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## **Manipulating ethos and pathos: Accents, product complexity, and promotional messages in Chile**

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**MANIPULATING ETHOS AND PATHOS: ACCENTS, PRODUCT COMPLEXITY,  
AND PROMOTIONAL MESSAGES IN CHILE**

**A Dissertation**

**by**

**VICTOR R. DAVILA**

**Submitted to the University of Texas-Pan American  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**JUNE 2000**

**Major Subject: International Business  
Concentration in Marketing**

MANIPULATING ETHOS AND PATHOS: ACCENTS, PRODUCT  
COMPLEXITY, AND PROMOTIONAL MESSAGES IN CHILE

A Dissertation  
by

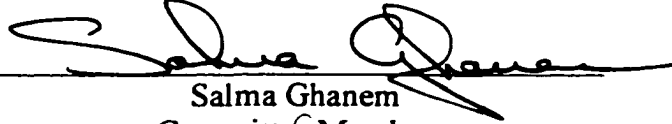
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Davila, Victor R., Manipulating Ethos and Pathos: Accents, Product Complexity, and Promotional Messages in Chile. Dissertation, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), June 2000, 173 pages, 26 tables, 8 figures, 7 appendixes, references, 180 titles.

This dissertation is motivated by fundamental questions about source effects in persuasive communications: Do receiver attributes influence perceptions about the source and about the object of the message? Do source and object cues influence receiver perceptions about the source? Do source and object cues influence receiver perceptions about the object of the message?

Traditional conceptions of receiver responses to a source have focused on character trait inferences. Of these character trait inferences, the literature on source credibility appears to converge on two categories: source expertise and source trustworthiness. A more recent stream of research has grown around the concept of homophily, a term coined by Lazarsfeld and Merton (1954) to refer to the tendency of individuals to associate with others similar to themselves.

This dissertation conceptualizes as social traits those source attributes associated with receiver perceptions of similarity between themselves and sources. This study tested whether inferences about the social and character traits of a source are separately significant predictors of overall assessments by receivers.

The study was conducted in central Chile. Respondents were classified according to socioeconomic background and asked to answer questions about their impressions of a recorded promotional message. Each of the 450 respondents in the study heard only one

of six recorded messages. Individual messages promoted one of two products and were recorded in one of three local accents, corresponding to the socioeconomically differentiated neighborhoods in the community.

The results of the study imply affirmative answers to each of the basic questions guiding this research. Both social and character trait inferences are found to be significant predictors of overall assessments of source credibility. Of the traditional character traits, expertise is found to play a conditional rather than a permanent role in receiver evaluations of a message. Signals of source-receiver similarity, at least with respect to accent, may elicit unfavorable assessments from lower status receivers.

## DEDICATION

To my wife, Nora, and to our brilliant sons, Victor, Alejandro, and Angel.

I can never repay what I owe you, but I will never stop trying.

To the people we love.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to my Dissertation Committee members, Dr. Michael Minor, Dr. Salma Ghanem, Dr. José Pagán for their guidance and support. I would also like to acknowledge the generosity and help of the doctoral faculty, doctoral students, administration and staff at the University of Texas – Pan American. I am grateful to Dr. Vern Vincent, Dr. Linda McCallister, Dr. John Sargent, Dr. Arturo Vásquez-Párraga, and Dr. Jane LeMaster for encouraging me to persevere. I would also like to thank the faculty, staff, administration, and students of the Universidad de Talca in Chile, without whose cooperation and assistance this study could not have been completed. I am honored to know you all and hope to retain your friendship and counsel through the years to come.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Conceptually, source credibility is linked with persuasive communications. Thus, a better understanding of receiver evaluations of a source is relevant to marketing and consumer behavior studies. With controls on receiver background, this dissertation studies how manipulations of spokesperson accents and product complexity influence receiver evaluations of the source and object of a promotional message. In particular, this studies receiver inferences about (a) speaker traits, (b) source credibility, and (c) source suitability. Receiver attitudes towards the promoted product are evaluated. The joint implications of separate streams of thought regarding source effects are also examined. This chapter discusses the domain, scope, justification, delimitations, and anticipated limitations of the dissertation, and lists the broad research questions that underlie the study.

#### Domain and General Approach

Spoken sales messages, whether in face-to-face presentations or through audio or audiovisual media, are a particular type of persuasive communication. Because spoken sales messages are at its focus, the domain of this research includes studies about the role of cues and studies of the persuasion process.

