one of these characters. In fact, all participants were asked to rate Olivier, the character associated with the target brand. We measured attitude towards the character, as past work has demonstrated that it could influence perceptions of the placed brand (e.g., Russell and Stern, 2006). Moreover, research has shown that a communicator is more salient in audiovisual than in print persuasion.
contexts, which makes communicator-related cognitions more influential (e.g., Chaiken and Eagly, 1983; Sparks, Areni, and Cox, 1998). Thus, we reasoned that the character placing the brand in our film version may also be more salient than the one in the text version, with attitude towards the character (which may in turn be affected by attitude towards the actor) eventually exerting a larger impact on brand attitude in the film (vs. text) condition. Therefore, we controlled for this variable in our analyses.

Finally, we measured brand familiarity using one item (How familiar are you with Esprit?) on a 7-point scale (not at all familiar/very familiar). We used this variable as a covariate, since past research has shown that it moderates the effects of placement repetition on brand attitude (Avramova et al., 2016; Storm and Stoller, 2015). Brand attitude and brand familiarity were also measured for two filler brands (Zara® and We®) to further mask the connection between the text/film and the dependent measures.

RESULTS

To test our hypotheses, we used Hayes’ (2013) PROCESS macro for SPSS, which uses a multiple regression approach and allows to test for moderated mediation. Although we did not formulate hypotheses regarding the effect of medium, since the literature gives no indication that medium should moderate the interaction effect between modality and frequency in any particular direction, we still included this factor (and its interaction with the other independent variables) as an additional predictor. Specifically, we first used Model 3, regressing irritation on the three predictors (modality, frequency, and medium, the latter two treated as moderators), their interactions, and the three covariates in order to test the simple and conditional effects of modality within each level of frequency and within each medium. Next, we used Model 11 to test whether irritation mediates the interactive effects of modality, frequency, and medium on brand attitude. All three independent variables were dichotomous. Thus, placement modality was coded 0 for the narration/visual placement and 1 for the dialogue/auditory placement condition. Placement frequency was coded 0 for the 2-repetition and 1 for the 4-repetition condition. Finally, medium was coded 0 for text and 1 for film.
The first model accounted for a significant amount of variance in irritation ($R^2 = .32$, $F(10, 326) = 3.63, p < .001$). The only covariate that had a significant impact was absorption into the story/film ($b = -0.30$, $t = -3.06$, $p = .002$), indicating that the more absorbed readers/viewers were, the less irritated they were with the placements. The effects of brand familiarity and attitudes towards the character were not significant (all $p$’s > .17).

**Table 6.2: The interactive effects of placement modality, placement frequency, and medium on irritation.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>LLCI</th>
<th>ULCI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>4.364</td>
<td>0.647</td>
<td>6.749</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>3.092</td>
<td>5.636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modality</td>
<td>0.446</td>
<td>0.393</td>
<td>1.137</td>
<td>.256</td>
<td>-0.326</td>
<td>1.219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0.509</td>
<td>0.369</td>
<td>1.382</td>
<td>.168</td>
<td>-0.216</td>
<td>1.234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>-0.220</td>
<td>0.394</td>
<td>-0.558</td>
<td>0.577</td>
<td>-0.994</td>
<td>0.555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modality*Frequency</td>
<td>0.432</td>
<td>0.526</td>
<td>-0.822</td>
<td>0.411</td>
<td>-0.602</td>
<td>1.466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modality*Medium</td>
<td>0.592</td>
<td>0.535</td>
<td>1.108</td>
<td>0.269</td>
<td>-0.460</td>
<td>1.644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency*Medium</td>
<td>0.493</td>
<td>0.527</td>
<td>0.936</td>
<td>0.350</td>
<td>-0.543</td>
<td>1.529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modality<em>Frequency</em>Medium</td>
<td>-1.625</td>
<td>0.736</td>
<td>-2.206</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>-3.074</td>
<td>-.176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand familiarity</td>
<td>-0.079</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>-1.374</td>
<td>0.170</td>
<td>-0.192</td>
<td>0.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards the character</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.115</td>
<td>-0.467</td>
<td>0.641</td>
<td>-0.173</td>
<td>0.280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absorption</td>
<td>-0.299</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>-3.063</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>-0.490</td>
<td>-0.107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 3-way interaction between modality, frequency, and medium was significant ($b = -1.63$, $t = -2.21$, $p = .028$; all other $p$’s > .17; see Table 6.2). Given that we were interested in the interactive effects of modality and repetition within the two media, we decomposed the 3-way interaction by testing the 2-way interaction between modality and repetition and the conditional effects of modality within each level of frequency within each medium.

In the text conditions, the 2-way interaction between modality and frequency on irritation was not significant ($t = .822$, $p = .411$), thereby rejecting H1. Although this indicates that the effect of modality does not significantly differ across the two frequency conditions, we looked at the conditional effects (see Table 6.3) and the pattern of the means (see Figure 6.2) to check whether
the effect of modality was significant at each level of repetition. These show that the effect of modality on irritation was significant in the 4-repetition condition ($b = .88, t = 2.52, p = .012$), while it was not significant in the 2-repetition condition ($t = 1.14, p = .256$). We also conducted an additional analysis within the text condition only, namely a 2(Modality) x 2(Frequency) ANCOVA (including the 3 covariates) on irritation, and found that both main effects were significant (estimated at the covariates’ sample means). Thus, exposure to dialogue compared to narration placements was associated with higher irritation, $F(1,159) = 6.15, p = .014$, as was exposure to 4 compared to 2 placements, $F(1, 159) = 7.17, p = .008$ (see Figure 6.2).

**Table 6.3: Conditional effects of placement modality (dialogue/auditory vs. narration/visual) on irritation within each level of placement frequency and within each medium.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Placement Frequency</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>LLCI</th>
<th>ULCI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>.446</td>
<td>.393</td>
<td>1.137</td>
<td>.256</td>
<td>-.326</td>
<td>1.219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>.879</td>
<td>.349</td>
<td>2.515</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>1.566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>1.039</td>
<td>.362</td>
<td>2.867</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.326</td>
<td>1.752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>-.154</td>
<td>.371</td>
<td>-.414</td>
<td>.679</td>
<td>-.884</td>
<td>.576</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the *film* conditions, the 2-way interaction effect between modality and frequency on irritation was significant ($b = -1.19, t = -2.54, p = .012$). However, contrary to our predictions, the effect of modality was significant in the 2-repetition conditions ($b = .94, t = 2.85, p = .005$), but not in the 4-repetition conditions ($t = -.77, p = .44$; see Table 6.3), thereby rejecting H3. Thus, although viewers exposed to the auditory placements reported greater irritation than those exposed to the visual placements, as expected, the effect was eliminated, rather than amplified, at higher (vs. lower) repetition levels (see Figure 6.2). Importantly, the lack of differences in the 4-repetition conditions seems to be due to an increase of irritation of viewers exposed to the visual placements and no change for those exposed to the auditory placements. In addition, the effect of repetition was significant in the visual placement condition ($t = 2.65, p = .009$), while it was not significant in the auditory placement condition ($t = -.54, p = .590$).
Figure 6.2: The impact of placement modality and placement frequency on irritation with the placements in text (panel A) and film (panel B).

Note: Estimates are based on covariates’ sample means: Brand familiarity = 4.39; Attitude towards the character = 4.77; Absorption in the story/film = 4.17. All covariates, as well as irritation, were measured on a 7-point scale.
Brand attitude: Moderated mediation

We next tested whether irritation with the placements mediates the interactive effects of modality and frequency on brand attitude for each medium. To this end, we utilized Model 11 of the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2013), which tests for moderated mediation. Specifically, this approach involves testing: 1) if the interaction between modality, frequency, and medium predicts irritation (mediator); 2) if irritation predicts brand attitude; and 3) if the conditional indirect effects are significant (i.e., if irritation mediates the effect of modality within each level of repetition within each medium).

The results from the first step were already discussed above. Next, the findings show that the model explains a significant amount of variance in brand attitude ($R^2 = .67$, $F(5, 331) = 54.20$, $p < .001$). In this case, brand familiarity was the only significant covariate, greater familiarity being associated with more positive brand attitude ($b = .44$, $t = 15.96$, $p < .001$). Attitudes towards the character and absorption into the story/film were not related to brand attitude (all $p$'s > .47).

As expected, irritation had a negative, albeit small, impact on brand attitude ($b = -.072$, $t = -2.75$, $p = .006$). We next looked at the conditional indirect effects, namely at the impact of modality on brand attitude via irritation within each level of frequency and within each medium (see Table 6.4). In the text conditions, irritation mediated the negative effect of modality (exposure to dialogue vs. narration placements) on brand attitude at high (indirect effect: $b = -.06$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI = -.17, -.01), but not at low placement frequency ($b = -.03$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI = -.13, .01). This provides support for H2. In the film conditions, irritation was again found to be a significant mediator. However, it mediated the negative effect of exposure to visual (vs. auditory) placements on brand attitude at low (indirect effect: $b = -.08$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI = -.17, -.02), but not at high placement frequency ($b = .01$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI = -.04, .08; see Table 6.4), thereby rejecting H4.
Table 6.4: Conditional indirect effects of placement modality (dialogue/auditory vs. narration/visual) on brand attitude via irritation within each level of placement frequency and within each medium.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mediator Frequency</th>
<th>Placement Medium</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>LLCI</th>
<th>UCLI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irritation 2</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>-.032</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>-.126</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irritation 4</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>-.063</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>-.175</td>
<td>-.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irritation 2</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>-.075</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>-.172</td>
<td>-.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irritation 4</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td>-.041</td>
<td>.079</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional analyses

Although we did not formulate specific hypotheses with regard to the moderating effect of medium, the present design allows us to test its effect as well. Specifically, given the different ways in which modality seems to affect irritation within text and film, and the significant three-way interaction reported above, we next looked at the interaction between medium and modality on irritation within different levels of repetition. This analysis revealed that the simple two-way interaction between medium and modality was significant in the 4-repetition conditions ($b = -1.03, t = -2.03, p = .043$), but not in the 2-repetition conditions ($t = .59, p = .269$). Zooming in on the 4-repetition conditions, the conditional effects show that, whereas there was no difference in irritation across the two media when participants were exposed to narration or visual placements ($t = .77, p = .442$), there was a significant difference when readers encountered dialogue/auditory placements ($b = -.76, t = -2.03, p = .043$). That is, readers who were exposed to four dialogue placements in the text reported more irritation than viewers exposed to four auditory (i.e., also dialogue) placements in the film. The mediation analysis demonstrated that the indirect effect of medium on brand attitude via irritation was also significant ($b = .06, SE = .04, 95\% CI = .003, .163$), indicating that the increase in irritation induced by repeated dialogue (vs. auditory) placements led to a corresponding decrease in brand attitude.
DISCUSSION

The current research tested the hypothesis that placement modality and placement frequency interact to affect irritation with the placement, which in turn influences brand attitude in a print and an audiovisual medium. In the text conditions, exposure to dialogue (vs. narration) placements led to greater irritation, yet the magnitude of this effect did not differ significantly across repetition levels. In the film conditions, the interaction between modality and frequency was significant, but the pattern was not consistent with our predictions: Greater irritation in response to auditory than to visual placements emerged at lower levels of repetition, but was eliminated (rather than amplified) at higher levels of repetition, apparently due to an increase in irritation for those exposed to highly-repeated visual placements. Nevertheless, irritation mediated the interaction effect of modality and repetition on brand attitude in both media, as expected. Additional analyses showed that exposure to repeated dialogue placements in text was associated with greater irritation, and thus also with lower brand attitude, than exposure to repeated auditory placements in film.

The present study contributes to the extant literature in several ways. Although previous work has studied placement modality and frequency in the context of written narrative separately (Avramova et al. 2016a, 2016b; Storm and Stoller 2015), the current experiment is the first to systematically manipulate both factors within the same study. Moreover, it is the first attempt to compare brand placement effects across different media. By using the same narrative content, target brand, and dependent measures, we could assess whether two key placement characteristics (modality and frequency) exert the same effects in text and film. Finally, we extend past work on brand placement effects by exploring the process that is (at least partly) driving modality and repetition effects on brand attitude. That is, we provided evidence for the mediating role of readers’/viewers’ affective reaction to the placements, namely irritation.

One tentative explanation for the lack of a significant interaction between placement modality and frequency on irritation in the text conditions could be the low power of our study. Although replicating these results with a larger sample is necessary before any conclusions can be drawn, the conditional effects are in line with our predictions that the effect of modality becomes stronger at higher repetition levels. Moreover, the indirect effect of modality and frequency on
brand attitude (via irritation) was significant in the high, but not in the low, frequency conditions. Interestingly, this pattern is consistent with prior evidence from audiovisual media: Using TV programs and film, Homer (2009) found that exposure to repeated (3 times) audiovisual, but not visual, placements was perceived as more distracting and was more detrimental to brand attitude than exposure to a single placement.

Notably, our findings with regard to film showed that repeating the placement even once (i.e., 2 exposures) was sufficient to elicit greater irritation in the auditory relative to the visual placement conditions. However, this effect was not amplified at higher placement frequency (i.e., 4 exposures). There are several possible explanations for this finding. First, it is possible that purely-auditory placements (as used in the present research) are less prominent than audiovisual placements (as used in Homer’s work). Hence exposure to 4 purely-auditory placements did not significantly increase irritation beyond the levels induced at 2 placement repetitions in our experiment, while exposure to 3 (vs. 1) audiovisual placements had a greater impact in Homer’s studies. Support for this account comes from earlier work on the impact of purely-auditory and audiovisual placements on memory and choice (Law and Braun, 2001). Further, our visual placements may have been more prominent (e.g., bigger size or more central position on screen) than the visual placements used in Homer’s studies, which could have made repeated exposure extra irritating. Interestingly, the pattern we observed is consistent with prior evidence on the “visual dominance” effect in information processing (Posner, Nissen, and Klein 1976), predicting that visual cues are more salient than auditory cues. In line with this, several studies in communication have reported better recall of visually-presented than auditorily-presented information (e.g., Furnham, Benson, and Gunter, 1987; Gunter, Furnham, and Leese, 1986).

The present study also explored the moderating effect of medium type. Although past research has never directly compared brand placement effects across media, a number of scholars have called for such an investigation (e.g., Bhatnagar et al., 2004; Brennan and McCalman, 2011; Friedman 1985; Van Reijmersdal et al., 2009), the rationale being that audiovisual and print media differ in important ways. For instance, reading (and generating story-related imagery) likely requires more concentration and mental effort than the more “automatic” viewing of a film, but reading also allows self-pacing (or even “slowness”, Hakemulder, 2011; see also Green and
Brock, 2002; Green et al., 2008; Sparks et al., 1998; Tukachinsky, 2014). This theorizing would imply that placements in text and film may be processed in a different manner. For example, if reading a story imposes a higher cognitive load than watching a film, fewer resources may be available to readers (as compared to film viewers) for extensive elaboration of the placements and for tactic inappropriateness-related thoughts (see also Bhatnagar and Wan, 2011). This would be a reason to expect equivalent placements (in terms of modality and frequency) to elicit lower irritation in a text, than in a film, context. Furthermore, evidence suggests that auditory (spoken words) and visual information (pictures) exhibit a recall advantage over printed words (e.g., Foos and Goolkasian, 2005; Goolkasian and Foos, 2002), which may also suggest the brand placements in an audiovisual medium are inherently more prominent than placements in text.

And yet, although our findings within each medium (analyzed separately) seem to support this view (i.e., a significant modality effect emerged at 2 repetitions in film, but only at 4 repetitions in text, with regard to both irritation and brand attitude), the formal test of the effect of medium tells a different story: The only significant difference between the two media was obtained when comparing readers’ vs. viewers’ irritation in response to the dialogue placements. Apparently, repeated exposure to the brand name in dialogue that one reads on the page is more irritating than repeated exposure to the same brand in the same dialogue that is heard within a film. One tentative interpretation of this finding is that dialogue may be less attention-grabbing in film than in text, as salient visual information is competing for viewers’ attentional resources in film, while dialogue is encoded apart from the preceding or following narration scenes in text. Moreover, readers can linger on a written passage longer, and even reread it, while viewers cannot pace their exposure to the film. As a consequence, a brand name may receive greater attention and undergo deeper processing when it is placed in the dialogue of a written text, than in a film, thereby eliciting more irritation. In any case, this effect, which may be hard to predict or explain using extant theories (which would rather predict the opposite, as outlined above), is beautifully captured by a New York Times journalist, who described his experience with Fay Weldon’s novel *The Bulgari Connection*, arguably the first case of paid brand placement in fiction (see Arnold, 2001):
I counted 34 mentions of Bulgari and about 15 other rhapsodies of jewelry, which in the context of the novel directly refer back to the jeweler. Mostly they stick out on the page like a boulder in the sand. […] They thump off the page, and land heavily, Here I am. In that sense it's not at all like product placement in the movies, where the product placed most often seems subliminal on the screen, seen and gone, quick, quick. The printed words on the page, certainly those that are in essence underlined, are there solid, clunky, unmoving, like carbuncles.

Importantly, regardless of the factors that elicit irritation in each medium, it is detrimental to brand evaluation in both media. This finding is noteworthy for at least three reasons. First, it is not that obvious that irritation with the placement should influence attitudes towards the brand itself. That is, readers/viewers could have attributed responsibility for the annoying placement to the text author/film producer, rather than to the brand itself. Yet, even if such thoughts and attributions did take place in our study, brand attitude was still negatively affected. What is more, although the levels of irritation reported in the current experiment were relatively low (i.e., in the film conditions all means were below the midpoint of the scale; in the text conditions, slightly above it), even a small increase in irritation was sufficient to negatively influence brand attitude.

Further, we obtained this pattern using a familiar brand. Thus, in contrast to some prior work, which has suggested that attitudes towards familiar brands are less likely to shift in response to placement exposure (e.g., Avramova et al., 2016a; Storm and Stoller, 2015), we found that evaluations of a familiar brand are affected by exposure to dialogue, as compared to narration, placements in text (at both low and high repetition levels) and by exposure to highly-repeated visual (vs. auditory) placements in film (see also Homer 2009). Finally, our results suggest that consumers’ affective reactions to the placement influence brand attitude. Interestingly, past research has mainly focused on the mediating role of cognitive responses, such as persuasion knowledge (i.e., recognizing the commercial nature of brand placements). However, a number of studies have shown that persuasion knowledge (activated in response to sponsorship disclosures in TV programs) only affects brand attitude via activating critical processing (e.g., Boerman et al., 2012, 2014), and others have found that it does not affect brand attitude at all (Avramova et al., 2016d; Matthes and Naderer, 2016). The present results thus highlight the need to consider both affective and cognitive responses to brand placements and their impact on brand outcomes.
Implications, limitations, and future research

The findings from the present research are informative for practitioners in showing that brand placements need to be adapted to the medium in which they are integrated. Critically, placement execution factors like modality and repetition could determine consumers’ perceptions of the integration, which then affect brand attitude. Specifically, placements in the narration of a fictional text seem to be more persuasive than placements in the dialogue, and higher placement frequency may (independently) increase irritation (although the optimal number of placements would obviously depend on the length of the text). In the context of film, the negative impact of exposure to auditory placements levels off at higher frequencies, while visual placements seem to gain prominence and thus increase irritation. These results imply that placements may be processed in different ways across different media and that the “lessons” learned from research employing one medium may not always be directly applicable in the context of another. They also suggest, in line with previous research (e.g., Cowley and Barron, 2008; Dens et al., 2012), that placement prominence may exert a negative impact on brand evaluation. Thus, it seems unwise to put a price tag on placements in either text or film that is purely based on how centrally the brand is placed. Instead, the interplay of different placement characteristics, as well as the medium itself, should be considered before a specific execution is chosen.