## Language Research

This dissertation is based on the role of linguistic cues, as related to the notion of source credibility. Cues are sensory signals or stimuli that determine responses, aid memory or facilitate experience (Deutsch and Krauss, 1965, p. 86; Flexner, 1987). Language is the ubiquitous and species-defining instrument of human communication (Dávila, 1998; Jakobson, 1972; Luria, 1973, pp. 137-146). Luria (1973), a biologist, observes that in the development of the human mind, “the critical step must have been the invention of language.”

Jakobson (1972), a linguist, reflects on the historical and continuing prominence of “speculations on the mysterious gift and confusion of tongues,” and notes that inquiries about the nature of language can be found in virtually every recorded period in Western and Indic traditions. The late nineteenth century, says Jakobson, saw the decline of an “exclusively comparative” approach to linguistics research with the gradual emergence of the relativistic approach, which since then has come to prevail.

The comparative approach, espoused by the Neogrammarian school of thought, was rooted in a belief in the ongoing evolution of durable linguistic features. This belief served and reflected the central interest in etymology of the Neogrammarians, who focused on how known languages were related to each other and to a hypothesized ancient mother-tongue. At the height of Neogrammarian influence, however, the conceptual restrictions of comparative analyses were fueling the search for a more productive approach to the study of language (Jakobson, 1972).

Born through the work of a few theorists— notably Henry Sweet (1845-1912), Jan Boudoin de Courtenay (1845-1929), Jost Winteler (1846-1929), Mikolaj Kruszewski

(1851-1887) and Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913)— a new approach, built on a framework of relativistic notions, extended the theoretical reach and interests of linguists. Jakobson (1972) implies that the approach of the modern relativistic school of linguistics assumes that uniformities in language should be sought in how groups of linguistic phenomena coexist and are related among themselves and to the extra-linguistic context. Understanding communication phenomena implies the consideration of context, interactions and feedback in communication.

#### Persuasion and Source Credibility

Bettinghaus (1980, p. 4) proposed that “persuasion ought to be thought of as a conscious effort at influencing the thoughts and actions of a receiver,” arguing that any definition of persuasion that omits the notion of intent inappropriately excludes ethical considerations and, in addition, is unsound pedagogically. Applbaum and Anatol (1974, pp. 12-13), however, responded that including intent ignores the fact that “all communication situations are persuasive.” Applbaum and Anatol contended that definitional concerns about ethics incorrectly distinguish between persuasion (a good or neutral thing) and coercion (a bad thing).

O’Keefe (1990, pp.14-17) evaluated paradigm cases of applications of the “persuasion” concept, and proposed the following definition: “(persuasion is) a successful intentional effort at influencing another’s mental state through communication in a circumstance in which the persuadee has some measure of freedom.” Applbaum and Anatol (1974, pp. 12-13) objected to the idea that “persuasion reflects choice on the part of the listener;” instead, persuasion should be understood as “a complex process by which



one individual or group elicits (intentionally or unintentionally) by nonverbal and/or verbal means a specific response from another individual or group.”

Classifying particular examples of persuasion as ethical or unethical appears reasonable. As noted above, the alternative would be to create an entirely different category for cases in which unethical sources obtain the results they are pursuing from receivers. As Bettinghaus and O’Keefe suggest, the notion of persuasion implies intent on the part of the persuader. An act of persuasion is a function of the intent of the source, not the response of the receiver, and persuasive acts can be effective or ineffective.

On the question of the receiver’s freedom of choice, O’Keefe’s definition can be interpreted as referring to the possibility of both voluntary and involuntary receiver responses. A persuader may seek, for example, to elicit reflexive emotional or somatic responses (involuntary), or favorable decisions (voluntary), or both. Together, these considerations suggest the following definition: *persuasion is an intentional attempt to influence voluntary and/or involuntary responses on the part of a receiver. Messages consisting of such attempts constitute persuasive communications.*

The relevance of speaker credibility to persuasive communications has been studied since classical Greek times (Vancil, 1993, pp.7-13). Aristotle defined “[those] persuasive qualities that seem to prove that a speaker should be trusted and believed” as *ethos*. The concept of *ethos* is closely related to the modern idea of communicator credibility. In Aristotle’s *ethos*, notes Vancil (1993), the persuasive qualities of a speaker fall into the following three categories: good sense, goodwill and good moral character. *Good sense* relates to the perception that the speaker “knows what he or she is talking about”. *Goodwill* is related to the perception that the speaker cares about the audience.

*Good moral character* relates to the perception of speaker virtues such as fairness and honesty (Vancil, 1993).

Four decades ago, Hovland (1953) proposed the analogous modern notion that an audience's perception of the "trustworthiness and expertness of the communicator" is fundamental to the effectiveness of communication. *Expertness* relates to the perception that a communicator is a "source of valid assertions"; and *trustworthiness* relates to the perception that a communicator is "motivated to make [valid] assertions" (Hovland, 1953, p.21). In other words, *expertness* is the "ability" and *trustworthiness* is the "willingness" of a communicator to make valid assertions (McCracken, 1989). Thus, the notion of "good sense" in Aristotle's *ethos* seems closely related to Hovland's "expertness" and Aristotle's "goodwill" and "good moral character" to Hovland's "trustworthiness." Generally, then, *expertness* is associated with such perceived aspects of a communicator as educational background, credentials, qualifications and knowledge. Trustworthiness is related to the perceived sincerity, dependability and honesty of a communicator.

In comparing the classical and modern theoretical notions of communicator credibility, at least three distinguishing points should be noted. First, as Miller (1974) observes, in the classical interpretation the dominant perspective concerns the general, permanent attributes of the communicator: Miller translates the term *ethos* as "habit". In the modern notion, the emphasis is on the particular communication situation not on the communicator.

Second, in the classical interpretation, credibility arises from the qualities of the communicator. In contrast, the modern interpretation is that credibility originates in the perceptions of the receiver of the communication.

Finally, in the classical concept, persuasive communications are implicitly positive in some moral or ethical sense (agreeing in this sense with Bettinghaus's preferred definition of persuasion). In the modern notion of "source credibility", which is the more common expression in contemporary studies on communicator credibility (e.g., Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz, 1969), concepts related to issues of ethics, morality, kindness and the like are better understood as classification devices than as determinants of credibility. Thus, an armed mugger can exhibit high source credibility, albeit with low ratings on empathy. Clearly, given the focus of this proposal on promotional messages for business purposes, this important generalization of the source credibility construct will be of restricted interest.

The focus on inferences about character traits has been an enduring aspect in the historical stream of thought about source credibility. Thus, expertise and trustworthiness of a source reflect the receiver's judgements about the inner qualities of the source. However, other contemporary lines of thought (e.g. Bourhis, Giles, Leyens, and Tajfel, 1979; Ryans and Carranza, 1975; Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer, 1970) imply that receiver inferences about a source's social standing may also and separately be important to overall evaluations of the source. This suggests the possible relevance of receiver inferences about source-receiver similarity and about the relative social status of the source to judgments of source credibility. Whereas the traditional expertise and

trustworthiness dimensions can be understood as *character traits*, the two additional dimensions of source credibility can be construed as *social traits*.

### Approach

Cronkhite and Liska (1976) proposed a functional credibility process model composed of five factors. These factors are (1) distinguishable features of the source (e.g., appearance, vocal qualities, gestures) and of the lexical and syntactic elements of the message; (2) inferences about source traits; (3) source function within the relevant topic or situation; (4) receiver criteria for evaluating the source as suitable for the given function; and (5) changes in receiver perceptions and behaviors regarding concepts different from the source.

By using this functional model as a guide, the present study seeks to reduce problems typically encountered in capturing and interpreting the responses of receivers. Descriptions of receiver evaluations of sources have been shown to be both topic dependent (Appelbaum and Anatol, 1972) and scale dependent (e.g., Appelbaum and Anatol, 1972; Markham, 1965). Cronkhite and Liska (1976) have argued that the combination of measurement procedures and factor analytical approaches has confounded subject responses in research reports.

This study is based on an information processing rather than a sociological approach. That evaluational processes appear to be transactional and interactive not linear is, therefore, important. Furthermore, the temporal sequence of the elements may be difficult to determine (e.g., Cronkhite & Liska, 1976; Krulee, Tondo, & Wightman, 1983; Minsky, 1986). Nevertheless, as discussed in the literature review, a linear account of the source evaluation process facilitates a discussion of its elements.