Interestingly, whereas visual placements are typically considered to be less prominent than auditory and audiovisual placements, and prior work in film has found that they may be immune to the negative impact of placement repetition (Homer, 2009), the present experiment found the opposite pattern. This raises the question of whether placement modality should be considered a proxy for placement prominence in the first place. Obviously, both visual and auditory placements can vary in terms of prominence: Visual placements may vary in terms of size, position on the screen, and duration, while auditory placements may differ by virtue of the speaker’s pitch, intonation, and stress (see also Dens et al., 2012). Manipulating the relative prominence of visual placements in a music video, Matthes et al. (2012) demonstrated that higher, compared to lower, placement frequency enhanced brand attitude, but only when the visual placement was relatively subtle. Conceptually similar results were obtained by Avramova et al. (2016c), who studied the effects of placing a brand within the direct vs. the indirect speech
in a fictional text. They argued that, even though both direct and indirect speech report what the character says (and are thus equally “meaningful” and connected to the plot, see Russell, 2002), the former should be relatively more prominent. In line with this, they found that exposure to placements in the indirect (vs. direct) speech was associated with more positive brand attitudes. To our knowledge, no research has so far tested the evaluative impact of auditory placements that vary in terms of prominence – an important gap that future research might address.

The present study also has some limitations. First, and probably most important, a perfect correspondence between the different modalities across the two media is inherently difficult to achieve or assess. In other words, the dialogue (narration) placements may not be entirely equivalent to the auditory (visual) placements. The question is, of course, to what extent they should be. Movies are often based on works of fiction, but even the most faithful adaptation will inevitably represent an (artistic) interpretation of the text. A scene from a movie will almost certainly present more visual information and a richer set than the one described on the page. Characters’ nonverbal behavior may be more vivid and influential on the screen than when depicted in text, and hearing characters’ actual speech, with all the subtleties of human voice, may provide for a different, more intensive experience than a written text.

However, research in cognitive science and linguistics has demonstrated that readers process language through mental simulation of the described content, which elicits perceptual experiences that closely mirror those resulting from interacting with the real world (see e.g., Barsalou, 2008; Fischer and Zwaan, 2008 for reviews). For instance, an “inner voice” is automatically generated during silent reading of direct speech (i.e., dialogue), which preserves certain perceptual aspects of actual speech, such as speech pace (e.g., Alexander and Nygaard, 2008; Zhou and Christianson, 2016). These findings increase our confidence that participants in our study were exposed to placements in text and film that were – if not identical – at least highly comparable. Controlling for level of absorption into the narrative and attitudes towards the character, which both could be affected by medium type, further ensured that the effects of modality and frequency that we observed across text and film can be attributed to the divergent impact of these factors within the two media. Still, current knowledge about the effects of repetition and modality across different media would be advanced if even cleaner manipulations
Chapter 6: Brand placement across media

are designed and if the present findings are replicated in other media. For instance, comparing the impact of exposure to dialogue placements in a written text and in an audiobook (or radio drama) would ensure that the content is perfectly equivalent across media (i.e., no visual information “contaminating” the dialogue and narration) and would provide more insight into the role of modality in placement effects.

Still, further research on how dialogue (written or heard) is perceived in the context of both types of media is crucial, given that readers/listeners may also visualize the content of the words (e.g., a brand name) they read or hear, especially in a narrative context (see Wyer, Hung, and Jiang, 2008). Notably, the likelihood that people engage in visual processing of verbally presented information has been shown to depend on individual differences in cognitive styles, the most relevant distinction being between visualizers and verbalizers (e.g., Childers, Houston, and Heckler, 1985; Kozhevnikov, Kosslyn, and Shephard, 2005). Moreover, it has been argued that situational factors could also trigger a visualizing or a verbalizing processing strategy, which in turn influences memory and judgment (Wyer et al., 2008). Thus, future research could look into how such (individual and situational) variables interact with placement modality to affect placement processing and, ultimately, brand responses.

Another limitation of the present study that merits further attention is the possible confounding of modality and duration in the film conditions. That is, mentioning the brand name in dialogue only takes a second, while displaying the branded product takes longer – a difference which may be more pronounced at higher repetition levels. Thus, it could be argued that in our 4-repetition conditions, viewers exposed to the visual placement spent a longer time encoding the brand than viewers exposed to the auditory placement. However, it is not clear how placement duration should be defined in the latter case: Is it the time it takes the character to literally pronounce the brand name, or is it rather the phrase or sentence that contains the brand that is important? This is quite relevant, as a 3-second display of a brand logo could also be considered as less prominent than a 1-second mention of the brand within a 7-second long sentence, fully dedicated to shopping at X and buying this or that product. Therefore, future research should zoom in on the specific characteristics of a placement scene that make it more or less prominent as a whole, and test whether and how duration affects placement effectiveness.
While the present study studied the effects of exposure to either 2 or 4 repetitions, future research might investigate whether higher repetition levels affect irritation and brand evaluation. As noted above, the levels of irritation reported in the present study were pretty low in absolute terms. Obviously, the specific number of placements that could be integrated in a story/film depends on the total length of the narrative content. Past work that has utilized higher placement frequency in audiovisual (e.g., Matthes et al., 2007; Matthes et al., 2012; Van Vaerenbergh et al., 2011) and print media (Avramova et al., 2016a) has documented linear effects, such that both the positive and negative effects of placement prominence (the direction itself determined by other factors) seem to get stronger at higher repetition levels. However, it is also conceivable that the effects of modality level off at higher placement frequency, as we found was the case for exposure to auditory placements in film.

Although the present study focused on the impact of placement modality and frequency, future research comparing brand placement effects across media could also explore the role of other key moderators. For example, the degree to which the brand is connected to the plot is likely to moderate the relationship between modality and repetition (see Olsen and Lanseng, 2012; Russell, 2002), yet it is not clear whether the same effects would emerge in film and text. Further, it has been shown that visual placements showing a character actively interacting with the product (i.e., drinking from a bottle of water), instead of simply showing the static product as a prop (i.e., the bottle of water sitting on the table), enhance both brand recall (suggesting greater prominence) and purchase intentions (Kamleitner and Jyote, 2013). However, it is yet to be established whether this difference is due to the closer association between the product and the character in the “interactive use” condition (i.e., the actor is touching and using the product), or to prominence per se (i.e., moving objects being more salient than static objects). In addition, it is possible that the positive impact of character-product interaction is attenuated at higher repetition levels, where the placement becomes too prominent. It would also be interesting to test whether the same effects are observed in a written narrative, where static and interactive placements may not differ to the same extent as in a visual presentation.
Chapter 7

Conclusions
Chapter 7: Conclusions

This chapter first presents a summary of the main findings reported in the empirical chapters of the dissertation. Next, it describes the implications of the present work for theory and practice. Finally, it discusses a number of limitations in the reported studies and delineates various avenues for future research.

MAIN FINDINGS

The main goal of this doctoral project was to systematically investigate how two key placement execution characteristics (i.e., placement frequency and placement modality), which have been shown to affect prominence in audiovisual media, influence brand evaluation in the context of fictional narratives. Moreover, it embarked to test if these placement factors interact with brand-related (i.e., brand familiarity), text-related (i.e., text language), and reader-related variables (i.e., level of narrative transportation; individual differences in need for cognition), which have been shown to influence processing style. Finally, the present dissertation also investigated the underlying process driving prominence effects by examining the mediating role of cognitive (i.e., persuasion knowledge and critical processing), as well as affective responses (i.e., irritation).

Chapter 2, which systematically manipulated placement frequency and brand familiarity, and also measured readers’ narrative transportation and individual differences in need for cognition (NFC), demonstrated that higher levels of brand name repetition affected attitudes towards an unfamiliar brand, but did not influence evaluations of a familiar brand. Moreover, and as expected, the degree to which readers were transported into the narrative moderated the impact of repetition, such that exposure to 11 (vs. 2) placements enhanced brand evaluations of highly, but not lowly, transported respondents. Finally, in line with predictions, readers’ need for cognition (NFC) further qualified these effects, as the interaction between repetition and narrative transportation (i.e., highly-transported participants reporting more positive brand attitudes after exposure to higher vs. lower number of brand mentions than low-transported participants) only emerged for people who were moderate to high in NFC.

The findings of Chapter 3, which studied the impact of placement modality in text (narration vs. dialogue placements) and the moderating role of NFC, provided support for the hypothesis that encountering a brand in the dialogue, as compared to the narration, of a story is associated with
lower brand attitudes for readers with high NFC. This effect was observed both immediately after exposure to the placements and at a two-week delay. Purchase intentions followed the same pattern, although the effect only reached significance at Time 2 (i.e., it was only significant for the sub-sample who took part in both waves of the study). In contrast, brand responses of readers with relatively low NFC were generally unaffected by placement modality, although dialogue placements were found to enhance purchase intentions for participants with very low NFC at Time 2.

Further, Chapter 4 compared readers’ evaluations of a brand placed in either direct or indirect speech. In addition, we manipulated brand familiarity. Using a different narrative and a different target brand than the ones employed in Chapter 3, the findings of this study confirmed the prediction that exposure to placements in indirect (vs. direct) speech is associated with more positive brand attitudes. Contrary to the expectation that speech type will interact with brand familiarity, the same pattern emerged for both the unfamiliar and the familiar brand.

The study reported in Chapter 5 aimed to test how repetition-induced placement prominence in written text affects readers’ brand attitude, as well as whether persuasion knowledge (i.e., recognition of advertising) and critical processing of the placement mediate these effects. In addition, it explored if text language plays a moderating role. The results provided tentative support for some, but not all, of the hypotheses. Specifically, they established that higher (vs. lower) placement frequency increases perceived placement prominence, which in turn directly enhances brand attitude, in line with predictions and with earlier work on brand name repetition in written narratives. This was the case in both the native and the foreign language. Further, while prominence was positively related to conceptual persuasion knowledge in both languages, it only triggered critical processing of the placements in the foreign language, as expected. However, the statistical support for the moderating role of language was only marginal. Importantly, and contrary to predictions, critical processing did not hurt brand evaluation. Thus, even when cognitive responses to the placement itself became more negative, brand attitude continued to benefit from increasing placement prominence.

Finally, Chapter 6 orthogonally manipulated two different aspects of prominence, namely modality and frequency. Notably, it tested their interactive effects in both text and film.
results showed that exposure to dialogue, as compared to narration, placements in text was associated with greater irritation, yet the effect did not significantly differ across frequency levels. In contrast, in the film conditions the predicted modality effect (i.e., greater irritation, and thus lower brand attitude, in response to auditory than to visual placements) only emerged at lower levels of repetition, but was eliminated (rather than amplified) at higher levels of repetition. This was apparently due to an increase in irritation for viewers exposed to highly-repeated visual placements. Still, irritation mediated the interaction effect of modality and repetition on brand attitude in both media.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY AND PRACTICE**

*Theoretical implications*

The findings of this dissertation extend prior research in the field of brand placement by showing that placements in literary narratives influence readers’ brand attitude. Moreover, they consistently show that some ways of integrating the brand in the narrative are more effective than others. The main proposal of the present work, which was tested and confirmed in different ways in each of the empirical chapters, was that the extent to which prominent (vs. subtle) brand placements are processed is a better predictor of brand evaluations than prominence *per se*. Across studies, conditions that facilitated deeper elaboration of the text and/or placements were generally associated with stronger negative effects of exposure to prominent (vs. subtle) placements. In contrast, whenever conditions favored less extensive processing (or a different type of processing, namely narrative elaboration, see Chapter 2), prominence either had a positive effect, or did not affect brand attitude. This finding highlights the need to consider the impact of other factors besides placement prominence both in theorizing on brand placement effectiveness, and in the actual planning and creating brand integrations in a fictional text.

More specifically, our findings demonstrate that both the direction and magnitude of placement repetition effects on brand evaluation are determined by the degree to which readers are immersed in the narrative, as well as by personality characteristics (i.e., chronic differences in need for cognition), both of which influence the likelihood that readers engage in (more) extensive processing of the text. Importantly, brand name repetition seems to be more
Chapter 7: Conclusions

Consequential for unfamiliar than for familiar brands, corroborating other recent evidence on the effects of placement frequency in text on purchase intention (Storm and Stoller, 2015). Moreover, although increasing repetition levels enhance perceived placement prominence, and thereby also persuasion knowledge and critical processing of the placement (the latter only when reading in a foreign language, see Chapter 5), brand attitude seems to be immune to the influence of these responses. This finding is consistent with recent work, showing that placement disclosures preceding TV shows (Campbell, Mohr, and Verlegh 2013), music videos (Matthes and Naderer, 2016) and TV programs (Boerman et al., 2012), as well as text (Storm and Stoller, 2015) may not (or not always) be an effective means to boost resistance to persuasion. On the other hand, one of our studies indicates that affective reactions to the placement (i.e., irritation) does mediate the negative (interaction) effects of placement modality and repetition on brand attitude. This finding implies that both cognitive and affective responses should be taken into account when investigating brand placement effects.

Further, the present dissertation reveals the importance of another factor for brand placement effectiveness in works of fiction, namely the stylistic features of the text where the brand is inserted. Specifically, a distinction was made between placements in the narration and the dialogue of a story, as well as between placements in the direct and indirect speech. The results of two studies are consistent with the idea that these different types of placements vary in terms of prominence, such that dialogue (direct speech) placements are more vivid than both narration and indirect speech placements. Moreover, the effects of modality are contingent on the degree to which readers engage in text/brand-related processing, such that prominent placements exerted a stronger negative impact on brand evaluations when readers were relatively high in NFC (Chapter 3). Notably, however, the effect of direct, relative to indirect, speech was not moderated by another variable that supposedly modulates processing style, namely brand familiarity.

The latter finding is interesting, given that brand familiarity transpired as an important moderator in Chapter 2, where the interactive effects of placement frequency and narrative transportation were only obtained for an unfamiliar, but not for a familiar, brand. This pattern is consistent with prior evidence showing that attitudes towards unfamiliar brands are more likely to be affected by brand placement than attitudes towards familiar brands (e.g., Mau et al., 2008; Storm and Stoller,
Chapter 7: Conclusions

2015; see also Kamleitner and Jyote 2013; Verhellen, Dens, and De Pelsmacker, 2015). One explanation for the lack of a significant interaction between type of speech and brand familiarity in the study reported in Chapter 4 could be related to its low power. However, it could also be that brand familiarity is not equally influential in the context of different prominence manipulations (i.e., repetition, modality). For instance, it is possible that attitudes towards familiar brands are immune to the effect of repetition, since the brand is less likely to be extensively processed, or new information about the brand to be extracted, at increasing levels of placement frequency (see Campbell and Keller, 2003). In contrast, brand evaluation may be affected by differences in speech type, where attention to the direct (relative to indirect) speech and hence to the brand placed within it is enhanced every time direct speech is encountered in the text. Thus, the effect of speech type (i.e., direct speech supposedly undergoing deeper processing than indirect speech) may override the effect of brand familiarity (familiar brands undergoing more shallow processing). In support of this account, modality (dialogue vs. narration) effects were obtained for a familiar brand in Chapters 3 and 6. Nevertheless, since different narratives and different products were used in these studies (vodka in Chapter 2, soft-drinks in Chapter 4, clothing brand in Chapters 3 and 6), and the degree of familiarity with each of the “familiar” brands may have also differed, such an interpretation is only tentative and pending further (direct) testing.

Finally, the present research suggests that brand placement effects may persist over time. That is, the interactive effects of placement modality and NFC on brand evaluation were still observed after a two-week delay. This finding is consistent with other work showing that the positive impact of placement frequency in text is manifest a week after exposure (Storm and Stoller, 2015). Critically, however, whereas in that earlier study time was a between-subjects variable (i.e., half of the participants completed the dependent measures a week after exposure), the experiment reported in Chapter 3 used data from the same participants at both measurement points (i.e., using a longitudinal, within-subjects design). A key point is therefore that the effects we observed persisted over time (no change was detected in brand evaluation), rather than emerged at a delay (which could be the case in the study of Storm and Stoller, 2015; see also Appel and Richter, 2007). Thus, what has been shown to be true of people (see e.g., Uleman,
Saribay, and Gonzalez, 2008), also seems to hold for brands: As Psychology professor James Uleman has eloquently put it, “You don’t get a second chance to make a first impression”.

**Practical implications**

Brand integrations in fiction are likely to increase in popularity, given the growing placement clutter in audiovisual media, such as film and TV programs (Alter, 2014a; Gaughran, 2012), with top US blockbusters from recent years often featuring more than 60 brands (Chahal, 2015). Young consumers, in particular, seem to have sophisticated knowledge of the technique, and thus expect and analyze brand appearances in movies and digital games (DeLorme & Reid, 1999; Molesworth, 2006). This high level of saturation and habituation urges marketers to search for alternative communication outlets, and books might provide just such an opportunity (Alter, 2014a; Jacobs, 2012). The findings of the present dissertation have a number of implications for practitioners, as they highlight specific factors, as well as the intricate relationships between them, that should be taken into account when integrating brands in books.

First, the present results suggest that higher placement repetition would enhance readers’ brand attitudes as long as the brand is mentioned in the narration (rather than in the dialogue) of the story, or at least in the indirect (rather than in direct) speech. Readers’ narrative transportation and need for cognition could play an important role here, such that high narrative transportation and high need for cognition strengthen the positive impact of repeated brand exposure. Although these variables are not under the advertiser’s direct control, knowledge of both the book’s and the brand’s target audience, as well as of the nature and quality of the text itself, would ensure that the strategy is effective. Importantly, it is safe to assume that consumers would typically read the genres and authors they like, and would thus likely be transported into a text they read for leisure. In addition, a recent meta-analysis (Van Laer et al., 2014) identifies a number of story antecedents (e.g., identifiable characters, verisimilitude) of narrative transportation that could be taken into account when searching for the right content for integrating a particular brand (see also Martin et al. 2003).

Further, consumers with high NFC seem to be the prototypical readers: Research has shown that people with high (vs. low) NFC tend to be more highly-educated, prefer more intellectually
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challenging activities, rely more on newspapers than on TV for news, and are more transported into books than into film (see e.g., Cacioppo et al., 1996; Green et al., 2008). Critically, high-NFC consumers may not be so hard to identify. Since NFC is one of the most widely researched personality traits (Petty et al. 2009), a myriad of correlates of NFC have been documented ranging from demographics (e.g., educational level) to political perceptions, media preferences, and actual behaviors (see e.g., Martin et al., 2005; Petty et al., 2009; Sohlberg, 2015). Notably, the unprecedented amount and richness of consumer (and, specifically, reader) data and advanced analytics techniques available nowadays (e.g., Alter 2012; Alter and Russell 2016; Harvey, 2015) allow online retailers, book publishers, and advertisers to more efficiently identify and segment a brand’s potential target audience. Major players in e-book publishing and retail, such as Amazon, Google, Barnes & Noble, and Apple can now track not only which books readers buy, but also how far they get into a book, how much time they spend reading it, and which passages they find most appealing (e.g., through interactive features such as text highlighting on Amazon’s Kindle; Alter, 2012). Moreover, a number of tech companies are solely dedicated to collecting such data. For instance, the company Jellybooks recently developed software that can be embedded in e-books and thus unobtrusively record (even offline) various aspects of reading behavior, such as pace, completion rate, and engagement, as well as demographic and other variables. Similarly, Tekstum provides big data to publishers using technology that measures and analyzes reader sentiment to inform editorial decisions (www.tekstum.com). Another online platform, Kadaxis, helps authors find highly-relevant keywords extracted from customers’ book searches (kadaxis.com). It also allows editors to compare key writing metrics for a manuscript or published book against other books that have previously sold well, highlighting specific editorial changes that may improve a book’s accessibility. Combined with data from reader profiles and online activity, such insights could inform advertisers, editors, and authors on how the story is perceived and experienced by different types of readers, also at an early stage of story development. In fact, such an approach is already implemented in the industry, for example by Pan Macmillan, who use consumer insights to develop the initial story idea from which a novel takes shape (e.g., Eyre, 2014).