### Source Cues

Spoken accents are used as source cues in this study. As business globalizes and populations in developed Western countries become less culturally homogeneous, people from differing backgrounds are interacting with more frequency (e.g., Adler 1991; Diaz-Guerrero and Szalay 1991; Hofstede 1994; Venkatesh 1995). The evolution of population mixes in domestic markets and the expansion of international markets imply a growing need for related research. In the marketing literature, the relationship of spoken accents to effective and efficient promotional messages is an issue that requires additional research (Dávila 1998, Tsalikis, DeShields and LaTour 1991).

The differences among the terms “language”, “dialect”, and “accent” tend to be confused, even in the literature. Mackey, Finn, and Ingham (1997, footnote, p.350), for example, argue that the term “dialect” is a generic word for “accent.” The key source cue that is manipulated in the proposed experiment is referred to as “accent” or “spoken accent”. Therefore the definitions for related terms are as follows (Dávila, 1998):

(a) The term “Language” refers to a recognized modern spoken tongue acknowledged as the codified set of common vocal symbols used for cooperation and communication within its associated community (e.g., Russian, Italian, Japanese, etc.). A given language may be the standard language of more than one nation (e.g., English and Spanish). Other languages may be standard only within a particular region of a single nation (e.g., the so-called Cantonese and Mandarin “dialects” in China); and some languages can be both national standards in one nation and regional standards in another (e.g., French).

(b) A “Dialect” is a variation on one of the recognized spoken languages, which is generally understandable to speakers of other dialects of these languages (Chaika, 1989). Thus, one can speak of Spanish dialects, such as Chilean Spanish from Santiago and Puerto Rican Spanish from San Juan. On the other hand, the so-called Chinese “dialects,” for these purposes, would not fit the definition because their spoken versions are not mutually intelligible. Likewise, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish, which are largely mutually intelligible, would not fit the definition of “dialect” because they are recognized languages (Chaika, 1989).

(c) An “Accent” is a characteristic non-pathological pattern of pronunciation of a language or a dialect (e.g., Chaika, 1989; Munro & Derwing, 1995), which is exclusive of individual vocal quality, as well as of variations in vocabulary and grammar and, thus, of verbal content. Accents typically are classified as standard or nonstandard (Chaika, 1989, p.196; Trudgill, 1983, pp. 186-200; Wolfram and Fasold, 1974, pp. 18-25); and within a particular language community accents are generally understood to vary (e.g., Berger, 1993; Moreno de Alba, 1976; Williams and Wolfram, 1977).

### Delimitations

People use multiple cues in assessing objects, events, and other people. However, satisfactory controls of the source cues to which respondents are exposed are both important and hard to achieve (e.g., Mandler, 1959). An important aim in a research design is to reduce the confounding effects of extraneous variables (Kerlinger, 1986, pp. 287-289). As will be discussed in the literature review, questions about adequate controls make the results of many source-effects experiments difficult to interpret.

Many situational variables, including receiver predispositions, can influence the measured effects on the receiver of a given communication. Experiments that postulate a relationship between a manipulated cue and a remote distal receiver response can be difficult to assess. McGuire (1985, p. 260) has observed that persuasion research seems particularly susceptible to this “great-expectation fallacy.”

In a similar vein, Lazarsfeld and Merton (1978) warned against the “nothing-but fallacy,” which refers to a tendency in quantitative research to assume that the factors being measured completely explain the phenomenon of interest. However, the “and-also fallacy,” a complementary tendency to explain discrepant experimental results by allusions to extra-experimental variables, should also be avoided (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1978, p. 62). Thus, caution is indicated in predicting consumer actions and intentions on the basis of conceptually distant cues, unless each connection between the cue and the distal response is specified and measured.

These general considerations help to define the delimitations of the research. As will be discussed in the following chapter, although much source research has been conducted, source influences on receivers are understood only in the broadest sense. An empirically based contribution, whether by supportive or non-supportive results, depends on appropriate controls. This dissertation presumes the need for every reasonable effort to define and restrict situational and source variables.

This research, therefore, is delimited as follows. The receivers surveyed had the role of consumers, not professional buyers. Sources and receivers are from a culturally, ethnically, and regionally homogeneous population. Within the restriction of required socioeconomic quotas for the field experiment, respondents of both sexes were randomly

selected. In a traditional sense therefore, this study attempts to control *pathos*: by restricting the range of characteristics of the audience (Vancil, 1993, pp. 15-16), unwanted variability is also restricted (Kerlinger, 1986, pp.287-289).