In light of the growing internationalization of the book market and the steadily increasing sales of English-language books across the globe (e.g., Jones, 2011; McIlroy 2015; PEW, 2014;
Wischenbart, 2014), it is important for practitioners who consider brand placement in books to know that their marketing efforts will have similar effects for readers at large, regardless of text language. A key implication of the present dissertation is that language matters, but only to a certain extent. Specifically, at least when it comes to the impact of brand name repetition, increasing placement prominence of an unfamiliar brand is beneficial for brand evaluation regardless of whether readers encounter the brand in their native or in a foreign language. The fact that even readers who are not familiar with the placed brand (e.g., readers abroad, reading a book in a foreign language) would be positively influenced by a (prominent) placement is an important advantage of using placements in works of fiction. And yet, advertisers need to be cautious: The present findings provide tentative support for the idea that reading in a foreign (vs. native) language may lead readers to take a more critical stance towards the placement, arguably as a result of engaging in deeper processing of the text. Although critical processing did not hurt brand attitude in this case, the question of whether it would be relevant for other brand outcomes (e.g., brand choice) remains to be investigated.

Finally, the present findings suggest that what works on the page, might not necessarily have the same effect when adapted for the screen. Specifically, placements in the narration of a fictional text seem to be more persuasive than placements in the dialogue, and placement frequency does not moderate this effect (at least with the repetition levels employed in this study, the interaction effect did not reach significance). In the context of film, however, the effect of modality is attenuated at higher repetition levels, with visual placements supposedly gaining prominence, and thus increasing irritation. These results imply that placements may be processed in different ways across different media, hence brand placements need to be tailored to the medium in which they are integrated. This is especially relevant in light of the fact that 2012 saw five times more audiovisual adaptations (from books, as well as other sources) than 1999 (Stephen Follows 2014). In fact, literary fiction is the most common script source of US top-grossing movies between 1994-2013 (Stephen Follows, 2014, 2015). Given that many novels feature real brand names in the original texts (e.g., Fifty Shades of Grey by E. L. James, the James Bond novels by Ian Fleming, the Millennium Trilogy by Stieg Larsson, Gone Girl by Gillian Flynn), movie producers and advertisers would be advised to make their brand integration decisions based on
evidence coming from research using film, rather than print or other media, in order to ensure that the brands are portrayed using the most effective (vs. “the same as in the book”) approach.

**Limitations and future research**

A number of limitations of the present dissertation have already been discussed in each of the empirical chapters with respect to the individual studies. Although more specific issues will not be reiterated here, a discussion of the more important limitations, as well as ways to address them in future research, follows next.

The currently reported studies aimed to investigate brand placement in books using a rigorous experimental approach, whereby different factors (i.e., placement frequency, modality, type of speech, brand familiarity) were systematically manipulated, while other variables were kept constant. And yet, the present experiments tested relative differences between conditions, for instance comparing the impact of exposure to low vs. high placement repetition, or to narration vs. dialogue placements. Thus, these findings do not provide direct evidence for the absolute effect of exposure to the placed brand relative to no exposure. The lack of control (no exposure) conditions was motivated by our focus on what placement strategy works better, rather than if brand placement works at all. Previous research has already documented “absolute” brand placement effects in both audiovisual (e.g., Matthes et al. 2007; Matthes et al., 2011; Van Vaerenbergh et al., 2011), and print media (Storm and Stoller, 2015). Nevertheless, future work could explore how the shift in brand attitude as a result of exposure to placements in different modalities and different types of text (e.g., speech) compares to no exposure, as such a comparison will provide more insight into the processes driving these effects and will help rule out alternative explanations of the reported findings.

A second important limitation of the current experiments is that they were underpowered. The relatively small sample sizes may provide an explanation for the marginal statistical support for some of the predicted relationships, and for some of the hypothesized interaction effects not reaching significance. For instance, the interactions between speech type and brand familiarity reported in Chapter 4, and between placement modality and frequency in the text conditions in Chapter 6, were not significant, yet the conditional effects and the pattern of the means were in
line with our predictions. This leaves some open questions regarding the processes underlying the observed effects, as well as the role of the moderators (i.e., brand familiarity, placement frequency) across the different studies. Replicating the present results using larger samples would help establish if the observed effects are reliable and valid.

Further, although we controlled for the influence of a number of variables in our analyses, we did not measure the same set of covariates across all studies. Also, other potentially relevant factors, such as media consumption, reading preferences and reading frequency, product knowledge or purchase history, and general attitudes towards advertising and product placement were not included in the present experiments in an attempt to keep the questionnaires as short as possible. Still, it will be interesting to test whether and how these factors are related to the observed effects. Even more important, the current work only measured brand attitude and (in Chapter 3) purchase intention as brand outcomes. It is thus essential that subsequent investigations also look at other indicators of brand placement effectiveness, such as brand recall, brand choice, and actual purchase behavior, as well as at (electronic) word-of-mouth.

Critically, future research needs to delve deeper into the processing mechanisms driving the currently reported effects. Although two of our five experiments measured readers’ responses to the placements (i.e., persuasion knowledge activation, critical processing, irritation) and tested whether these mediated the impact of placement repetition and/or modality on brand evaluation, the other three studies did not include process measures. Hence, there are a number of issues that merit more attention. First, and maybe most important, we did not measure perceived prominence in any of the studies that investigated the impact of placement modality. Thus, although past work provides ample supporting evidence, and the present findings are also consistent with the idea that dialogue and narration /indirect speech vary in terms of prominence and undergo different levels of processing, these relationships should be tested more directly. Employing self-report prominence measures is certainly one possibility (see Chapter 5), but it is recommended that future work design ways in which the content, modality, and intensity of mental representations is more reliably assessed. These may include implicit measures (e.g., implicit association tests, probe recognition tasks, word completion tasks), neuroimaging techniques (e.g., fMRI), or thought-listing procedures (where the number, content, and valence of thoughts are
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recorded). In addition, researchers could design experimental manipulations that simulate the processes that readers supposedly engage in when exposed to narration vs. dialogue. For example, placement modality could be manipulated along with explicit instructions to engage in either visual or auditory imagery. If modality-specific mental simulations drive the effects of placement modality on prominence, and thereby on brand evaluation, such instructions should eliminate or at least attenuate the impact of modality, relative to a no-instruction condition.

Another key point that needs to be addressed is that – whereas the negative impact of placement frequency obtained in Chapter 2 could be attributed to irritation with the highly repeated placements, in line with the finding that irritation (partly) mediates the negative effect of prominence on brand attitude (Chapter 6) – the negative impact of modality is consistent with at least two different interpretations. That is, the decrease in brand evaluations following exposure to placements in the dialogue (vs. narration in Chapters 3; vs. indirect speech in Chapter 4) could be due to readers’ heightened criticism or irritation with the marketing tactic, but it could also be due to a violated conversational (or social) norm (Grice 1975; Schwarz 1994). Specifically, “hearing” the character repeatedly referring to the brand name can be irritating (given that he could have also used the product category name, or mentioned the brand only once), even if the commercial nature of the placement is not considered (or criticized). It is thus essential that future research also measures responses to other aspects of the placement (e.g., whether it is realistic, whether it violates conversational norms), as well as perceptions of and inferences about the character (e.g., Is s/he conceited? Is s/he arrogant? Is s/he brand-conscious?) to gain more insight into the underlying processes.

Furthermore, the mechanism underlying the positive effects of prominence (e.g., for highly-transported, high-NFC readers in Chapter 2; for readers in both the foreign and the native language in Chapter 5) is even less clear. Although implicit processes (e.g., mere exposure, fluency) have been proposed to underlie positive effects in the past (e.g., Matthes et al., 2007, 2011), such accounts usually presume that consumers are unaware of being exposed to the placements (i.e., low brand recall). Other work has shown, however, that awareness and recall of the stimulus (in this case, a placement) need not offset, and may even enhance, the positive effect of repeated exposure (e.g., Stafford and Grimes, 2012). In addition, if narrative transportation
(Chapter 2; see also Green and Brock, 2000; Slater and Rouner, 2002) and para-social interaction with the characters (see Russell and Stern, 2006) play a role in enhancing readers’ attitudes towards a placed brand, it is possible that awareness of the placements is a prerequisite, rather than an impediment, to narrative persuasion. The relative contribution of implicit and explicit processes in brand placement effects thus needs to be assessed more directly.

Another limitation of the present studies is that they used a small number of brands and product categories (i.e., alcohol, soft-drinks, and clothing), thereby limiting the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, although no research exists in the area of brand placement indicating that product category is a moderator of brand placement effects, it could be that some products are better-suited for integration in fiction, or that the impact of the moderators identified in the current work changes as a function of product type. Friedman’s (1985) content analysis demonstrated that automobiles and magazines were the most frequently mentioned products in his sample of post-war American bestsellers. He noted that both these products are high in value expressiveness (or, symbolic value), and are usually associated with conspicuous consumption (e.g., Belk, 1981). Similarly, Brown’s (1995) content analysis of Scrupules (J. Krantz) and American Psycho (B. E. Ellis), which adopted a broader definition of “brand”, showed that 62% of the brands mentioned in these novels belonged to one of the following five categories: celebrities, upmarket retail stores, designer label clothing, exclusive leisure services (restaurants, hotels, nightclubs), and works of art. Although it is currently not known whether references to symbolic brands are the norm, and whether this varies with genre, it could be that brand image (symbolic vs. functional, e.g., Park, Jaworski, and MacInnis, 1986; Bhat and Reddy, 1998) plays a role for brand placement effects. For instance, it could be that readers expect symbolic brands to feature in literature, as (besides being more common) these supposedly carry more meaning about the personality, lifestyle, and values of the character. As a result, consumers could get more suspicious upon encountering functional brands, unless the context makes their insertion logical, or congruent. Whether this would have consequences for placement processing and brand perception is an interesting question for future research.

One aspect of the present studies that needs to be taken into account when generalizing our findings to the context of “books” in general is of course the type of stimulus materials we used.
Specifically, for the sake of feasibility in the context of an experimental study, we had to use texts that were not too long, namely short-stories (of up to 2,900 words). Thus, although we used longer texts than the ones used in previous research (e.g., Olsen and Lanseng, 2012; Storm and Stoller, 2015), and used the full text, rather than an excerpt (cf. Olsen and Lanseng, 2012), applying the present results to the context of longer works of fiction, such as novels, should be done with caution. For instance, it is possible that the longer time a reader spends reading a novel and the episodic, intermittent consumption of the text, allowing contemplation and elaboration in-between reading sessions, as well as the greater richness of the plot and the stronger connection to the characters all make brand placement in a novel work differently than in a short-story. A promising avenue for future research would thus be to measure responses to brand placements in longer texts, and eventually measure how these evolve over time. The large (and growing) number of online reading platforms and book-oriented social media (e.g., Goodreads, Shelfari, Wattpad, Book Crossing) may offer just the right setting for studying (long-term) brand placement effects in a more natural context.

Further, although the present dissertation looked at the role of text-related variables, such as whether the placement is featured in the narration or in the dialogue, and in the direct or indirect speech, it did not investigate other factors that could influence how readers process brand placements in text. For instance, prior work suggests that the degree to which readers perceive the protagonist of a story as similar to themselves moderates the impact of story immersion on brand attitudes (Bhatnagar and Wan, 2011). These effects were attributed to differences in the availability of cognitive resources between the two dis/similarity conditions: Processing of the story with the dissimilar (vs. similar) protagonist supposedly left less cognitive resources that readers could dedicate to placement elaboration, leading to more positive brand attitude. These findings imply that the effect of modality and repetition reported here could be further moderated by the extent to which readers perceive the protagonist as similar. Furthermore, degree of identification with the characters, which is arguably closely related to the notion of similarity, has also been shown to drive narrative persuasion effects (e.g., De Graaf et al., 2010; Sestir and Green, 2010; Tal-Or and Cohen, 2010). With regard to brand placement, the work of Russell and Stern (2006) on para-social interaction with sitcom characters has shown that viewers align their brand attitude with that of characters they feel strong attachment to. Thus, future investigations
may explore whether character identification and related variables moderate, or even mediate, the effects obtained in the present studies.

Finally, an interesting question for future work on brand integrations in fiction pertains to the effects of placement disclosures. Although the idea of a brand placement disclosure in a book may strike some as weird, it is conceivable that the growing popularity of the practice, combined with evidence for its (covert) influence on consumers, would raise concerns among consumer protection groups. It would therefore not be surprising if brand placements in books at some point become the subject of the same regulation that has already been implemented with respect to TV programs, for instance in the EU (see e.g., Boerman et al., 2014; Tessitore and Geuens, 2013). It would be interesting to test how such disclosures would affect perceptions of the work and its author. A more important question for the present discussion is whether such an approach will be successful in boosting readers’ defenses against unwanted persuasion attempts. The work of Storm and Stoller (2015) – who asked participants in their studies to read an article emphasizing the biasing influence of product placement before they read the target text – suggests that such a strategy won’t be effective (see also Matthes and Naderer, 2016), as readers may not be able to resist the influence of brand integrations in text. However, an equally fundamental question that still awaits an answer is whether they even want to. Future work may thus not only examine ways to counter the effects of brand placement on consumers, but may also explore how consumers perceive this practice in the first place.
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References


Appendix 1

Stimulus materials
Appendix 1: Stimuli

1A: STIMULI USED IN CHAPTERS 2 & 5

Note: The original short-story *Checkmate* by Jeffrey Archer (1988) was adapted for the purposes of the present studies. In Chapter 2, a professional translation of the text from English (original) to Dutch was used. In Chapter 5, the same story in Dutch was used in the *native language* conditions, while the English version was used in the *foreign language* conditions.

The text below is the version containing 11 instances of the brand placement (i.e., *high repetition* conditions). In the *moderate* (Chapter 2) and *low repetition* conditions (Chapters 2 and 5), 6 and 2 brand mentions were placed, respectively (i.e., some of the placements presented here were removed from those versions). The first and last brand mention were always present in all conditions. The target brand is either *Posolskaya* (unfamiliar brand, Chapters 2 and 5) or *Eristoff* (familiar brand, Chapter 2). Brand familiarity was only manipulated in Chapter 2. The brand names are in bold in the text below, but were printed in normal font in the text participants read.

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SCHAAKMAT

Alle ogen volgden haar toen ze de ruimte binnenliep.
De bewondering van sommige mannen begint bij het gezicht en dwaalt vervolgens omlaag. Ik begin bij de enkels en werk dan naar boven.
Ze droeg hoge hakken van zwart fluweel en een nauwsluitende zwarte jurk die net kort genoeg was om de meest perfect toelopende benen te onthullen. Mijn ogen streken verder omhoog en bleven op haar smalle taille en haar atletisch figuur rusten. Maar het was haar ovaal gezicht dat mij fascineerde, een licht pruilmondje en de grootste blauwe ogen die ik ooit gezien had en prachtig dik, zwart, kort geknipt haar dat letterlijk glansde. Haar entree was nog adembenemender vanwege de omgeving die ze gekozen had. Blikken zouden haar gevolgd hebben op een diplomatieke receptie, op een societycocktail, zelfs op een liefdadigheidsbal, maar op een schaaktoernooi...

Ik volgde haar overal met mijn ogen en in mijn laatdunkendheid wilde ik niet geloven dat ze misschien wel een schaakster kon zijn. Ze liet langzaam naar de tafel van de clubsecretaris en tekende in om mijn ongelijk te bewijzen. Ze kreeg een nummer dat aangaf wie haar tegenspeler in de eerste wedstrijd was. Elke man die nog geen tegenspeler aangewezen had gekregen wachtte af of ze tegenover hem zou komen zitten.

De schaakster keek naar haar nummer en stevende af op een oudere man die achteraan in een hoek van de ruimte zat, een voormalige clubaanvoerder die betere dagen had gekend.
Als nieuwe aanvoerder van de club had ik deze wedstrijden ingevoerd waarbij elke schaker tegen elke andere uitkomt. We ontmoeten elkaar elke laatste vrijdag van de maand in een grote clubachtige ruimte boven een pub op High Street. De huisbaas zorgt ervoor dat er twaalf tafels voor ons klaarstaan en dat er voldoende te eten en te drinken is. Drie of vier andere clubs in de regio sturen zes tegenstanders voor een paar snelle wedstrijden en dat geeft ons de kans om
andere schakers te ontmoeten tegen wie we anders nooit zouden spelen. De wedstrijdregels zijn in wezen eenvoudig – één minuut maximaal op de klok voor elke zet, zodat een spel zelden langer dan een uur duurt, en als na dertig zetten geen enkel schaakstuk geslagen is, wordt de partij automatisch als remise beschouwd. Een korte pauze tussen wedstrijden voor een drankje, op kosten van de verliezer, zorgt ervoor dat iedereen de kans krijgt om zich die avond aan twee tegenstanders te meten.

Een magere man met een half leesbrilletje en een driehoekig donkerblauw pak liep naar mijn tafel toe. We glimlachten en gaven elkaar de hand. Ik dacht dat hij een advocaat was maar vergiste me want hij bleek een accountant te zijn bij een leverancier van kantoorenbenodigdheden.

Ik moest om mij te concentreren op de goed ingestudeerde Moskou-opening van mijn tegenstander, omdat mijn ogen telkens op het bord afdwaalden naar de vrouw in de zwarte jurk. De enige keer dat onze ogen elkaar ontmoetten, glimlachte ze geheimzinnig. Ondanks mijn pogingen lukte het me niet om haar een tweede keer dezelfde respons te ontlokken. Hoewel ik afwezig was, slaagde ik er toch in de accountant te verslaan, die blijkbaar niet wist dat er verschillende manieren zijn om je uit een aanval van zeven schaakstukken te manoeuvreren.

Tijdens de pauze boden drie clubleden haar een drankje aan voordat ik zelfs maar de bar bereikte. Ik wist dat ik niet op een partij tegen de vrouw kon hopen, omdat ik geacht was tegen een van de aanvoerders van ons gastteam te spelen. Haar volgende tegenstander bleek de accountant te zijn.

Ik versloeg mijn nieuwe tegenstander in nauwelijks drie kwartier en als zorgzame gastheer wandelde ik langs de onvoltooide wedstrijden. Een lange omweg zorgde ervoor dat ik uiteindelijk bij haar tafel belandde. Intussen merkte ik dat de accountant al de bovenhand had en kort nadat ik hun tafel bereikte had, verloor ze zowel haar dame als de partij.

Ik stelde me voor en haar handdruk alleen al was een sensuele ervaring. Zigzaggend tussen de tafels slenterden we samen naar de bar. Ze heette Amanda Curzon, zei ze. Ik bestelde twee glazen Posolskaya/Eristoff en begon haar mijn medeleven met haar verlies te betuigen.

‘Hoe vond je hem als tegenstander?’ vroeg ze.
‘Ik heb hem op het nippertje verslagen,’ zei ik. ‘Maar het was kantje boord. Hoe was je eerste partij tegen onze vorige aanvoerder?’
‘Pat,’ zei Amanda. ‘Maar ik denk dat het alleen uit beleefdheid was.’
‘De laatste keer dat ik tegen hem speelde eindigde het ook in pat,’ vertelde ik haar. Ze glimlachte.
‘Misschien moesten we maar eens tegen elkaar spelen.’
‘Daar kijk ik naar uit,’ zei ik terwijl ze haar glaasje Posolskaya/Eristoff leegdronk.
‘Ik moet nu echt gaan,’ kondigde ze opeens aan. ‘Ik moet de laatste trein naar Hounslow halen.’
‘Laat me je een lift aanbieden,’ bood ik hoffelijk aan. ‘Dat is het minste wat de aanvoerder als gastheer kan doen.’
‘Maar is dat niet een grote omweg voor je?’
‘Helemaal niet,’ loog ik, want Hounslow ligt twintig minuten van mijn flat vandaan. Ik sloeg de laatste druppel wodka achterover en hielp Amanda in haar jas. Voordat we vertrokken, bedankte ik de huisbaas voor zijn efficiënte organisatie.

We slenterden de parking in. Ik opende het zijportier van mijn Scirocco zodat Amanda kon instappen.
Appendix 1: Stimuli


‘Het is nog vroeg,’ waagde ik na wat onbeduidende opmerkingen over de clubavond. ‘Heb je nog tijd voor een drankje bij mij thuis?’

‘Een snel drankje dan,’ zei ze op haar horloge kijkend. ‘Ik heb een drukke dag voor de boeg.’

‘Prima,’ zei ik al doorkletsend, in de hoop dat ze de omweg, die nauwelijks kon worden beschreven als op weg naar Hounslow, niet zou bemerken.

‘Werk je in de stad?’ vroeg ik. ‘Ja, ik ben receptioniste op een makelaarskantoor in Berkeley Square.’ ‘Ik dacht dat je een fotomodel was.’

‘Dat was ik vroeger ook,’ antwoordde ze zonder verdere uitleg. Ze leek zich totaal onbewust te zijn van de route die ik gekozen had en praatte door over haar vakantieplannen in Ibiza. Toen we eenmaal bij mijn flat aankwamen parkeerde ik de auto en Amanda volgde mij door de toegangspoort naar mijn flat. In de hal hielp ik haar uit haar jas en leidde haar naar de zitkamer.

‘Wat kan ik je inschenken?’

‘Ik hou het bij hetzelfde als daarnet, als je tenminste een fles wodka hebt staan,’ antwoordde ze terwijl ze langzaam rondliep en de opvallend nette kamer in zich opnam. Waarschijnlijk is mijn moeder vanochtend langs geweest, dacht ik dankbaar.

‘Het is maar een vrijgezellenflat,’ zei ik met nadruk op ‘vrijgezellen’ en liep de keuken in. Tot mijn opluchting stond er nog een fles Posolskaya/Eristoff in de bijkeuken. Toen ik een paar tellen later met twee glazen in mijn hand terugkwam in de living, trof ik Amanda verdiept in het bestuderen van mijn schaakbord aan, terwijl ze de delicate ivoren stukken die klaarstonden voor een wedstrijd door haar vingers liet glijden.

‘Wat een schitterend schaakspel,’ zei ze spontaan terwijl ik haar het glaasje Posolskaya/Eristoff aanreikte. ‘Hoe kom je eraan?’

‘Mexico,’ zei ik zonder er bij te zeggen dat ik het gewonnen had op een toernooi toen ik daar met vakantie was. ‘Ik vond het jammer dat we geen kans hebben gehad om tegen elkaar te spelen.’ Ze keek op haar horloge. ‘Eén snelle partij dan,’ zei ze en nam plaats achter de witte stukken. Ik ging snel tegenover haar zitten. Ze glimlachte, pakte de witte en de zwarte loper op en hield ze achter haar rug. Haar jurk verstrakte en benadrukte het gewelf van haar borsten. Vervolgens plaatste ze haar dichtgeklemde vuisten voor mij. Ik raakte haar rechterhand aan. Ze draaide haar vuist om en opende het: het was de witte loper.

‘Zullen we om iets wedden?’ vroeg ik nonchalant. Ze keek in haar handtas.

‘Ik heb maar een paar pond bij me,’ zei ze. Een lagere inzet vond ik ook goed. ‘Waar dacht je aan?’ vroeg ze.

‘Wat heb je te bieden?’

‘Wat wil je?’

‘Tien pond als jij wint.’

‘En als ik verlies?’

‘Dan trek je iets uit.’
Ik had spijt van mijn woorden zodra ik ze geuit had en verwachtte dat ze na een klap in mijn gezicht zou vertrekken maar ze zei eenvoudig: ‘Dat kan geen kwaad als we maar één partij spelen.’

Ik knikte beamend en staarde naar het bord.

Ze speelde aardig – een patzer in de mond van beroepsspelers – hoewel haar Rouxopening ietwat conservatief was. Ik slaagde erin de partij twintig minuten te rekken en offerde een paar stukken op zonder dat het overduidelijk was. Toen ik ‘schaakmat’ zei, trapte ze haar beide schoenen uit en lachte.

‘Nog een glaasje Posolskaya/Eristoff?’ vroeg ik, niet erg optimistisch. ‘Het is tenslotte nog geen elf uur.’

‘Oké. Een kleintje, maar dan moet ik echt gaan.’

Ik liep naar de keuken en kwam een moment later terug met de fles Posolskaya/Eristoff in mijn hand en schonk haar bij.

‘Het was toeval dat ik won,’ zei ik, ‘nadat jouw loper mijn paard sloeg. Het was echt op het nippertje.’

‘Misschien,’ antwoordde ze.

‘Zin in nog een partij?’ waagde ik. Ze aarzelde.

‘Dubbel of quitte?’

‘Wat bedoel je?’

‘Twintig pond of een ander kledingstuk?’

‘We zullen geen van beide vanavond veel verliezen, denk je niet?’

Ze ging weer voor het spel zitten terwijl ik het bord omdraaide en samen zetten we de ivoren stukken weer op hun plaats.

De tweede partij duurde wat langer, omdat ik al gauw een domme fout beging door aan de kant van mijn dame te rokeren en het kostte me meerdere zetten om de schade in te halen. Maar ik wist uiteindelijk de partij binnen een halfuur te beëindigen en slaagde er bovendien in om Amanda’s glas bij te vullen met Posolskaya/Eristoff toen ze niet keek.

Ze lachte me toe en trok haar jurk hoog genoeg op zodat ik net de bovenkant van haar kousen kon zien. Ze maakte haar jarretelles los, trok haar kousen langzaam uit en liet ze aan mijn kant op tafel vallen.

‘Ik had je daarnet bijna verslagen,’ zei ze.

‘Bijna,’ zei ik. ‘Wil je een revanche? Laten we zeggen vijftig pond dit keer,’ stelde ik voor, in een poging mijn aanbod edelmoedig te doen klinken.

‘De inzet wordt voor ons allebei hoger,’ antwoordde ze terwijl ze het bord weer opstelde. Ik begon me af te vragen wat zich in haar hoofd afspeelde. Wat dat ook was, ze offerde dwaas al gauw haar torens op en de partij was binnen enkele minuten voorbij.

Ze nam een slokje van haar Posolskaya/Eristoff en trok haar jurk nogmaals op, maar dit keer een eind boven haar middel. Ik kon mijn ogen niet van haar dijen afhouden, terwijl ze haar zwarte jarretelgordel losmaakte en het hoog boven mijn hoofd hield voordat ze het naast haar kousen aan mijn kant van de tafel liet vallen.

‘Toen ik eenmaal de tweede toren verloren had,’ zei ze, ‘was ik kansloos.’
'Klopt. Daarom gebiedt de eerlijkheid je nog één kans te geven,' zei ik en stelde het bord snel weer op. ‘Tenslotte,’ voegde ik eraan toe, ‘kan je dit keer honderd pond winnen.’

Ze glimlachte. ‘Ik moet toch echt naar huis gaan,’ zei ze, en verzette haar dame twee velden verder. Ze gaf me weer haar raadselachtige glimlach toen ik met mijn loper de tegenaanval inging.

Dit was de beste partij die ze de hele avond had gespeeld en ze hield me een halfluur aan het bord gekluisterd met een Warschaugambiet. In feite had ik verdomme bijna al in het begin verloren, omdat ik me nauwelijks behoorlijk kon concentreren op haar verdedigingsplan. Een enkele keer gniffelde ze als ze dacht de overhand te hebben, maar het werd duidelijk dat ze Karpov niet de Siciliaanse verdediging had zien spelen om vervolgens vanuit een ogenschijnlijk onhoudbare positie te winnen.

‘Schaakmat,’ kondigde ik ten slotte aan.

‘Verronk,’ zei ze. Ze stond op en keerde haar rug naar mij toe. ‘Je moet me even helpen.’

Trillend leunde ik voorover en trok de rits omlaag tot haar lende. Opnieuw wilde ik haar gladde roomachtige huid aanraken. Ze draaide zich om en streek mijn wang met haar hand, met de uitwerking van een elektrische schok. Ik schonk nog een bodempje Posolskaya/Eristoff bij in haar glas en liep naar de keuken met het excuus om snack nootjes te halen. Toen ik terugkwam had ze zich niet verroerd. Een flinterdunne zwarte bh en slipje waren de laatste kledingstukken die hopelijk nog uitgetrokken zouden worden.

‘Ik neem aan dat je niet nog één partij wil spelen,’ zei ik, terwijl ik de wanhoop in mijn stem probeerde te verbergen. ‘Het werd tijd dat je me naar huis bracht,’ giechelde ze.

‘Nog één,’ smeekte ik. ‘Maar dit keer voor beide kledingstukken.’

Ze lachte. ‘Geen sprake van,’ zei ze. ‘Ik kan me niet permitteren om te verliezen.’

‘Ja, het is natuurlijk de laatste partij,’ stemde ik in. ‘Maar dit keer tweehonderd pond en we spelen voor beide kledingstukken.’ Ik wachtte in de hoop dat de omvang van de weddenschap haar in verleiding zou brengen. ‘De kans dat je wint is erg groot. Je hebt tenslotte bijna drie keer gewonnen.’

Ze walste met haar glaasje Posolskaya/Eristoff alsof ze het voorstel in overweging nam. ‘Oké,’ zei ze. ‘Nog één.’ We lieten geen van beiden blijken wat we dachten van wat er vast en zeker zou gebeuren als ze zou verliezen.

Ik trilde onwillekeurig terwijl ik het spel nogmaals opstelde. Ik richtte mijn aandacht op het spel en hoopte dat ze niet gemerkt had dat ik de hele avond slechts één glaasje Posolskaya/Eristoff gedronken had, terwijl ik haar glaasje meermaals had bijgevuld. Ik wilde beslist een snel einde aan deze partij maken.

Ik stapte mijn dame een veld naar voren. Ze sloeg terug en verplaatste haar koning twee velden verder. Ik wist precies wat mijn volgende zet moest zijn en daarom duurde de partij maar elf minuten.

Nog nooit in mijn leven ben ik zo volledig verslagen. Amanda was weergaloos, een klasse apart. Stuk voor stuk was ze mijn zetten voor en had gambieten die ik nooit eerder was tegengekomen of waar ik zelfs maar ooit over gelezen had. Het was haar beurt om ‘Schaakmat’ te zeggen, hetgeen ze met dezelfde mysterieuze glimlach deed, en voegde eraan toe: ‘Je zei toch dat de kans dat ik dit keer zou winnen groot was?’
Ik kon het niet geloven en liet mijn hoofd hangen. Toen ik opkeek had ze haar mooie zwarte jurk weer aangetrokken en was ze haar kousen en jarretelles in haar handtas aan het proppen. Even later had ze haar schoenen weer aan.

Ik haalde mijn chequeboek tevoorschijn, vulde ‘Amanda Curzon’ in en voegde het bedrag ‘£200’, de datum en mijn handtekening toe. Terwijl ik daarmee bezig was, plaatste ze de ivoren stukken op het bord terug, precies zoals ze stonden toen ze voor het eerst de kamer was binnengekomen. Ze boog zich naar me toe en kuste me zachtjes op de wang. ‘Dank je,’ zei ze en deed de cheque in haar tas. ‘We moesten maar weer eens tegen elkaar spelen.’ Ik was nog steeds ongelovig naar het opgestelde bord aan het te staren toen ik de voordeur achter haar dicht hoorde gaan.

‘Wacht even,’ zei ik, naar de deur stormend. ‘Hoe kom je thuis?’

Ik zag haar nog net de trap afhollen richting het open portier van een BMW. Ze stapte in en gunde me een laatste blik op haar lange toelopende benen. Ze glimlachte toen het portier voor haar werd dichtgedaan. De accountant slenterde terug naar de andere kant, stapte in, startte de motor en bracht de kampioen naar huis.
1B: STIMULI USED IN CHAPTERS 3 & 6

Note: The text below, developed for the purposes of the present studies, was used in both Chapter 3 and Chapter 6. In Chapter 6, both this text, and a filmed version, produced for the sake of comparing placement effects across media, were employed. The study reported in Chapter 3, where the target brand (Esprit) was mentioned 4 times, manipulated placement modality, that is whether the placements appeared within the narration or within the dialogue of the text. Chapter 6 also manipulated placement frequency, that is whether the brand name appeared 2 or 4 times (note that the data from the 4-repetition conditions is used in both Chapters), in addition to modality. In the 2-placement conditions (Chapter 6), participants were exposed to the first (#1) and the last (#4) placements (the other 2 were removed).

Below is presented the text containing 4 placements in the dialogue. Following the text, the excerpts from all four placement scenes from both the dialogue and the narration conditions (i.e., the modality manipulation) are provided. The brand name is in **bold** in the text below, but was printed in normal font in the text participants read.

Het is maandagnamiddag en Silke en Kevin zitten tegenover elkaar aan tafel in hun stamcafé. Het is hun vaste stek om als goede vrienden gezellig te keuvelen over de laatste gebeurtenissen, al dan niet in gezelschap van hun andere vrienden. Al snel komt het feestje van afgelopen zaterdag ter sprake. Beide twintigers hebben zich nog maar net aan het tafeltje gezet of Kevin loopt over van enthousiasme.

“Het was de max, eigenlijk. Spijtig dat je er niet bij kon zijn, echt spijtig! Ik zei het nog tegen Tom ook, jammer dat Silke er niet bij is. Je zou het echt leuk gevonden hebben.” Hij stoot echter op een lauw onthaal van Silke, die duidelijk met haar gedachten op een andere planeet is. Kevin probeert te achterhalen wat haar dwars zit.

“Zeg, wat scheelt er? Is er iets, of zo?”

Silke strijkt troostmoedig een pluk van haar lange bruine lokken achter haar oor en grijpt de kans aan om haar hart te lichten.

“Ik weet niet meer, Kevin. Soms weet ik het gewoon niet meer. Alles gaat zo goed, we komen zo goed overeen. Wij delen alles, lief en leed. We gaan samen uit, komen samen thuis, en dan zou hij zoiets doen??? Snap jij dat nu?”

Ze begint zich steeds meer op te boeien. Kevin, die moeite heeft de gaten in Silke’s verhaal in te vullen, onderbreekt haar al snel:

“Wow, wow, wow, slow down… Ik denk dat ik een paar ‘kleine’ details mis. Heeft Tom iets mispeuterd?”

Silke dient hem meteen van antwoord, duidelijk nog steeds opgedraaid:

“Dat weet ik dus niet... Zot word ik er van, zot!”
Kevin probeert haar te bedaren:
“Kalm, kalm, ... Wat weet je niet? Vertel, waarom verdenk je hem?”
Silke kalmeert een heel klein beetje en probeert het hem te verduidelijken.
“Kijk, er zijn verhalen, ok? Dat hij hier bij voorbeeld dit weekend heeft liggen flikflooien met één of ander meisje.”
Kevin schudt toegeeflijk het hoofd:
“Kom op, niet te hard van stapel lopen. Waarom zou Tom...”
Silke valt hem, opnieuw op dreef, in de rede nog voor hij zijn vraag kan afmaken:
“Eerst verandert hij zijn wachtwoord van Facebook, dan spreek hij minstens twee keer af met vrienden van wie ik nog nooit gehoord heb... En dan zijn er die verhalen... Dit is overduidelijk: Hij verbergt iets. Een vrouw voelt zoiets! En dan zijn er nog een heel aantal dingen die je niet weet!”
Kevin is intussen licht verbouwereerd.
“Ken jij zijn paswoord?”
Silke beantwoord zijn vraag met een schoorvoetend schouderophalen. Kevin herstelt zich snel, en probeert zijn vriendin tot rede te brengen:
“Vertel dan ten minst wie die zotte verhalen in je hoofd heeft gepraat.”
Silke wil haar bron echter niet prijsgeven:
“Gewoon, iemand...”
Kevin blijft aandringen:
“Komaan, Silke, niet zo stom doen. Was het Karel? Het is was zeker Karel!”
Silke probeert nog even de boot af te houden.
“Misschien...”. Uiteindelijk bezwijkt ze, “Ok, het was Karel... Ik weet dat die mens al twee jaar achter mij aanloopt, maar daar zou hij nooit over liegen. Dat zou veel te doorzichtig zijn.” Kevin is minder overtuigd:
“En wat had meneer Karel juist te vertellen?” vraagt hij wantrouwig.
“Wel, hij vertelde gewoon over het feestje van dit weekend. Dat het druk was, maar kennelijk wel gezellig. Terwijl hij van zijn pintje aan het genieten was en naar de mensen op de dansvloer stond te kijken, zag hij Tom aan een tafeltje zitten.... ”.
Kevin luistert aandachtig en knikt om haar aan te sporen verder te vertellen.
“Naar het schijnt was meneer zich goed aan het vermakken met een of ander kortgerokt grietje. Niemand bekend, anders had ik het wel geweten. Volgens Karel, die alles van heel dichtbij heeft kunnen volgen, was het meer dan een gewone babbel. Ze konden niet van elkaar afblijven, en het scheelde volgens Karel niet veel of ze begonnen te kussen. En dan, nog het ergste van alles, slaat meneer zijn armen om haar heen, ze nemen hun jas en ze gaan naar buiten. Zomaar! Gelukkig heeft Karel mij op tijd gewaarschuwd met een sms. Hij kon in de zetel slapen daarna, meneer Tom. Hij komt niet meer in mijn bed tot hij toegeeft wat hij gedaan heeft!”
Kevin is nog steeds niet overtuigd:
“Komaan, Silke, dat geloof je nu toch zelf niet. Karel is gewoon een wezel eerste klas, dat weet iedereen. Tom zou niet de eerste zijn onder wiens duiven hij probeert te schieten.”
“Wensen jullie iets te drinken?”
De conversatie wordt abrupt onderbroken door de vraag van Mieke, die naast haar studies enkele dagen per week in het café werkt. Ze is ook bevriend met Silke en Kevin, maar ze is zich blijkbaar van geen kwaad bewust.
“Voor mij een pintje, alstublieft,” antwoordt Silke haar.
“Ik kan het gebruiken. En daarbij, hou je commentaar eens voor jezelf, alstublieft.”
Ze kan er toch een beetje om lachen. Kevin rolt met zijn ogen en besluit niet achter te blijven:
“Ok, dan... Geef mij dan ook maar een pint”.
“Dat is alles?” vraagt Mieke met een glimlach.
“Ja”, bevestigt Kevin.
“Ok,” antwoordt Mieke, en loopt terug naar de bar om de bestelling te halen.