A single source variable was discernible by the receivers: manner of speech. Only unbranded product categories that are similar in terms of product heterogeneity (e.g., Feick & Higie, 1992) and that are known to the members of the respondent population are mentioned in the promotional message. As determined by a pre-test, the two products selected for the experimental message vary along a single measured attribute: product complexity (e.g., Ritchie, 1974).

The message (the *logos*, in the traditional sense) uses the same lexical and syntactic elements, mutatis mutandis. The medium was the same in every trial: a recorded message played on a tape player. The design is based on a field experiment; therefore, ambient conditions vary from trial to trial.

Finally, measurements establish both the antecedent conditions and the intermediate constructs suggested by the literature as relevant to the measured outcome variables. Object-related source effects are operationalized by specific measures of perceived product complexity and necessity of product (e.g., Lavidge & Steiner, 1977, pp. 137-139).

#### Limitations

For the reasons discussed above, the study on which this dissertation is based was designed to reduce the influence of extraneous variables, insofar as reasonably possible. Thus, any interpretation of the results reported here must consider the deliberate restrictions imposed on the study. To test or to verify reported results, each of these



restrictions can be changed or selectively relaxed in a controlled fashion in future research. For example, the field experiment is based on a homogeneous region of a Latin American country. A similar experiment could be conducted in a similarly homogeneous region of a non-Latin American country to test for robustness of results given a change in the cultural or general socioeconomic environment.

### **Research Questions**

The general research questions that underlie this study are the following:

1. Do receiver attributes influence perceptions about the source and about the object of the message?
2. Do source and object cues influence receiver perceptions about the source?
3. Do source and object cues influence receiver perceptions about the object of the message?

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Using a functional approach that begins with a general discussion of the nature of cues, the literature on source evaluations is reviewed. The review emphasizes studies that are related to promotional communications in a business context. Thus, the literature is reviewed with respect to the nature of cues, the concept of homophily, inferences about source credibility and suitability, and reported source influences on a receiver about concepts other than the source. The chapter concludes with a summary of the review and a discussion of implications.

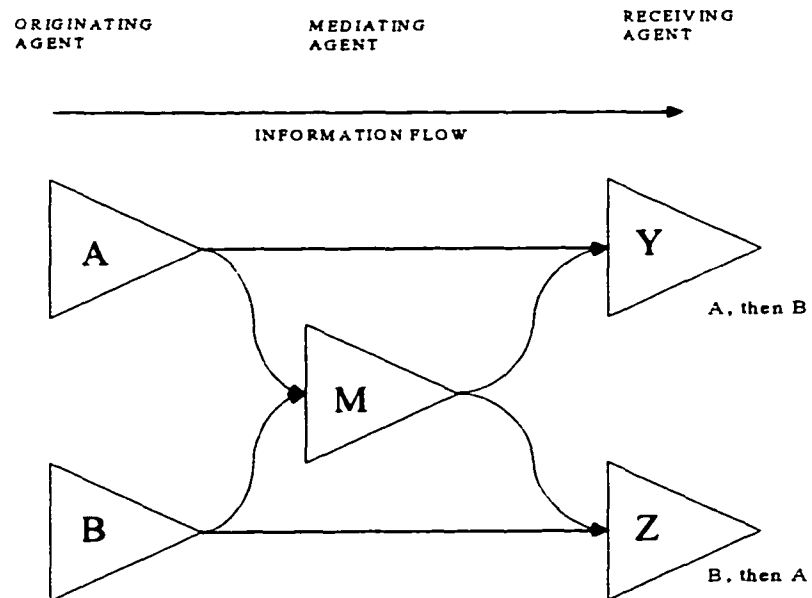
#### Nature of Cues

In psychology, a cue is understood as a stimulus that guides overt and/or internal receiver responses, often without entering consciousness (Deutsch and Krauss, 1965, pp.86-87; Flexner, 1987). Cues allow receivers to infer what is likely to occur given antecedent conditions (Bandura, 1977, p.58). Thus, cues about a specific object may represent positive or negative signals that the object belongs in a category of interest. For example, given their respective functional roles, a nurse's uniform is intended as a positive signal, while a hunter's camouflage suit is intended as a negative signal.

Receiver responsiveness to particular cues is determined by receiver knowledge of the “correlative relationships to response outcomes” of the cues (Bandura, 1977, p.88). A given object of interest may present the receiver with more than one cue. For example, a vocal signal will contain cues about speaker gender, message complexity, pitch, tone, intensity, etc. The number of cues processed in a given situation varies, and this determines “the range of cue utilization”: “the total number of environmental cues in any situation that an organism observes, maintains an orientation towards, responds to, or associates with a response” (Easterbrook, 1959). Several cues about the same object of interest can be processed interactively (e.g., Krulee, Tondo, and Wightman, 1983), implying difficulties in determining temporal sequentiality (e.g., Minsky, 1986). Pattern recognition is associated with the notion of interactive processing: after the receiver extracts features (i.e., cues) from the object of interest and estimates how these features are interrelated, the resulting pattern description is matched against memorized patterns (Reed, 1973).

With respect to the timing of usage of individual cues, Figure 1 illustrates a research implication of ambiguity in the sequence of evaluation processes. In the illustration, “A” and “B” represent two different cues. “Y” and “Z” represent two measurable responses, each of which requires inputs from “A” and “B”. At “Y”, however, “A” is processed directly but processing of “B” occurs after “A” and “B” are integrated by mediating mechanism “M”. This causes an apparent difference in the timing of cue utilization. Thus, a manipulation at “A” and “B”, followed by a measurement at “Y” will result in an apparent “A”, then “B” sequence. The sequence will appear reversed if the measurement is taken at “Z”. Thus, depending on the starting

**Figure 1: Cue Response Sequence**



Note: Adapted from illustration on p. 61 of Marvin Minsky (1986), *The Society of Mind*. New York: Touchstone.

point (i.e., specific cue) and ending point (i.e., particular receiver response) being tracked in a given study, empirical evidence may be found about sequential relationships among internal evaluational processes which will sometimes contradict and other times support other research evidence (Minsky, 1986).

### Cues about People

Humans appear to be capable of evaluating other humans on the basis of a multitude of cues (Fussell, 1983). Studies of source evaluations have relied on many types of source manipulations. Respondents have been asked to imagine an indefinite someone (e.g., Applbaum and Anatol, 1972) or someone famous (e.g., Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz, 1970) as a source in a given situation. Respondents have been shown photographs of putative sources (e.g., Jones, Moore, Stanaland, and Wyatt, 1998). Researchers have manipulated the information a receiver is given about the stimulus person (e.g., Sharma, 1990).

Other studies have involved manipulations of the behavior (including message content: e.g., Giles, Williams, Mackie and Rosselli, 1995), appearance, or other observable characteristics of stimulus persons. Among the source features manipulated are physical traits, such as attractiveness, (e.g., DeShields, 1992; Hamid, 1972; Markham, 1965; Webster, 1996) or vocal features, such as accent (e.g., De La Zerda-Flores and Hopper, 1975; Giles and Sassoon, 1983; Ryan and Carranza, 1975), speaking speed (e.g., Moore, Hausknecht, and Thamodaran, 1986), lexical and syntactic diversity (e.g., Bradac, Kinsky, and Davies, 1976), or intonation and intensity (e.g., Gelinas-Chebat, Chebat, and Vaninsky, 1996). Although studies based on these various manipulations typically report

source effects in predicted directions, the methodologies used often leave questions about whether extraneous source cues have been controlled.

Mandler (1959, p. 146) has cautioned about “frequently reported relationships between variables, without specifying the kinds of instances (subjects or situations) for which these relationships are presumed to hold. The composition of the sample is, of course, usually specified.” The many cues humans can use to judge a person (e.g., Fussell, 1983) makes Mandler’s caveat especially relevant to studies of source effects.

To cite a carefully structured study as an example, Webster (1996) reports ethnicity effects in respondent acquiescence to interviewer requests in interactions between two ethnic categories of stimulus persons and respondents (i.e., Anglos and Hispanics). Without details about the comparability of the stimulus persons in other aspects (e.g., attractiveness, vocal traits, apparent affluence, etc.), Webster’s finding that source ethnicity significantly influences interviewee responses is difficult to assess. This example illustrates the general conclusion that the detection and explicit control of potentially confounding variables is especially relevant to source effects research.

### Cues about Products

In marketing studies, source cue manipulations are often linked to product cue manipulations. Among the many product cues manipulated are reference prices (Urbany, Bearden, and Weilbaker, 1988), product warranties (Bearden and Shimp, 1982; Shimp and Bearden, 1982) and prices (Gotlieb and Dubinsky, 1991; Gotlieb and Sarel, 1992), descriptions of product features (Chattopadhyay and Alba, 1988; Klein and Yadav, 1989), and timing of product information (Kardes, 1986). In studies of joint source cue-product cue effects, the manipulations have included source of information and public or

private use of a product (Bearden and Etzel, 1982; Childers and Rao, 1992), and imagined (Fiore and DeLong, 1984), celebrity (Kamins, 1990; Ohanian, 1990), and non-celebrity users of products (Hamid, 1972).