Silke is duidelijk nog niet klaar om van gespreksonderwerp te veranderen en peilt naar Kevin’s versie van het verhaal.
“Vertel jij mij dan eens hoe het gegaan is... Jij was er toch ook, hier, dit weekend in het café? Heb jij Tom gezien? Was hij alleen?”
Kevin voelt zich hier duidelijk ongemakkelijk bij, maar probeert haar toch ietwat tevreden te stellen:
“Goh, eventjes denken... De details van die avond zijn een beetje mistig, teveel pintjes, weet je wel...” Uiteindelijk gaat hij verder: “Ik stond ergens aan de bar, denk ik, wat mensen te begroeten, beetje small talk. Als ik het me goed herinner, zag ik toen daar in de hoek Tom staan praten met een meisje. Ik kan me haar niet zo goed meer voor de geest halen, maar ik ben er vrij zeker van dat ik haar nog nooit eerder had gezien.”
Silke spoort hem vurig aan verder te gaan:
“En wat waren ze aan het doen, Kevin? Komaan, denk, denk, ...”
“Rustig, rustig, ... Hmmmm... Juist, ja. Gewoon aan het praten, eigenlijk, denk ik. Alleszins niets oneerbiedigs zoals die kwal van een Karel suggereert. Ik ben dan nog even goeiedag gaan zeggen, ja. Maar vraag mij niet hoe ze heet, of hoe ze eruit ziet, of zo... Soit, hun gesprek kon mij echt niet boeien, dus ik heb nog een pintje besteld. Daarna heb ik ze niet meer gezien, nee...”
“Sorry, ik was zat”, antwoordt Kevin ontwijkend, “vraag het aan Mieke, zij was er ook.” Hij wijst naar de bar.
“Voor mij is die avond één grote waas. Ik heb Tom gezien met een meisje, ja. Maar niets meer. Het is toch niet omdat hij met een ander meisje stond te praten dat hij jou daarom bedriegt?”
Kevin heeft even genoeg van het spervuur van vragen.
Appendix 1: Stimuli

“Excuseer mij nu even, ik moet nodig naar het toilet.” Hij staat op en wil zich uit de voeten maken. Hij spot Olivier, een andere vriend van hen die net het café binnenwandelt, met zijn rugzak in de hand.

“Ach, kijk, daar is Olivier, vraag het aan hem, hij was er ook!” Kevin wenkt Olivier en haast zich van de tafel weg.

Olivier begeeft zich naar het tafeltje waar Silke inmiddels alleen zit.

“Hey, Silke”, begroet hij haar enthousiast. Hij neemt plaats tegenover Silke terwijl hij zijn spullen neerlegt.

“Dag Olivier, goed geshopt?” informeert Silke.

“Och, snel even langs Esprit geweest,” repliceert hij vrijblijvend. In tegenstelling tot Kevin, merkt Olivier meteen op dat er iets loos is.

“Zeg, je ziet er zo bedrukt uit? Is er iets?”

“Ach ja, het leven zeker… Met zijn ups en downs…” antwoord Silke eerst algemeen.

Olivier kent haar echter goed genoeg:

“Iets waar je over wilt praten, of…” nodigt hij haar uit met gefronste wenkbrauwen.

“Nee, niet meteen” Uiteindelijk is het toch sterker dan zichzelf. “Of toch… Olivier, zou jij je vriendin ooit bedriegen?”

“Ik? Emma?”, antwoordt Olivier in klare taal, “Nooit! Nooit van mijn leven. Dat weet jij toch?”

Waarom vraag je mij dat?” vraagt hij verbaasd.

Silke verduidelijkt haar vraag.

“Jij was hier toch op dat feestje dit weekend?”

Daar moet Olivier niet lang over nadenken.

“Ja, ja, ik was hier. Met Emma. Superleuke avond gehad. Tom was hier ook.”

“Ja... Tom...”, pikt Silke meteen in, “En één of ander meisje. Tom bedriegt mij, Olivier.”

Olivier zucht verbaasd, maar krijgt geen kans haar te onderbreken. Silke raast zonder adem te halen verder:

“Ik weet niet hoe, met wie of wat, maar ik voel het gewoon.”

Haar tirade wordt verstoord door een gerinkel uit Olivier’s rugzak. Zijn telefoon gaat over.

Olivier wordt hierdoor afgeleid. Hij grijpt naar zijn rugzak, en verontschuldigt zich:

“Sorry, heel even kijken…” Hij rommelt in zijn rugzak, maar kan hem niet meteen vinden. Hij haalt er een rode plastic tas uit en legt hem opzij om beter te kunnen zoeken. Zijn telefoon rinkelt nog steeds opdringerig. Olivier zoekt nog even verder, maar wordt ongeduldig. Hij geeft het al snel op:

“Laat al maar”. Hij staakt zijn zoektocht en de beltoon stopt vanzelf.

Intussen is Mieke aan de tafel teruggekeerd met de pintjes die Kevin en Silke besteld hadden. Ze neemt ze van haar plateau en waarschuwt hen echter even:

“Pas op met die Esprit zak, want ik heb al veel gemorst vandaag..”
Appendix 1: Stimuli

Olivier maakt plaats voor haar om de flesjes bier veilig neer te zetten. Nadat Mieke de twee flesjes op de tafel gezet heeft, wendt ze zich tot Olivier:
“Had jij graag nog iets gehad?”
Olivier denkt kort na en bestelt ook een pintje. Silke kan niet wachten om hun gesprek te vervolgen. Ze steekt meteen opnieuw van wal en legt Olivier het vuur aan de schenen:
“Dus... Wat heb jij gezien? Ik MOET gewoon de waarheid horen, want die onzekerheid vreet aan mij.”
Olivier doet zijn best zich de avond opnieuw voor de geest te halen.
“Tja... Even denken...” Hij wijst naar een tafeltje in het hoekje en vertelt: “Ik zat daar zo, aan dat tafeltje, met Emma. Gezellig wat aan het bijpraten. We hebben tijdens de week zo weinig tijd voor elkaar, dus is het in het weekend wel altijd fijn om wat tijd te hebben voor elkaar. Er was een leuke sfeer, we hebben ons prima gemuseerd, eigenlijk En ja, op een gegeven moment is Tom binnengekomen, met inderdaad een meisje dat ik nog nooit eerder heb gezien. Hij is goeiedag komen zeggen en dan met haar aan een tafeltje gaan zitten. Ze hebben wat gepraat. Ik heb hen ook niet zitten bespioneren, he. En voor ik het wist zag ik hem eigenlijk alweer vertrekken met dat meisje... Ja, meer weet ik eigenlijk niet. Ik bedoel...”
“Nu weet ik nog niets meer, hé...”, brengt Silke met enige wanhoop in haar stem uit.
“Ja, zeg,” vergoelijkt Olivier. Mieke brengt hem zijn bestelling.
“Alsjeblieft, jouw pintje.”
Olivier bedankt haar met een brede glimlach.
Kevin vervoegt hen opnieuw aan het tafeltje en Olivier begroet hem hartelijk. Aangezien Olivier zijn plaats heeft ingenomen, zet Kevin zich nu naast Silke, en begroet hem eveneens.
“En, wat heb je vandaag gedaan?”
“Bwa ... daarnet even gaan shoppen en nu iets komen drinken, zoals je ziet.” antwoordt Olivier.
“Ah, je bent gaan shoppen?” reageert Kevin enthousiast.
“Ja, gewoon even langs Esprit geweest,” vertelt Olivier, “Ik zal het je dadelijk eens tonen, maar nu moet ik even naar het toilet.”
Hij schuift zijn stoel achteruit en verdwijnt in de richting van de toiletten.
Silke hangt wat achterover in haar stoel, duidelijk nog steeds bedrukt.
“En, wat had Olivier te vertellen?” informeert Kevin toegeeflijk.
“Niet, he-le-maal niets!” Silke schreeuwt het bijna uit. Ze zet zich opnieuw recht, en raast als een sneltrein verder met grote handgebaren.
“Die omerta hier tussen mannen, ik word er gek van! Ik heb het gevoel dat jullie mij allemaal aan het lijntje houden. Karel die Tom heeft zien dansen met een ander, jij die 'teveel pintjes' op had, en Olivier die ook niets gezien heeft. Wat voor vrienden zijn jullie eigenlijk?”
Ze gooit zich kwaad opnieuw naar achter in haar stoel. Kevin probeert haar nog maar eens te sussen.

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“Kijk, Silke, ik heb je verteld wat ik weet. Je weet dat ik je alles vertel, zelfs als het over Tom gaat. Komaan, het is toch niet omdat hij met een ander meisje stond te dansen dat hij jou daarom bedriegt. Dat is toch te gek voor woorden?”

Mieke, die het tafeltje naast hen aan het opruimen is, kan niet anders dan hun gespreksonderwerp op te vangen en werpt haar een sympathieke blik toe. Silke merkt haar echter niet op. Ze kan er niet over ophouden.

“Zeg mij gewoon wie het is, Kevin, meer vraag ik toch niet!”

Kevin geeft het op. Mieke probeert dan ook om haar vriendin op te beuren.

“Sorry, Ik wil jullie niet storen, of onbeschoft zijn, maar ik heb jullie gesprek gehoord, en ik heb Tom die avond wel gezien. Hij zat daar aan een tafeltje te praten met één of ander meisje. Ze zijn hier ongeveer een uurtje gebleven, maar dan samen weggegaan. Ik heb ze daarna niet meer gezien.”

Silke slaat haar handen voor haar mond, en mompelt verlegen:


“Maar… dat zeg ik niet…” probeert Mieke haar te overtuigen.

Silke begraaft haar gezicht in haar handen, ze is radeloos:

“Ik had het moeten zien aankomen.”

Kevin probeert de situatie recht te trekken:

“Dat heeft ze toch niet gezegd. Integendeel, ze heeft zelfs niet de minste vonk gezien tussen die twee. Toch?”

“Inderdaad!” bevestigt Mieke. Ze wordt gewenkt door andere klanten, en moet hun tafeltje verlaten.

Olivier kruist Mieke terwijl ze aangeslagen wegloopt en zet zich opnieuw aan tafel. Kevin en Silke staren beiden woordeloos voor zich uit. Olivier merkt dat de sfeer er niet bepaald op verbeterd is sinds hij hen achterliet. In een poging om de ijzige stilte te doorbreken, gooit hij de conversatie over een andere boeg:

“Vinden jullie ook niet dat het hier wat frisjes aan het worden is? Misschien moet ik mijn nieuwe Esprit trui eens aantrekken.” Hij grijpt naar zijn rugzak, maar stopt halverwege in zijn handelingen als hij Kevin’s gelaatsuitdrukking ziet.

“Ooh, damn, niet goed, niet goed…”

Olivier draait zich om om te zien waar Kevin op doelt. Tom is nietsvermoedend het café binnengekomen. Hij is in het gezelschap van een meisje. Hij had blijkbaar niet verwacht zijn vriendin hier tegen het lijf te lopen, en begint te stamelen:

“S…Silke… Wat… Wat doe jij hier? Dit is niet wat je denkt… (slikt) Ik… Ik kan het uitleggen….”

Silke geeft hem echter geen kans. Ze is al uit haar stoel opgestaan en schreeuwt hem woedend toe:

“Uitleggen, Tom… Daar ben je altijd al veel te goed in geweest.”
Ze geeft gem een harde duw, met haar beide handen tegen het midden van zijn borstkas, en snauwt:
"Hier, zie, dat is wat jij verdient, jij en die troela hier! Mij zie je nooit meer terug, nooit!"
Terwijl ze wilt buitenstormen, grijpt Tom haar stevig vast om haar tegen te houden. Het andere meisje kijkt perplex toe. Tom probeert de reactie zijn vriendin te begrijpen.
"Maar, enfin, Silke, ben je nu helemaal...?"
Silke onderbreekt hem opnieuw en lacht honend:
"Ik moet jouw leugens niet horen, Tom!" valt Silke hem aan.
Tom dringt opnieuw aan:
"Maar luister! Ik moet je iets zeggen."
"Ah ja?" daagt Silke hem uit.
"Ja!" antwoord Tom luid. Hij vist een ring uit de zak van zijn donkerblauwe hoodie.
"Dit hier."
Silke bekijkt het kleinood dat Tom stevig vasthoudt. Het is een gouden ring met grote steen. "Dit, Silke, is het teken dat ik de rest van mijn leven bij jou wil blijven."
Silke trekt grote ogen. Ze is met verstomming geslagen. Tom wijst nu op het meisje waar hij mee binnenkwam.
"En dat hier is Evelien. Haar vader heeft een jacht en hij wou ons dat verhuren. Ik moest met haar afspreken. Mijn Facebook heb ik geblokkeerd omdat ... opdat je niet toevallig achter mijn plannen zou komen. En de midweekse afspraken... Zo'n ring kiest zichzelf natuurlijk niet, he ..."
Silke glimlacht beschaamd en Tom vervolgt:
"En, ja... als het dan hier maar moet..."
Hij zakt op één knie en biedt een ontredderde Silkes de ring aan ....

MODALITY MANIPULATION

PLACEMENT 1:
[Olivier enters the café and joins his friends.]

Narration:
“Wacht, ik zal deze misschien even wegsteken.” Hij neemt de zak van Esprit die hij bij had van de tafel, plooit hem dubbel, en stopt hem in zijn rugzak.

**Dialogue:**


[In this condition, the bag is not mentioned, as it is still in his backpack; he takes it out later on. These minor changes were necessary for ensuring that both narration and dialogue placements were as natural as possible within the respective scenes and did not interfere with the main plot line.]

**PLACEMENT 2:**

[Olivier’s phone rings, it’s apparently in his backpack, so he starts looking for it and since he cannot find it, he starts taking out stuff from his backpack.]

**Narration:**


Intussen is Mieke aan de tafel teruggekeerd met de pintjes die Kevin en Silke besteld hadden. Ze neemt ze van haar plateau en wil ze op tafel plaatsen. Ze waarschuwt hen echter even: “Pas op, want ik heb al veel gemorst vandaag.” Olivier maakt plaats voor haar om de flesjes bier veilig neer te zetten door zijn rode plastic tas in veiligheid te brengen op de stoel naast hem, bovenop zijn rugzak.

**Dialogue:**


Intussen is Mieke aan de tafel teruggekeerd met de pintjes die Kevin en Silke besteld hadden. Ze neemt ze van haar plateau en wil ze op tafel plaatsen. Ze waarschuwt hen echter even: “Pas op met die Esprit zak, want ik heb al veel gemorst vandaag.” Olivier maakt plaats voor haar om de flesjes bier veilig neer te zetten.

**PLACEMENT 3:**

[Kevin comes back from the bathroom, joining Silke and Olivier, and asks Olivier what he has been up to.]
Narration:

Dialogue:

PLACEMENT 4:
[Olivier comes back from the bathroom and joins his friends at the table, who just had a heated argument, so are now sitting in awkward silence.]

Narration:
“Vinden jullie ook niet dat het hier wat frisjes aan het worden is? Ik zal mijn nieuwe trui eens aantrekken.” Hij neemt de Esprit tas opnieuw van de stoel, maar stopt halverwege in zijn handelingen als hij Kevin’s gelaatsuitdrukking ziet.

Dialogue:
“Vinden jullie ook niet dat het hier wat frisjes aan het worden is? Misschien moet ik mijn nieuwe Esprit trui eens aantrekken.” Hij grijpt naar zijn rugzak, maar stopt halverwege in zijn handelingen als hij Kevin’s gelaatsuitdrukking ziet.
1C: STIMULI USED IN CHAPTER 4

The text below was adapted from a story found on the internet. In fact, it was a story that Belgian writer Jo Claes wrote in collaboration with listeners of the Flemish public radio station, Radio 1. The text was used in Chapter 4 to test the effects of placing the brand in the *indirect or the direct speech*. Below is presented the text containing the *indirect speech* placements (the brand was mentioned 4 times in total). Either an unfamiliar (Cedevita), or a familiar brand (Orangina) was placed. The sentences containing the brand name are in **bold** in the text below, but were printed in normal font in the text participants read. Following the text, the passages containing placements in the direct speech are also provided.

---

DE MAN MET DE KAP

Het was middenacht voorbij toen Tom Weerhout van het vrijgezellenfeestje kwam dat zijn vrienden voor hem hadden georganiseerd. Hij had zich goed gemuseeerd en was lichtjes in de wind. **Zijn broer raadde hem aan een Cedevita/Orangina te drinken om terug wat nuchter te worden en veilig naar huis te kunnen rijden.** Hij moest immers vroeg op in de morgen. De volgende dag stonden er honderden dingen op het programma en hij moest nog naar Antwerpen om de muziekinstallatie van een kennis op te halen die ze de dag erna op het avondfeest zouden gebruiken. Na een kwartiertje rijden sloeg hij de straat in waar hij woonde. Het was een rustige buurt met smalle arbeidershuisjes uit de vorige eeuw die gezien de hoge huurprijzen in de stad erg in trek waren bij jonge mensen. Enkele maanden geleden was het pand naast het zijne gesloopt en toen hij het stuk braakland passeerde, had hij plots het gevoel dat iemand hem vanuit het duister gadesloeg. Verbaasd hield hij halt en tuurde in het donker. Er was niets te zien. De straat was slecht verlicht en het terrein strekte zich enkele tientallen meters uit in de diepte.

Een ogenblik lang dacht hij dat hij zich had vergist, maar terwijl hij daar zo stond, nam het gevoel van bekeken te worden nog toe en ineens was hij er bijna zeker van dat iemand zich in de duisternis ophield. Bijna tegelijkertijd voelde hij zijn hartritme toenemen. Zo snel hij kon, legde hij de laatste meters af die hij nog van zijn huisdeur verwijderd was.

Net op het moment dat hij de sleutel in het slot stak, hoorde hij iets en nog voor hij zich in de richting van het geluid kon draaien, zag hij vanuit zijn ooghoek hoe een schaduw zich losmaakte uit het zwarte gat tussen de huizen. Geschrokken drukte hij zich met zijn rug tegen de deur, zijn hart ging plots tekeer als een op hol geslagen machine. Hij zag nog net iemand de straat uittrennen en om de hoek verdwijnen. Was het een man? Hij droeg een donker trainingspak met een kap over het hoofd.

Zijn hand, merkte hij, beefde toen hij de sleutel omdraaide. Van het lichte, prettige gevoel dat de alcohol in zijn hoofd had achtergelaten, bleef niets meer over. Hij knipte het licht aan en sloot de deur. Wie in godsnaam had hem de stuipten op het lijf gejaagd? Opeen rinkelde de telefoon, Tom pakte op.

‘Hallo met Tom, met wie spreek ik?’

‘Tom, het is Lukas hier, ben je goed thuis gekomen?’
Appendix 1: Stimuli

‘Ja hoor.’ Hij twijfelde of hij zijn broer zou vertellen over de schaduw die hem gevolgd had. Ach dacht hij, het zal mijn verbeelding geweest zijn.

‘Ik heb wel echt onzetend veel dorst, waarschijnlijk door de pizza die we hebben gegeten’, zei hij uiteindelijk. Zijn broer raadde hem aan nog een Cedevita/Orangina te drinken vooraleer hij zijn bed in kroop.

‘Zal ik doen’ zei Tom. ‘Danku voor je bezorgdheid.’

‘Geen probleem broer, tot morgen, slaapwel’

‘Slaapwel Lukas’, Tom hangde op.

Hij pakte het blikje uit de koelkast en liep de woonkamer door. Meteen zag hij dat de achterdeur openstond. Perplex bleef hij staan. Hij had daarstraks de deur gesloten, daar was hij zeker van.

Op hetzelfde ogenblik realiseerde hij zich dat er was ingebroken. De man van daarnet was waarschijnlijk over de tuinmuur gekropen en had zich via de achterdeur toegang tot de woning verschaf.


Even wist hij niet wat te doen. Er ging een onbestemde dreiging uit van het ding, hoe klein het ook was. Hij deed enkele stappen dichterbij. Wat op het bed lag, was ongeveer twintig centimeter lang en cilindervormig. Hij duwde er even met zijn vinger tegen. Het was vederlicht en rolde een eindje verder over de sprei. Enigszins gerustgesteld strekte hij zijn hand uit en nam het op.

Uit de verpakking kwam een opgerold blad in buigzaam, zwart plastic. Eerst dacht hij dat het een röntgenfoto was, maar toen hij het ding tegen het licht hield, merkte hij tot zijn ontsteltenis dat het een echografische foto was van een foetus. Perplex liet hij zich op het bed zakken. Wat was dit? Wie had dit in zijn slaapkamer achtergelaten en waarom?

Hij schrok ineens van zijn eigen gedachte. De foetus? Was hij de vader? Lag de foto daarom op zijn bed? Maar Inge was niet zwanger, dat zou ze hem verteld hebben. Per slot van rekening trouwden ze overmorgen. Van wie was het dan? Er overviel hem plots een andere gedachte. Anke! De vriendin van Bart, zijn beste vriend die hij gevraagd had als getuige. Een halfjaar geleden had hij een onenightstand gehad met haar. Het was toevallig gebeurd, na afloop van een feestje. Bart was voor het werk op reis. Inge lag met griep in bed. Het was dom geweest, het gevolg van te veel Vodka? Tja, van wat nog? In elk geval zaten ze er beiden na afloop mee verveeld en ze hadden elkaar beloofd dat het voorval tussen hen zou blijven. Bart en Inge hoefden niets te weten. Dat was nergens voor nodig.

Verbouwereerd staarde Tom naar de foto in zijn hand. Was dit het resultaat van die ene nacht? Maar hij had een condoom gebruikt toen, daar had Anke op gestaan. Bovendien, waarom zou ze hem op deze manier laten weten dat hij een kind bij haar had verwekt? Dat was toch compleet onzinnig. En Bart, was die op de hoogte van de zwangerschap van zijn vriendin? Er was daarstraks niets aan hem te merken geweest. Zo zou hij trouwens toegestemd hebben om getuige te zijn als hij wist dat? Nee, onmogelijk. Dit had niets met Anke te maken.

Hij bekeek de echografie wat grondiger. Hoe oud de foetus was, was moeilijk in te schatten. Het viel hem op dat de witte rand van de foto was afgeknip. Daar stonden waarschijnlijk gegevens op als naam en datum, dat soort dingen. Maar van wie was dit kind als het niet van hem was? Wat
had hij ermeet te maken? En wie was de man met de kap die de foto op zijn bed had achtergelaten?
Verward, met een opkomend gevoel van paniek ging hij rechtzitten. De gsm was hem onbekend. Het was niet Inges toestel, dat was donkerpaars. Had de inbreker het onder zijn kussen verstopt? Een andere verklaring was er niet. Maar waarom? Hij gilde het bijna uit toen het mobieltje in zijn hand plots begon te piepen. Tegelijkertijd lichtte het schermje op. Er stond: L bericht ontvangen.
Hij las de cijfers hardop. Eerst begreep hij niet wat ze vertelden, toen drong tot hem door dat het om een datum ging: 17 februari 2008. Dat was ongeveer een maand geleden. Wat was er op die dag gebeurd? Hij herinnerde zich niets speciaals. Met de gsm in de hand ging hij naar beneden en sloeg zijn agenda open. Zeventien februari bleek een zondag te zijn. Hij had die dag geen aantekening gemaakt.
Een rilling trok over zijn rug, van de koude en van de spanning. Iemand had het op hem voorzien, zoveel was duidelijk. Maar waarom en met welke bedoeling? Het enige wat hij met zekerheid wist, was dat er vannacht van slapen niets meer in huis zou komen.
De volgende dag werkte hij systematisch al de dingen af die voor het feest nog geregeld moesten worden. Hij telefoneerde een paar keer met Inge, maar over het pakje en de gsm repte hij met geen woord. Wel nam hij zich voor om na de bruiloft contact op te nemen met de politie.
Omstreeks half drie was hij met alles klaar. Het enige wat hij nog moest doen, was de muziekinstallatie ophalen in Antwerpen. Hij programmeerde zijn gps-toestel, sprong in de wagen en vertrok. Het weer was barslecht. Typisch maartse buien. Om half vijf nam hij afscheid van zijn kennis. De muziekinstallatie zat veilig in de koffer van de wagen. Hij dwakte op THUIS, maar al snel merkte hij dat het gps-toestel een heel andere route aangaf. Ongeduldig probeerde hij opnieuw, maar de computer bleef hem een verkeerde richting uitspelen.
Hoe kon dit vroeg hij zich af, maar bijna op hetzelfde moment drong zich een vreselijk vermoeden aan hem op. De gps had op de salontafel gelegen, hij liet het toestel ’s nachts nooit in de wagen achter. Was het mogelijk dat de inbreker met de computer had geknoeid? Het zweet stond plots in zijn handpalmen. Woedend beukte hij met zijn vuist op het stuur. Dit werd al te gek! Voor hoeveel verrassingen kwam hij nog te staan?
Hij twijfelde even wat te doen en besloot de aangewezen route te volgen. De regen was opgehouden, het begon al te schemeren. Tot zijn verbazing merkte hij dat de rit hem naar zijn geboortedorp voerde. Opnieuw vroeg hij zich af wat dat te betekenen had. Wie het ook was die voor dit alles verantwoordelijk was, het moest iemand zijn die veel over hem afwist. De gedachte maakte dat hij zich nog minder op zijn gemak voelde.
Appendix 1: Stimuli

Het was kwart over vijf toen hij zijn geboortedorp binnenreed. Hij keek op het scherm van de gps. In tegenstelling tot wat hij halvelings had verwacht, leidde de computer hem niet naar het huis van zijn ouders. Voor de zoveelste keer begreep hij er niets van. Er woonde niemand anders in het dorp met wie hij nog contact had. De groene pijl op het scherm stuurde hem naar rechts, vervolgens naar links. Aan de rotonde gaf het toestel aan recht door te rijden. Hij draaide om de kerk heen en na een honderdtal meter was hij op zijn bestemming. Hij zette de motor af en staarde verbijsterd door de voorruit.

Enkele meters verder zag hij de poort van het kerkhof. Voor de zekerheid checkte hij of dit wel de locatie was die de gps had aangegeven. Er was geen twijfel mogelijk. Met een onbehaaglijk gevoel stapte hij uit. Het metalen hek stond open. Hij kende dit kerkhof, zijn grootouders lagen er begraven.

Tegen zijn zin liep hij het terrein op. Er was geen mens te zien. Wat had hij hier verloren? Waarom had de man met de kap hem naar hier gestuurd? Toen hij verder wandelde struikelde hij over een blikje, hij keek er naar en schrok. Wat verderop stond een oude man te klagen: ‘Het is altijd hetzelfde met die hangjongeren, ze komen hier drinken ’s nachts en laten alles rondslingeren.’

**Hij vertelde dat iedere keer hij naar het kerkhof komt, hij over blikjes Jupiler bier en frisdrank zoals Cedevita/Orangina struikelt.**

‘Het is een regelrechte schande’. Tom knikte instemmend met de man maar zei er verder niets over. Hij had andere zaken aan zijn hoofd.


Het duurde even, maar geleidelijk aan begonnen de cijfers zich in zijn hoofd aan elkaar te rijgen. Hij draaide zich om naar de vorige rij en begon te tellen. Tien grafstenen waren er. De laatste rij had er

17. Hij volgde het betonnen zijpad tussen de zerkens: 11, 12, 13. Er bleven er nog maar enkele over.

En toen wist hij het! Nog voor hij bij het laatste graf kwam, begreep hij dat de cijfers op het schermje van de gsm geen datum voorstelden, zoals hij eerst had aangenomen, maar het nummer van een graf. 17.02.2008 stond niet voor 17 februari 2008. Het stond voor het zeventiende graf dat zich op de tweede rij bevond van dit jaar.

Hij bleef stokstijf staan. Ondanks de schrale wind die over het kerkhof waaide, brak het zweet hem uit. Daarom had de gps hem dus naar dit kerkhof geleid. Hij keek angstig om zich heen. Het was intussen bijna donker, maar er was niemand te zien. Hij was moederziel alleen.

Met de moed der wanhoop zette hij zich weer in beweging. Nu hij eenmaal hier was, moest hij weten naar welk graf deze tocht hem had gevoerd. Terwijl hij langzaam voortging, telde hij de zerkens: 14, 15, 16. Hij hield zijn pas in. Nummer 16 bleek het laatste graf te zijn. Daarachter
bevond zich enkel nog een kuil, afgedekt met een groen plastic zeil dat de grafdelvers hadden achtergelaten toen ze het gat groeven voor de volgende begrafenis.
Toen, met een schok, herkende hij hem. Hij was de man in het donkere trainingspak. De man met de kap. De inbreker die hij gisteravond had zien weglopen.
Intussen naderde de onbekende langzaam maar zeker. Tom voelde hoe de angst hem bij de keel greep, maar toch slaagde hij erin om enkele woorden uit te brengen.
‘Wie bent u?’ riep hij. ‘Wat wil u van mij?’
De man antwoordde niet. Zijn handen staken in de zakken van het trainingsvest; hij hield het hoofd een beetje gebogen; zijn gezicht ging schuil onder de kap. Stap voor stap kwam hij dichterbij.
‘Wat wilt u?’ riep Tom opnieuw. Zijn stem klonk hoog en schril.
De man reageerde nog steeds niet. Er ging een onheilsprellende dreiging van hem uit, een dreiging die met elke stap toenam.
‘Wie bent u verdomme’ riep Tom en deed een pas achteruit. Zijn voet vond plots een weerstand. Het was alsof de grond onder hem wegzakte. Meteen verloor hij zijn evenwicht. Hij zwaaid met zijn armen om overeind te blijven, maar het was al te laat. Met een schreeuw viel hij op het zeil dat meegaf onder zijn gewicht.
‘Tom, jongen, kalm maar. Ik ben het: Bart.’
Hij zweeg abrupt toen hij de stem hoorde. Had hij net Bart verstaan? Zat Bart achter dit alles? Wist hij dan toch over de affaire met Anke af?
‘Het was maar een grap, Tom?’
‘Een grap?’ stamelde hij.
‘De jongens en ik wilden je eens laten voelen wat het betekent om getrouwd te zijn. Voor je het weet, word je vader en dan zit je rustige leventje erop, voorgoed. Eens vader altijd vader. Tot in de kist. Kom, geef me je hand, dan help ik je uit dat gat. Je hebt je toch geen pijn gedaan, hoop ik?’
Appendix 1: Stimuli

Daadwerkelijk stak Tom zijn arm omhoog. Met Barts hulp klauterde hij uit het graf. Eenmaal boven vroeg hij: ‘Was jij dan ook de man bij mijn huis?’
‘Natuurlijk, wie anders? Ik ben een halftuur voor jou op het feest vertrokken, weet je nog?’

Hij vertelde dat hij Tom zelfs het blikje Cedevita/Orangina had zien drinken bij hem thuis.
Tom knikte werktuiglijk. Hij zou zich opgelucht moeten voelen, maar om de een of andere reden was dat niet het geval. Hij keek in het gezicht van zijn vriend. Barts mond lachte, maar zijn ogen lachten niet mee. Er lag een heel andere uitdrukking in zijn blik, een die hij niet meteen kon plaatsen, maar die hem een onbehaaglijk gevoel gaf. Tom twijfelde aan het verhaal.
‘Kom we gaan naar huis’ zei Bart. Hij legde zijn arm om Toms schouder. Terwijl ze naar de uitgang van het kerkhof stapten, had Tom het gevoel dat de hand van zijn vriend zwaarder en zwaarder werd. Zo zwaar, dat hij het gewicht ervan haast niet meer kon verdragen.

Direct speech condition:

PLACEMENT 1:
Zijn broer raadde hem het volgende aan:
‘Drink een Cedevita/Orangina om terug wat nuchter te worden en om veilig naar huis te kunnen rijden. Je moet immers vroeg op.’

PLACEMENT 2:
‘Ik heb wel echt onzettend veel dorst, waarschijnlijk door de pizza die we hebben gegeten’, zei hij uiteindelijk.
‘Drink nog een Cedevita/Orangina vooraleer je je bed inkruipt.’
‘Zal ik doen’ zei Tom. ‘Danku voor je bezorgdheid.’

PLACEMENT 3:
Waarom had de man met de kap hem naar hier gestuurd? Toen hij verder wandelde struikelde hij over een blikje, hij keek er naar en schrok. Wat verderop stond een oude man te klagen:
‘Het is altijd hetzelfde met die hangjongeren, ze komen hier drinken ’s nachts en laten alles rondslingeren. Iedere keer dat ik hier kom struikel ik over blikjes Jupiler bier en frisdrank zoals Cedevita/Orangina. Het is een regelrechte schande’.

PLACEMENT 4:
‘Was jij dan ook de man bij mijn huis?’
‘Natuurlijk, wie anders? Ik ben een halftuur voor jou op het feest vertrokken, weet je nog?
Ik heb je zelfs dat blikje Cedevita/Orangina zien drinken bij je thuis.’
Appendix 2

Questionnaires
WELKOM!

In wat volgt zal je deelnemen aan een reeks van studies in het kader van masterthesissen, die verder geen verband houden met elkaar. De eerste studie gaat over de beoordeling van een tekst, de tweede over consumentengedrag, en de derde over persoonlijkheid.

Al je antwoorden zijn anoniem. Je gegevens zullen geaggregeerd verwerkt worden, en enkel voor onderzoeksdoeleinden worden gebruikt. Er zijn geen juiste of foute antwoorden, we vragen je enkel om zo eerlijk mogelijk te antwoorden.

Door deze vragenlijst volledig te beantwoorden maak je kans om één van 3 waardebonnen ter waarde van 25 euro bij Fnac te winnen.

**Voor we beginnen, geef hieronder je leeftijd en geslacht aan:**

Leeftijd: ........ jaar

Geslacht:

- Man
- Vrouw

Vul hier je emailadres in, zodat we kunnen contacteren als je gewonnen hebt:

Emailadres: ........................................................................................................

Ga naar de volgende pagina om met de eerste studie te starten.
Leesgedrag onderzoek

Bedankt voor je deelname!

In deze studie zijn we geïnteresseerd in de percepties en reacties van een lezer op een kortverhaal.
Daarom vragen we je om dit kortverhaal te lezen en een je mening te geven over verschillende aspecten van het verhaal en je leeservaring.

Beantwoord eerst de volgende vragen vóór je met het lezen begint. Duid steeds het bolletje aan dat het beste overeenstemt met jouw mening.

1. Hoe graag lees je boeken?

   -3    -2    -1    0    +1    +2    +3
   Helemaal niet graag

2. Hoe vaak lees je boeken?
   - Ik lees geen boeken
   - Minder dan een keer per week
   - Een tot twee keer per week
   - Drie tot vier keer per week
   - Vijf tot zes keer per week
   - Elke dag

3. Als je een boek leest, hoeveel tijd spendeer je daar dan ongeveer aan per dag.
   - Ik lees geen boeken
   - Minder dan 15 minuten
   - Tussen 15 en 45 minuten
   - Tussen 45 minuten en 1u15 minuten
   - Tussen 1u15 minuten en 1u45 minuten
   - Meer dan 1u45 minuten

Ga naar de volgende pagina om het verhaal te lezen.
## 1. *In welke mate je het eens bent met de volgende uitspraken over het verhaal?*

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<th>Mee eenens</th>
<th>Eerder mee eenens</th>
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<td>Ik zou dit verhaal aan mijn vrienden aanraden</td>
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## 2. *Geef je oordeel over de twee hoofdpersonages in het verhaal:*

**Ik vind *de man (de verteller):***

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<tr>
<td>Onaangenaam</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onaantrekkelijk</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onaardig</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ik vind *de vrouw (Amanda):***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>-3</th>
<th>-2</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>+2</th>
<th>+3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slecht</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onaangenaam</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aantrekkelijk</th>
<th>Aardig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Onaantrekkelijk</td>
<td>Onaardig</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. *Wat was je ervaring tijdens het lezen van het verhaal?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terwijl ik het verhaal las, kon ik me de gebeurtenissen erin heel goed inbeelden</th>
<th>Helemaal mee eens</th>
<th>Mee eens</th>
<th>Eerder mee eens</th>
<th>Noch eens, noch oneens</th>
<th>Eerder oneens, noch mee eens</th>
<th>Mee oneens</th>
<th>Helemaal oneens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tijdens het lezen van de verhaal was ik me bewust van wat er in het lokaal om me heen gebeurde</td>
<td>Helemaal mee eens</td>
<td>Mee eens</td>
<td>Eerder mee eens</td>
<td>Noch eens, noch oneens</td>
<td>Eerder oneens, noch mee eens</td>
<td>Mee oneens</td>
<td>Helemaal oneens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik kon me gemakkelijk inbeelden dat ik bij de gebeurtenissen in het verhaal aanwezig was</td>
<td>Helemaal mee eens</td>
<td>Mee eens</td>
<td>Eerder mee eens</td>
<td>Noch eens, noch oneens</td>
<td>Eerder oneens, noch mee eens</td>
<td>Mee oneens</td>
<td>Helemaal oneens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tijdens het lezen voelde ik me betrokken bij het verhaal</td>
<td>Helemaal mee eens</td>
<td>Mee eens</td>
<td>Eerder mee eens</td>
<td>Noch eens, noch oneens</td>
<td>Eerder oneens, noch mee eens</td>
<td>Mee oneens</td>
<td>Helemaal oneens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadat ik “Schaakmat” had gelezen, vond ik het gemakkelijk om het verhaal uit mijn hoofd te zetten</td>
<td>Helemaal mee eens</td>
<td>Mee eens</td>
<td>Eerder mee eens</td>
<td>Noch eens, noch oneens</td>
<td>Eerder oneens, noch mee eens</td>
<td>Mee oneens</td>
<td>Helemaal oneens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tijdens het lezen van het verhaal wilde ik graag weten hoe het zou aflopen</td>
<td>Helemaal mee eens</td>
<td>Mee eens</td>
<td>Eerder mee eens</td>
<td>Noch eens, noch oneens</td>
<td>Eerder oneens, noch mee eens</td>
<td>Mee oneens</td>
<td>Helemaal oneens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Het verhaal heeft me emotioneel geraakt</td>
<td>Helemaal mee eens</td>
<td>Mee eens</td>
<td>Eerder mee eens</td>
<td>Noch eens, noch oneens</td>
<td>Eerder oneens, noch mee eens</td>
<td>Mee oneens</td>
<td>Helemaal oneens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik merkte dat ik erover nadacht hoe “Schaakmat” op een andere manier had kunnen aflopen</td>
<td>Helemaal mee eens</td>
<td>Mee eens</td>
<td>Eerder mee eens</td>
<td>Noch eens, noch oneens</td>
<td>Eerder oneens, noch mee eens</td>
<td>Mee oneens</td>
<td>Helemaal oneens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tijdens het lezen van de verhaal merkte ik dat mijn gedachten afdwaalden</td>
<td>Helemaal mee eens</td>
<td>Mee eens</td>
<td>Eerder mee eens</td>
<td>Noch eens, noch oneens</td>
<td>Eerder oneens, noch mee eens</td>
<td>Mee oneens</td>
<td>Helemaal oneens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
De gebeurtenissen in het verhaal zijn relevant voor mijn dagelijks leven

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Dit is het einde van dit onderzoek.
Bedankt om deel te nemen!