As noted above, problems in establishing which source cues respondents used can make interpretation of reported source effects difficult. Nevertheless, in general, credible sources appear favorably to influence respondent perceptions of products and their attributes (e.g., Bearden and Shimp, 1982; Gotlieb and Sarel, 1992) and the degree of source influence appears to vary with the availability to respondents of non-source information (e.g., Ratneshwar and Chaiken, 1991). A general conclusion is that both source cues (such as credibility) and cues about the product (such as competing product prices and features) can influence the criteria used by respondents in forming impressions about a product (e.g., Gotlieb and Sarel, 1992; Klein and Yadav, 1989).

### Homophily

The notion of similarity between a source and a receiver and associated idea of relative status are fundamental to studies of source evaluations (e.g., Ryan and Carranza, 1975; DeShields, 1992). Furthermore, the concept of degrees of similarity between a decision-maker and the corresponding object of interest underlies numerous ideas in the social sciences. Some examples include the notions of in-groups and out-groups (e.g., Bourhis, Giles, Leyens, and Tajfel, 1979; Peabody, 1968), congruency between products and users (e.g., Fiore and DeLong, 1984), language prestige (e.g., Ryan, 1979), stereotyping and discrimination (e.g., Perreault and Bourhis, 1999), effectiveness of communication styles (e.g., Mitra and Webster, 1998), interpersonal influence (e.g., Gilly, Graham, Wolfinger, and Yale, 1998), and psychic distance (e.g., Johanson and

Vahlne, 1990). A problematic issue in determining how similarity influences decisions, however, is defining what is meant by similarity (Rogers and Bhowmik, 1971).

In the context of the processes of friendship formation and dissolution, Lazarsfeld and Merton (1954, p.23) proposed a set of terms for the study of the influence of similarity on interpersonal relationships. For the “tendency for friendships to form between those who are alike in some designated respect,” Lazarsfeld and Merton coined the term “homophily.” For the complementary “tendency for friendships to form between those who differ in some designated respect,” they suggested the term “heterophily.” Lazarsfeld and Merton understood homophily and heterophily as descriptive, not interpretative, concepts (1954, p.23, footnote). Nevertheless, they emphasized the utility of thinking about degrees of homophily and heterophily, rather than about heterophily and homophily as absolute states or conditions. Furthermore, Lazarsfeld and Merton (p.24) distinguished between tendencies related to similarity in terms of group-affiliation (status-homophily) and similarity in terms of a correspondence in the values of people in a relationship (value-homophily).

Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer (1970, p.12) theorized that either similarities or dissimilarities between the source and the receiver could increase the likelihood that the receiver would adopt the source’s position, if these similarities or dissimilarities were perceived to have instrumental value by the receiver. This proposition parallels the reasoning in Cronkhite and Liska (1976) on the relevance of perceived source functions in a given situation to source suitability evaluations by the receiver. Furthermore, Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer noted, on the basis of their review of research results, that



perceived source credibility appears to be influenced by factors (e.g. source expertise), which are conceptually different from those that define similarity and dissimilarity.

Rogers and Bhowmik (1971) discussed similarity and dissimilarity using the terms coined by Lazarsfeld and Merton, homophily and heterophily. Lazarsfeld and Merton (p. 23) intended “homophily” as a reference to the degree of correlation between how similar two people perceive each other to be and their likelihood of establishing a relationship (with a complementary meaning for “heterophily”). Rogers and Bhowmik simplified the definitions of homophily and heterophily and thus contributed to the reduction of these terms to a role as synonyms of “similarity” and dissimilarity,” respectively.

Homophily, in Rogers and Bhowmik (p.526), “refers to the degree to which pairs of individuals who interact are similar with respect to certain attributes, such as beliefs, values, education, social status, etc.” Of course, heterophily has the complementary definition for pairs of individuals who are different. Citing Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer (1970), Rogers and Bhowmik (p.532) concluded that to maximize the effectiveness of communications, a source and a receiver should be alike in some respects (i.e., homophilous) and different in others (i.e., heterophilous).