Studie over consumentengedrag
(ref.UA-MKT/P11R-04-14)

Welkom bij onze studie over consumentengedrag en hartelijk dank voor je medewerking!

In dit deel van de studie zijn we geïnteresseerd in je houding tegenover merken uit verschillende productcategorieën. **Geef voor elk van de onderstaande criteria je mening over het merk door het cijfer te omcirkelen dat het beste overeenstemt met je mening.**

1. Wat is je houding tegenover **Casio horloges**?

   | Negatief  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Positief
   | Onaantrekkelijk | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Aantrekkelijk
   | Niet leuk | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Leuk
   | Lage kwaliteit | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Hoge kwaliteit

2. Wat is je houding tegenover **Gucci zonnebrillen**?

   | Negatief  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Positief
   | Onaantrekkelijk | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Aantrekkelijk
   | Niet leuk | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Leuk
   | Lage kwaliteit | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Hoge kwaliteit

3. Wat is je houding tegenover **Hacienda olijfolie**?

   | Negatief  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Positief
   | Onaantrekkelijk | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Aantrekkelijk
   | Niet leuk | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Leuk
   | Lage kwaliteit | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Hoge kwaliteit
Appendix 2: Questionnaires

4. Wat is je houding tegenover **Posolskaya wodka**?

| Negatief | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Positief
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------
| Onaantrekkelijk | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Aantrekkelijk
| Niet leuk | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Leuk
| Lage kwaliteit | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Hoge kwaliteit

5. Wat is je houding tegenover **Lomond printers**?

| Negatief | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Positief
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------
| Onaantrekkelijk | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Aantrekkelijk
| Niet leuk | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Leuk
| Lage kwaliteit | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Hoge kwaliteit

In dit deel van de studie zijn we geïnteresseerd in je gebruik van en mening over wodka. **Geef voor elk van de onderstaande vragen je mening over het merk door het cijfer te omcirkelen dat het beste overeenstemt met je mening.**

1. Wodka is voor mij …

| Onbelangrijk | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Belangrijk
|--------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------
| Betekent niets | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Betekent veel
| Maakt niet uit | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Maakt veel uit

2. Hoe vaak heb je het afgelopen jaar wodka gedronken?

| Elke dag | 0 |
| 5-6 keer per week | 0 |
| 3-4 keer per week | 0 |
| 1-2 keer per week | 0 |
| 2-3 keer per maand | 0 |
| 1 keer per maand | 0 |
| Enkele keren | 0 |
| 1 keer | 0 |
| Ik heb het afgelopen jaar geen wodka gedronken | 0 |
Leesgedrag onderzoek (vervolg)

Nu stellen we je terug enkele vragen over het verhaal (Schaakmat) dat je zonet hebt gelezen. In het verhaal werden een aantal producten en merken genoemd. In de volgende vragen willen we graag je perceptie en evaluatie kennen over een van die merken, namelijk Posolskaya, en het verband tussen dat merk en het verhaal.

1. **In welke mate past Posolskaya bij de **man in het verhaal (**de verteller**)?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Helemaal mee eens</th>
<th>Mee eens</th>
<th>Eerder mee eens, noch oneens</th>
<th>Eerder oneens</th>
<th>Mee eens</th>
<th>Helemaal oneens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posolskaya past bij zijn persoonlijkheid</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posolskaya past bij zijn levensstijl</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Het is logisch dat hij Posolskaya gebruikte</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **In welke mate past Posolskaya bij de **vrouw in het verhaal (**Amanda**)?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Helemaal mee eens</th>
<th>Mee eens</th>
<th>Eerder mee eens, noch oneens</th>
<th>Eerder oneens</th>
<th>Mee eens</th>
<th>Helemaal oneens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posolskaya past bij haar persoonlijkheid</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posolskaya past bij haar levensstijl</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
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<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bedankt!
**Persoonlijkheidsonderzoek**

Beste deelnemer,

De volgende vragenlijst maakt deel uit van een breder onderzoek naar persoonlijkheid en individuele verschillen tussen mensen. Hij bevat een aantal uitspraken die al dan niet op jou van toepassing zijn. Geef aan in welke mate je vindt dat de volgende uitspraken je als persoon goed omschrijven. Je antwoorden zijn volledig anoniem. Antwoord zo open en eerlijk mogelijk.

1 = Helemaal niet akkoord  
2 = Akkoord  
3 = Eerder niet akkoord  
4 = Noch akkoord, noch niet akkoord  
5 = Eerder akkoord  
6 = Akkoord  
7 = Helemaal akkoord

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Als ik moet kiezen heb ik liever een ingewikkeld dan een simpel probleem.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ik ben graag verantwoordelijk voor een situatie waarin veel nagedacht moet worden.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Denken is niet precies mijn idee van plezier hebben.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ik doe liever iets waarbij weinig nagedacht moet worden dan iets waarbij mijn denkvermogen zeker op de proef wordt gesteld.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ik probeer situaties te voorkomen of te vermijden wanneer de mogelijkheid bestaat dat ik er uitgebreid over moet nadenken.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Iets langdurig en precies afwegen geeft me voldoening.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik denk alleen zo veel als nodig.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik denk liever over kleine dagelijkse dan over lange-termijn projecten na.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik hou van taken waarbij weinig nagedacht hoeft te worden wanneer ik ze eenmaal geleerd heb.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Het idee om op mijn verstand te vertrouwen vind ik aantrekkelijk.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik geniet echt van een taak waarin men met nieuwe oplossingen voor problemen moet komen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik verkies een leven vol met raadsels en puzzels die ik moet oplossen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Het idee om abstract te denken vind ik aantrekkelijk.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik heb liever een taak die intellectueel, moeilijk en belangrijk is, dan een taak die enigszins belangrijk is maar waarbij je niet veel hoeft na te denken.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik voel eerder opluchting dan voldoening wanneer ik een taak die veel mentale inspanningen vereiste, beëindigd heb.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik vind het voldoende wanneer iets blijkt te werken: hoe of waarom het precies werkt, interesseert me niet.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gewoonlijk maak ik zelfs uitgebreid afwegingen over zaken die niet persoonlijk op mijzelf betrekking hebben.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EINDE**

Bedankt voor je deelname!!!
**4B: QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN CHAPTERS 3 & 6**

*Note: Chapter 3 focused on brand placement in text and Chapter 6 investigated both text and film. The data reported in both chapters were collected simultaneously within the framework of one large online experiment. Participants were randomly assigned to either the text, or the film condition, and thus completed the respective questionnaire. The wording of each question referred to either the story or the film, depending on condition. The experiment was programmed in Qualtrics and respondents were recruited via a major online panel agency.*

---

**Welkom!**

In wat volgt, zal je deelnemen aan een reeks van studies in het kader van enkele onderzoeksprojecten aan de Universiteit Antwerpen, die verder geen verband houden met elkaar. Voor de aanvang van elke studie krijg je informatie en specifieke richtlijnen.

Al je antwoorden zijn anoniem. Je gegevens zullen in groep verwerkt worden, en enkel voor onderzoeksdoeleinden worden gebruikt. Er zijn geen juiste of foute antwoorden, we vragen je enkel om zo eerlijk mogelijk te antwoorden.

Klik op "volgende" (>>) om met de eerste studie te starten.

---

**Bedankt voor je deelname!**

In deze studie zijn we geïnteresseerd in je mening over een kortverhaal. Daarom vragen we je om dit verhaal te lezen en daarna enkele vragen te beantwoorden over het verhaal en je leeservaring.

Het verhaal is 5 pagina’s lang. Het is belangrijk dat je het hele verhaal aandachtig leest. De knop om verder te gaan in dit onderzoek zal daarom slechts na enige tijd verschijnen.

Voordat we beginnen, gelieve de volgende gegevens in te vullen:

**Geslacht:** Man / Vrouw

**Leeftijd:**

**Hoogst behaalde diploma (of huidige studie):** …
**Appendix 2: Questionnaires**

Hoe graag lees jij boeken?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helemaal niet graag</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Heel erg graag</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Hoe graag kijk jij naar films?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helemaal niet graag</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Heel erg graag</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Heb je het hele verhaal gelezen?

- Ja
- Nee

Wat vond je van het verhaal?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ik hield er niet van</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Ik hield er van</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slecht</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Goed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mijn mening is ongunstig</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mijn mening is gunstig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De gebeurtenissen in het verhaal waren onrealistisch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>De gebeurtenissen in het verhaal waren onrealistisch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De personages in het verhaal waren onrealistisch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>De personages in het verhaal waren realistisch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wat was je ervaring tijdens het lezen van het verhaal?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tijdens het lezen van het verhaal vergat ik de tijd</th>
<th>Helemaal niet akkoord</th>
<th>Akkoord</th>
<th>Eerder niet akkoord</th>
<th>Noch akkoord, noch niet akkoord</th>
<th>Eerder akkoord</th>
<th>Eerder akkoord</th>
<th>Helemaal akkoord</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tijdens het lezen van het verhaal was ik geconcentreerd op wat er in het verhaal gebeurde.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik voelde mij geabsorbeerd in het verhaal.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Het verhaal pakte me zo dat ik me kon afsluiten voor wat er om mij heen gebeurde.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik was zo geconcentreerd aan het lezen dat ik de wereld om mij heen even was vergeten.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tijdens het lezen van het verhaal leek het soms alsof ik zelf ook in de wereld van het verhaal was.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tijdens het lezen van het verhaal waren er momenten waarop de wereld van het verhaal leek te overlappen met mijn eigen wereld.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De wereld van het verhaal voelde tijdens het lezen soms dichterbij dan de wereld om mij heen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toen ik klaar was met lezen van het verhaal voelde het alsof ik net een uitstapje had gemaakt naar de wereld van het verhaal.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omdat al mijn aandacht uit ging naar het verhaal, leek het soms alsof ik niet meer los van het verhaal bestond.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tijdens het lezen van dit verhaal had ik een beeld van de hoofdpersoon voor mijn ogen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tijdens het lezen van dit verhaal kon ik de situaties die beschreven werden voor me zien.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik kon me voorstellen hoe de omgeving waarin het verhaal zich afspeelt eruit zag.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Questionnaires

Op de volgende pagina's zijn we geïnteresseerd in de mening van mensen over de personages (Silke, Kevin, Mieke, Olivier en Tom).

Om de vragenlijst korter te maken, krijg je slechts één van de personages toegewezen om te beoordelen.

Ik vind **Olivier**... (de jongen die ongeveer halfweg het verhaal het café binnenkwam en tegenover Silke aan tafel ging zitten)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helemaal niet aantrekkelijk</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Heel aantrekkelijk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helemaal niet aardig</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heel aardig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helemaal niet betrouwbaar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heel betrouwbaar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Geef aan in welke mate je het eens bent met de volgende uitspraken over **Olivier**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Helemaal niet akkoord</th>
<th>Akkoord</th>
<th>Eerder niet akkoord</th>
<th>Eerder akkoord</th>
<th>Eerder akkoord</th>
<th>Helemaal akkoord</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ik kon me tijdens het lezen van het verhaal voorstellen hoe het zou zijn om in de schoenen van Olivier te staan.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik voelde me verbonden met Olivier.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik voelde mij hoe Olivier zich voelde.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik leefde mee met wat er gebeurde in het verhaal.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik voelde met Olivier mee.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Waarom was Silke van streek?
- Ze was haar smartphone verloren.
- Ze had ruzie gemaakt met een vriendin.
- Ze was bang dat haar vriendje haar bedroog.
- Haar hond was overleden.

Wie kwam er op het einde het café binnen?
- Tom (het vriendje van Silke).
- Olivier (een vriend van Silke)
- Mieke (de barvrouw)
- Karel (een kennis van Silke)

---

**Studie over consumentengedrag**

Welkom bij onze studie over consumentengedrag en hartelijk dank voor je medewerking!

In deze studie zijn we geïnteresseerd in je houding tegenover kleding, en verschillende merken van kledij. Beantwoord alstublieft de volgende vragen.

**Kleding is voor mij …**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Onbelangrijk</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>Belangrijk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Betekent niets</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Betekent veel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maakt niet uit</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Maakt veel uit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hoe vertrouwd ben je met ZARA?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helemaal niet vertrouwd</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>Heel erg vertrouwd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Wat is je houding tegenover ZARA?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negatief</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>Positief</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Onaantrekkelijk</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Aantrekkelijk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niet leuk</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Leuk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lage kwaliteit</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Hoe kwaliteit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Appendix 2: Questionnaires**

Hoe waarschijnlijk is het dat je ZARA zult overwegen, de volgende keer dat je kleding koopt?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helemaal niet waarschijnlijk</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Heel erg waarschijnlijk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Hoe vertrouwd ben je met ESPRIT?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helemaal niet vertrouwd</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Heel erg vertrouwd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Wat is je houding tegenover ESPRIT?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negatief</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Positief</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Onaantrekkelijk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aantrekkelijk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niet leuk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leuk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lage kwaliteit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hoe kwaliteit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hoe waarschijnlijk is het dat je ESPRIT zult overwagen, de volgende keer dat je kleding koopt?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helemaal niet waarschijnlijk</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Heel erg waarschijnlijk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Hoe vertrouwd ben je met WE?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helemaal niet vertrouwd</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Heel erg vertrouwd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Wat is je houding tegenover WE?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negatief</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Positief</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Onaantrekkelijk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aantrekkelijk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niet leuk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leuk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lage kwaliteit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hoe kwaliteit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

226
Hoe waarschijnlijk is het dat je WE zult overwegen, de volgende keer dat je kleding koopt?

| Helemaal niet waarschijnlijk |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Heel erg waarschijnlijk |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Dit is het vervolg van Studie 1. In dit deel vragen we je om terug te denken aan het verhaal dat je in de eerste studie gelezen hebt. Daarin kwamen een aantal producten en merken voor. In de volgende vragen, willen we graag je mening weten over één van de merken die in het verhaal voorkwamen, namelijk ESPRIT.

Geef aan in welke mate je akkoord gaat met de volgende uitspraken:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Helemaal mee eens</th>
<th>Mee eens</th>
<th>Eerder mee eens</th>
<th>Noch eens, noch oneens</th>
<th>Eerder eens</th>
<th>Mee eens</th>
<th>Helemaal mee eens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ik vond de manier waarop Esprit in het verhaal verwerkt was irriterend.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanwege de verwijzingen naar Esprit in het verhaal, vind ik het verhaal minder aangenaam.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De verwijzingen naar Esprit zouden verwijderd moeten worden uit het verhaal.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Persoonlijkheidsonderzoek**

Beste deelnemer,

De volgende vragenlijst maakt deel uit van een breder onderzoek naar persoonlijkheid en individuele verschillen tussen mensen. Hij bevat een aantal uitspraken die al dan niet op jou van toepassing zijn. Geef aan in welke mate je vindt dat de volgende uitspraken je als persoon goed omschrijven. Je antwoorden zijn volledig anoniem. Antwoord zo open en eerlijk mogelijk.

1 = Helemaal niet akkoord
2 = Akkoord
3 = Eerder niet akkoord
4 = Noch akkoord, noch niet akkoord
5 = Eerder akkoord
6 = Akkoord
7 = Helemaal akkoord

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Als ik moet kiezen heb ik liever een ingewikkeld dan een simpel probleem.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik ben graag verantwoordelijk voor een situatie waarin veel nagedacht moet worden.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denken is niet precies mijn idee van plezier hebben.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik doe liever iets waarbij weinig nagedacht moet worden dan iets waarbij mijn denkvermogen zeker op de proef wordt gesteld.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik probeer situaties te voorkomen of te vermijden wanneer de mogelijkheid bestaat dat ik er uitgebreid over moet nadenken.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iets langdurig en precies afwegen geeft me voldoening.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik denk alleen zo veel als nodig.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik denk liever over kleine dagelijkse dan over lange-termijn projecten na.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

228
Ik hou van taken waarbij weinig nagedacht hoeft te worden wanneer ik ze eenmaal geleerd heb.

Nieuwe manieren leren om te denken trekt me niet bijzonder aan.

Ik geniet echt van een taak waarin men met nieuwe oplossingen voor problemen moet komen.

Ik prefereer een leven vol met raadsels en puzzels.

Het idee om abstract te denken vind ik aantrekkelijk.

Ik heb liever een taak die intellectueel, moeilijk en belangrijk is, dan een taak die enigszins belangrijk is maar waarbij je niet veel hoeft na te denken.

Ik voel eerder opluchting dan voldoening wanneer ik een taak die veel mentale inspanningen vereiste, beëindigd heb.

Ik vind het voldoende wanneer iets blijkt te werken: hoe of waarom het precies werkt, interesseert me niet.

Gewoonlijk maak ik zelfs uitgebreid afwegingen over zaken die niet persoonlijk op mijzelf betrekking hebben.

**EINDE**

Bedankt voor je deelname!
4C: QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN CHAPTER 4

Note: The experiment was programmed in Qualtrics and data were collected online using convenience sampling. Participants were exposed to either an unfamiliar (Cedevita), or a familiar brand (Orangina). Yet, they provided ratings for both brands, so we could test the effects of placement exposure to a no-exposure condition.

WELKOM!

U neemt deel aan een onderzoek in het kader van een masterthesis. Alle gegeven antwoorden zijn anoniem en zullen enkel gebruikt worden voor onderzoeksdoeleinden. Er zijn geen juiste of foute antwoorden, wel wordt u gevraagd zo eerlijk mogelijk te antwoorden. Door mee te doen met dit onderzoek kan u kans maken op een duo cinematicket.

Het onderzoek zal ongeveer 15 minuten in beslag nemen.

U wordt alvast bedankt voor uw deelname.

Vul hier uw emailadres in, zodat we u kunnen contacteren indien u gewonnen heeft: __________

Leeftijd: ______________

Geslacht:
☐ Man
☐ Vrouw

Klik op "volgende" (>>) om met de eerste studie te starten.

Studie over leesgedrag:

In deze studie zijn we geïnteresseerd in de percepties en reacties van de lezer op een kortverhaal. Daarom vragen we u om "De man met de kap" te lezen en uw mening te geven over verschillende aspecten van het verhaal en uw leeservaring.

Het verhaal is 4 pagina's lang en het is belangrijk dat je het aandachtig leest.

Alvast bedankt!

Klik op "volgende" (>>) om het verhaal te lezen.
Gelieve de volgende vragen omtrent het kortverhaal te beantwoorden.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Helemaal mee eens</th>
<th>Mee eens</th>
<th>Eerder mee eens</th>
<th>Noch eens, noch oneens</th>
<th>Eerder mee eens</th>
<th>Mee eens</th>
<th>Helemaal mee eens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'De man met de kap' vond ik een aangenaam verhaal.</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'De man met de kap' is een boeiend verhaal.</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Het verhaal is interessant.</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
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<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik zou graag het vervolg lezen van dit verhaal.</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik zou dit verhaal aanbevelen aan kennissen.</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
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<td>⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️ ⬜️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bedankt!

**Let op:** dit is **niet** het einde van deze vragenlijst.

---

**Studie over consumentengedrag**

Dit deel van de studie gaat over keuzes en beslissingen van consumenten. We zijn geïnteresseerd in uw mening over een aantal frisdrankmerken.

Gelieve uw mening te geven over de volgende frisdrankmerken:
Appendix 2: Questionnaires

Ik vind Cedevita:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Onaangenaam</th>
<th>Negatief</th>
<th>Onaantrekkelijk</th>
<th>Lage kwaliteit</th>
<th>Aangenaam</th>
<th>Positief</th>
<th>Aantrekkelijk</th>
<th>Hoe kwaliteit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ik vind Orangina:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Onaangenaam</th>
<th>Negatief</th>
<th>Onaantrekkelijk</th>
<th>Lage kwaliteit</th>
<th>Aangenaam</th>
<th>Positief</th>
<th>Aantrekkelijk</th>
<th>Hoe kwaliteit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hoe vertrouwd bent u met het merk Cedevita?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Helemaal niet vertrouwd</th>
<th>Heel erg vertrouwd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hoe vertrouwd bent u met het merk Orangina?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Helemaal niet vertrouwd</th>
<th>Heel erg vertrouwd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dit is het einde van de vragenlijst.

Klik alstublieft op volgende zodat de antwoorden worden geregistreerd.

Heel erg bedankt voor je deelname!
Welkom!
In wat volgt, zal je deelnemen aan twee studies in het kader van mijn masterthesis die verder geen verband houden met elkaar. De eerste studie gaat over de beoordeling van een tekst en de tweede over consumentengedrag.
Al je antwoorden zijn anoniem en zullen alleen voor onderzoeksdoeleinden gebruikt worden. Er zijn geen juiste of foute antwoorden, we vragen je enkel om zo eerlijk mogelijk te antwoorden.
Door deze vragenlijst volledig te beantwoorden maak je kans om ofwel één van de 3 duo cinematicets te winnen of één van de 3 waardebonnen ter waarde van 20 euro bij Fnac. Je kan hieronder aanduiden welke je prefereert. De vragenlijst neemt ongeveer 20 min in beslag. Alvast bedankt voor je medewerking!

Welke type voucher verkies je, indien je wint?
- Duo cinematicets (Kinepolis) (1)
- FNAC (t.w.v. € 20) (2)

Vul hier je emailadres in, zodat we je kunnen contacteren als je gewonnen hebt:____________________

Leeftijd: ________________

Geslacht:
- Man
- Vrouw

Moedertaal:
- Nederlands
- Engels
- Andere ____________________
Appendix 2: Questionnaires

Hoe schat je je kennis van Engels in?
- Bijna geen kennis
- Zwak
- Redelijk
- Goed
- Heel goed
- Uitstekend
- Even goed als moedertaal

In deze eerste studie zijn we geïnteresseerd in je mening over een kortverhaal. Daarom vragen we je om het verhaal "Shaakmat" te lezen en daarna enkele vragen hierover te beantwoorden. Het verhaal is 5 pagina's lang en het is belangrijk dat je het aandachtig leest. Alvast bedankt!

**[TEXT CONTAINING THE MANIPULATIONS]**

Hier volgen enkele vragen over het kortverhaal dat je net hebt gelezen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Helemaal niet mee eens</th>
<th>Niet mee eens</th>
<th>Eerder niet mee eens</th>
<th>Noch eens, noch oneens</th>
<th>Eerder mee eens</th>
<th>Mee eens</th>
<th>Helemaal mee eens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ik hield van het verhaal 'Shaakmat'.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Het plot van het verhaal is opwindend.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaakmat is een goed verhaal.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Het verhaal is interessant.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Het verhaal was moeilijk te begrijpen.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Het verhaal vereiste veel inspanning.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Het verhaal was makkelijk te verwerken.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bedankt! Dit is het einde van Studie 1 en je gaat zo verder met Studie 2 over consumentengedrag. Let op: dit is niet het einde van deze vragenlijst.

Welkom bij onze studie over consumentengedrag en hartelijk dank voor je medewerking! Deze studie gaat over de keuzes en beslissingen van consumenten. We zijn geïnteresseerd in je houding tegenover bepaalde producten, in dit geval wodka. Gelieve de volgende vragen te beantwoorden.

**Wodka is voor mij:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Onbelangrijk: Belangrijk</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Betekent iets: Betekent veel</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maakt niet uit: Maakt veel uit</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Wat is je houding tegenover Smirnoff wodka?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negatief: Positie</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Onaantrekkelijk: Aantrekkelijk</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niet leuk: Leuk</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lage kwaliteit: Hoge kwaliteit</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Wat is je houding tegenover Posolskaya wodka?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negatief: Postief</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Onaantrekkelijk: Aantrekkelijk</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niet leuk: Leuk</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lage kwaliteit: Hoge kwaliteit</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Wat is je houding tegenover Sibirskaya wodka?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negatief: Positief</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Onaantrekkelijk: Aantrekkelijk</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niet leuk: Leuk</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lage kwaliteit: Hoge kwaliteit</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Questionnaires

Wat is houding tegenover Absolut wodka?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negatief:Postief</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ondraad:Antrekkelijk</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niet leuk:Leuk</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lage kwaliteit:Hoge kwaliteit</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hoe vertrouwd ben je met het merk Posolskaya?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helemaal niet vertrouwd: Heel erg vertrouwd</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hoe vertrouwd ben je met het merk Sibirskaya?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helemaal niet vertrouwd: Heel erg vertrouwd</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dit is het einde van de consumentengedrag onderzoek.
Gelieve naar de volgende pagina te gaan om de laatste vragen te beantwoorden.

Dit is het vervolg van Studie 1. In dit deel vragen we je om terug te denken aan het verhaal dat je in de eerste studie gelezen hebt. Daarin kwamen een aantal producten en merken voor. We willen graag je mening hieromtrent weten.
Geef aan in welke mate je akkoord gaat met de volgende uitspraken over het merk Posolskaya, dat in het verhaal vermeld werd:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Posolskaya trok de aandacht tijdens het verhaal.</th>
<th>Helemaal niet mee eens</th>
<th>niet mee eens</th>
<th>eerder niet mee eens</th>
<th>noch eens, noch oneens</th>
<th>eerder mee eens</th>
<th>mee eens</th>
<th>helemaal mee eens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posolskaya was uitgesproken aanwezig in het verhaal.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik had het gevoel dat Posolskaya vaak voorkwam in het verhaal.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Geef aan in welke mate je akkoord gaat met de volgende uitspraken:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ik denk dat de vermelding van het merk Posolskaya in het verhaal een vorm van reclame is.</th>
<th>Helemaal niet mee eens</th>
<th>niet mee eens</th>
<th>eerder niet mee eens</th>
<th>noch eens, noch oneens</th>
<th>eerder mee eens</th>
<th>mee eens</th>
<th>helemaal mee eens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tijdens het lezen van het verhaal, bekritiseerde ik de vermelding van het merk Posolskaya.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tijdens het lezen van het verhaal, stond ik sceptisch tegenover de vermelding van het merk Posolskaya.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dit is het einde van de vragenlijst.
Heel erg bedankt voor je deelname!
Nederlandse samenvatting
Merkplaatsing (brand placement), het opzettelijk integreren van merken in media- inhoud, wordt traditioneel geassocieerd met film en televisieprogramma’s, en meer recent met computerspelletjes en muziekvideo’s. De laatste tijd wordt echter meer en meer gebruik gemaakt van merkplaatsing in boeken. Dit fenomeen zal wellicht steeds belangrijker worden, gezien de groeiende verzadiging van merkplaatsing in audiovisuele media zoals film en televisie. In topfilms uit de Verenigde Staten worden momenteel al soms meer dan 60 merken geplaatst. Dit hoge saturatieniveau zet adverteerders ertoe aan om alternatieve communicatieplatformen te zoeken, en boeken zijn daarbij een belangrijke opportuniteit. Recente voorbeelden van boeken waarin merken werden geplaatst, zijn Fay Weldon’s roman The Bulgari Connection, William Boyd’s The Vanishing Game, Hilary Carlip’s Find Me I’m Yours, en Carole Matthews’ The Sweetest Taboo. Gezien de groeiende aanwezigheid van merken in literair werk, roepen onderzoekers op om de impact van merkplaatsing in boeken op consumenten te bestuderen. Er zijn echter nog maar enkele studies die dit hebben gedaan. Om deze kenniskloof te dichten, onderzoekt dit proefschrift systematisch het effect van merkplaatsing in boeken. In een reeks van studies, gerapporteerd in vijf empirische hoofdstukken, worden belangrijke merk- en uitvoeringskarakteristieken van merkplaatsing gemanipuleerd, individuele verschillen tussen lezers gemeten, verschillende reacties op merkplaatsing nagegaan, en de relatie tussen die factoren bestudeerd.

Een fundamentele factor die een essentiële rol speelt in vroeger merkplaatsingsonderzoek in audiovisuele media, is de prominentie van de plaatsing, de mate waarin het geplaatste merk levendig en aandacht trekend wordt geïntegreerd in de inhoud. De resultaten van dit onderzoek wijzen uit dat prominent geplaatste merken weliswaar beter de aandacht trekken dan een subtiele plaatsing, maar ook dat prominente plaatsing de merkbeoordeling ongunstig beïnvloedt. De standaardverklaring voor dit fenomeen is dat prominente plaatsing de overtuigingskennis (persuasion knowledge) van de consument activeert: consumenten interpreteren de merkplaatsing als een vorm van reclame, beginnen er kritisch over na te denken, en wapenen zich tegen deze poging tot beïnvloeding. Dit beïnvloedt op zijn beurt hun mening over het geplaatste merk. Anderzijds hebben een aantal recente studies aangetoond dat prominenter geplaatste merken de merkevaluatie gunstig kunnen beïnvloeden, en dat dit afhangt van een aantal andere factoren.
Door het belang van de plaatsingsprominentie, en naar aanleiding van elkaar tegensprekende resultaten in vroegere studies, onderzoekt deze verhandeling de complexe werking van plaatsingsprominentie in geschreven teksten. Meer in het bijzonder wordt het volgende onderzocht: 1) hebben belangrijke plaatsingskenmerken zoals frequentie en modaliteit, die prominentie beïnvloeden in audiovisuele media, een gelijkaardig effect in geschreven fictie; en 2) interageren deze plaatsingsfactoren met merkkenmerken (merkbekendheid), tekstgerelateerde (taal) en lezersgerelateerde (niveau van ‘getransporteerdheid’ in het verhaal, neiging tot nadenken (Need for cognition) factoren? Deze elementen beïnvloeden de manier waarop mensen informatie verwerken, en uiteindelijk ook hun houding tegenover merken. Het basisidee dat wordt uitgewerkt in verschillende hoofdstukken, is dat de wijze waarop prominente of subtiel geplaatste merken merkevaluatie beïnvloeden, van het verwerkingsproces van de lezer afhangt, en niet zozeer van de prominentie van de merkplaatsing op zich.

Het eerste empirische hoofdstuk onderzoekt het effect van de herhaling van de geplaatste merknaam op de merkattitude, en test het modererend effect van merkbekendheid, getransporteerdheid in het verhaal, en individuele verschillen in Neiging tot Nadenken. De deelnemers in het experiment lazen de volledige tekst van een kortverhaal waarin het merk was verwerkt. Twee factoren werden gemanipuleerd: lezers kregen een tekst te lezen met een bekend of een onbekend merk, dat 2, 6 of 11 keer werd herhaald. Meer herhaling van het merk had invloed op de houding tegenover een onbekend geplaatst merk, maar niet tegenover een bekend merk. In vergelijking met 2 herhalingen van het merk, leidde 11herhalingen tot een positievere merkattitude bij mensen die sterk in het verhaal werden getransporteerd, maar niet bij mensen die zwak in het verhaal werden gezogen. Dit deed zich bovendien enkel voor bij lezers met een matige tot hoge Neiging tot Nadenken.

Het tweede empirische hoofdstuk introduceert een tweede aspect van prominente van merkplaatsing in een geschreven tekst, namelijk ‘modaliteit’. Dit hoofdstuk onderzoekt hoe de plaatsing van een merk in de dialoog of de verhaallijn van een tekst merkattitude en koopintentie beïnvloedt. Bovendien wordt, evenals in het vorige hoofdstuk, het modererende effect van Neiging tot Nadenken getest. Tot slot worden reacties op geplaatste merken zowel onmiddellijk na het lezen als twee weken later gemeten. Op die manier wordt, als een van de weinige studies,
het langere-termijneffect van merkplaatsing onderzocht. Lezers met een hoge Neiging tot Nadenken hebben een negatievere attitude tegenover een merk dat in de dialoog wordt geplaatst dan tegenover een merk dat in de verhaallijn zit, zowel onmiddellijk na het lezen als twee weken later. Hetzelfde patroon doet zich voor bij koopintentie. De merkevaluatie van lezers met een lage Neiging tot Nadenken wordt niet door de plaatsingsmodaliteit beïnvloed.

Het derde empirische hoofdstuk exploreert verder de vraag of stijlkenmerken in een tekst de effectiviteit van merkplaatsing beïnvloeden. Op basis van een ander verhaal en een ander merk dan in het vorige hoofdstuk, wordt onderzocht in welke mate de plaatsing van het merk in directe of indirecte taal de merkattitude beïnvloedt. Verder wordt ook het modererende effect van merkbekendheid getest. De deelnemers aan de studie lazen een kortverhaal met ofwel een bekend of onbekend merk, dat ofwel in directe ofwel in indirecte taal was geplaatst. De attitude bleek negatiever voor een merk in directe taal dan voor een merk in indirecte taal, en dit effect was sterker voor onbekende merken.

De eerste drie hoofdteksten geven aan dat de wijze waarop merkplaatsingen worden verwerkt bepalend is voor het effect van plaatsingsprominentie op de merkevaluatie. Het vierde empirische hoofdstuk bouwt hierop verder door de modererende rol te onderzoeken van een andere variabele die verwerkingsstijl kan beïnvloeden, namelijk de taal van de tekst (moedertaal versus vreemde taal). De deelnemers lazen een tekst waarin een merk 2 of 11 keer werd geplaatst. Deze tekst was ofwel in het Nederlands (moedertaal) of in het Engels. De gepercipieerde prominentie van de merkplaatsing, overtuigingskennis, kritische verwerking, en merkattitude werden gemeten. In beide talen verhoogt meer merkherhaling de gepercipieerde plaatsingsprominentie, en dit leidt tot een positievere merkattitude. Hoewel een hogere gepercipieerde prominentie overtuigingskennis verhoogt, heeft dit enkel een effect op kritische verwerking als het merk geplaatst is in een tekst in de vreemde taal (Engels). In tegenstelling tot wat werd verwacht, beïnvloedt deze kritische verwerking de merkattitude niet.

Het laatste empirische hoofdstuk vergelijkt de effecten van de interactie tussen plaatsingsfrequentie en plaatsingsmodaliteit in twee media, namelijk tekst en film. Er wordt getest of de resultaten van het tweede empirische hoofdstuk zich ook voordoen bij lagere niveaus van plaatsingsfrequentie. Bovendien wordt nagegaan in hoeverre gevoelens van irritatie (in de
Nederlandse samenvatting

plaats van cognitieve responses zoals in het vorige hoofdstuk) het effect van prominentie op merkattitude mediëren. Tenslotte wordt onderzocht of deze effecten gelijkwaardig zijn bij merkplaatsing in tekst en in film. De deelnemers in het online experiment zagen ofwel een korte film, ofwel lazen ze een kortverhaal. De merknaam was ofwel vermeld in de dialoog of in de verhaallijn van de tekst, of werd uitgesproken of getoond in de film. De merknaam werd ofwel 2 keer ofwel 4 keer geplaatst. De merknaam, de scenes van de merkplaatsing, de verhaallijn en de afhankelijke variabelen waren gelijkwaardig in de tekst en in de film. Merkplaatsing in de dialoog (vergelijk met in de verhaallijn) leidt tot meer irritatie bij hoge plaatsingsfrequentie, maar niet bij lage frequentie. Auditieve merkplaatsing leidt tot een gelijkwaardig irritatieniveau bij hoge en lage plaatsingsfrequentie, terwijl visuele merkplaatsing leidt tot meer irritatie als de plaatsingsfrequentie hoger is. De interactie tussen plaatsingsmodaliteit en plaatsingsfrequentie heeft in zowel tekst als film een effect op irritatie, en meer irritatie leidt tot een negatievere merkattitude.

De bevindingen van dit proefschrift leveren een bijdrage aan het merkplaatsingsonderzoek door aan te tonen dat ook merkplaatsing in literaire teksten de attitude tegenover geplaatste merken beïnvloedt. Bovendien tonen de resultaten aan dat sommige types van merkplaatsing effectiever zijn dan andere. De belangrijkste propositie en conclusie van dit werk is dat de wijze waarop subtiele en prominente merkplaatsing worden verwerkt een betere voorspeller van merkattitude is dan prominentie op zich. Over verschillende studies heen blijkt dat een diepere verwerking leiden tot sterkere negatieve reacties van prominentere plaatsing (vergelijk met minder prominente plaatsing). Als de plaatsingsomstandigheden tot minder verwerking leiden, heeft prominente een positief of helemaal geen effect op de merkattitude.

Deze conclusies illustreren het belang van andere factoren dan enkel plaatsingsprominentie voor de effectiviteit van merkplaatsing en de plaatsing van merken in literaire teksten. Meer bepaald blijkt dat zowel de aard als de sterkte van het effect van plaatsingsfrequentie op merkattitude afhangen van de mate waarin lezers worden meegezogen in het verhaal en van hun persoonlijkheidstrekkens (Neiging tot Nadenken). Beide factoren bepalen de sterkte van de verwerking van de tekst. De herhaling van de merknaam in de tekst blijkt ook meer effect te hebben voor onbekende dan voor bekende merken. De studies tonen ook aan dat stijlfiguren van

De bevindingen zijn ook relevant voor de marketingpraktijk omdat ze verschillende factoren onder de aandacht brengen waarmee rekening moet worden gehouden als merken in boeken geplaatst worden. Een frequentere merkplaatsing verbetert de merkattitude als deze plaatsing gebeurt in de verhaallijn en niet in een dialoog, en in indirecte taal eerder dan in directe taal. Bovendien versterken het meegezogen worden in het verhaal en een hogere Neiging tot Nadenken de effecten van plaatsingsfrequentie. Hoewel een adverteerder geen controle heeft over deze laatste effecten, kan inzicht in de aard van het boek en zijn lezerspubliek hiervoor richtinggevend zijn. De kenmerken van mensen met een hoge Neiging tot Nadenken zijn in de wetenschappelijke literatuur goed gedocumenteerd. De hoeveelheid en rijkheid van gegevens over lezers, en de hedendaagse analytische technieken, stellen online boekenverkopers, uitgeverijen en adverteerders bovendien in staat om diepgaande kennis te verwerven over lezers en doelgroepen voor verschillende types van boeken. Ook de taal van het boek speelt een rol. Meer en meer boeken worden in het Engels gelezen in plaats van de moedertaal. De bevindingen suggereren dat een hogere plaatsingsfrequentie voor een onbekend merk ook positieve merkeffecten heeft bij diegenen die boeken in een voor hen vreemde taal lezen.

Tot slot is ook gebleken dat wat werkt in een tekst niet noodzakelijk hetzelfde effect heeft op een scherm. Merkplaatsing in de verhaallijn werkt beter dan plaatsing in een dialoog, zeker bij hoge plaatsingsfrequentie, maar frequentere visuele plaatsing in een film leidt tot meer irritatie en een slechtere merkattitude. Dit is niet het geval bij auditieve plaatsing. Merkplaatsing moet dus aangepast worden aan het medium.

Het concluderende hoofdstuk bespreekt een aantal beperkingen van de uitgevoerde studies, en reikt ideeën aan voor verder onderzoek.