McCroskey, Richmond, and Daly (1975) proposed an instrument to measure perceived homophily in communication situations and defined homophily as similarity between the parties to the communication. The scale developed by McCroskey, Richmond, and Daly was based upon the idea of commonality of attitudes but recent studies have primarily adopted the notion of homophily as synonymous with similarity

(e.g., Mitra and Webster, 1998). Thus, in the recent marketing literature, we find discussions of the following sort:

(An important construct) in the influence of another individual as a Source of information is the similarity of two individuals, often termed *homophily*.

Homophily refers to the degree to which individuals in a dyad are congruent on a certain attributes, usually demographic variables [Rogers and Bhowmik 1971]. . .

The theory of homophily, conceptually labeled by Lazarsfeld and Merton [1954], purports that most human communication will occur between a Source and a Seeker who are alike, that is, homophilous. (Gilly, Graham, Wolfenbarger, and Yale, 1998, p. 85).

The practice of “loose terminology” (Lazarsfeld and Merton, 1954, p.23) regarding similarity appears hazardous, particularly in studies of source evaluations. Blair and Conner (1978), for example, found that employers made separate assessments of race (in this case, Black or White) and manner of speech (standard or non-standard English) in evaluating potential employees. If, as occurs in marketing studies, Blair and Conner had instead simply measured race effects, or the effects of manner of speech, their results would be difficult to interpret. This illustrates how the effects of two separate similarity-of-the-source cues can be confounded.

As discussed, therefore, marketing studies are vulnerable to imprecise cue manipulations of similarity (e.g., Webster, 1996). Nevertheless, the literature implies that receiver perceptions of the social standing of the source may be relevant to how the source is evaluated. In particular, receivers may make inferences about two categories of social traits of the source: (1) how similar the source is to the receiver and (2) the

comparative social status of the receiver (Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer, 1970; Rogers and Bhowmik, 1971). Because receiver perceptions of a source appear to be influenced by receiver inferences about the similarity and dissimilarity of the source with respect to the receiver, the concept of similarity must be considered in studies of source evaluations.

### Inferences about Source Credibility

#### Dimensions of Credibility

Although Cronkhite and Liska (1976) have argued that the dimensions of credibility cannot be defined except in the context of the particular communication situation, many attempts are reported in the literature to determine these dimensions with respect to inferences about the source (e.g., Bettinghaus, 1980; Bowers and Phillips, 1967; Hovland, 1953; Markham, 1965). In an influential conceptualization, Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz (1970) proposed that receivers evaluate sources in terms of three dimensions: Safety, Qualification, and Dynamism. "Safety" refers to a "general evaluation of the affiliative relationship between source and receiver, as perceived by the receiver." "Qualification" refers to receiver impressions of a source's expertise, intelligence, and prestige. "Dynamism" refers to perceptions of the source's energy, potency, boldness, and propensity to action.

As Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz observed (pp.574-575), their Safety dimension parallels the "trustworthiness" dimension proposed by Hovland (1953), while their Qualification dimension is similar to Hovland's "expertness" dimension. Because Safety is associated with affiliative source-receiver relationships and Qualification is associated with source-status (i.e., power, success, prestige), the Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz

conceptualization appears to link more closely the concepts of source credibility and similarity.

#### Evidence of Nomological Validity

As Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz recognized (pp.575-576), the “dynamism” dimension of source credibility appears to be unstable. In fact, the “dynamism” dimension has been found to be situationally dependent (Kleiven, 1979) and to influence source perceptions particularly when a receiver attributes negative consequences to the source (Kaplan and Sharp, 1974). This implies that inferences about source credibility are influenced by receiver perceptions of two source qualities, labeled “expertness” and “trustworthiness” by Hovland (1953) and “safety” and “qualification” by Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz (1970). A further implication, however, is that these two basic credibility dimensions can be manifested in different ways.

Concepts consistent with “expertness” and “trustworthiness” are echoed in studies of diverse types. In word-of-mouth research, the dimensions have been interpreted as “expertise” and “opinion leadership” (e.g., Gilly, Graham, Wolfenbarger, and Yale, 1998, p. 85). In retail sales research, the components of salesperson attributes preferred by respondents can be grouped into a competence factor (e.g., thoroughness, knowledge of market and buyer’s needs, preparation, technical education) and a trustworthiness factor (e.g., dependability, willingness to go to bat for the buyer, imagination in solving buyer problems) (Hawes, Rao, and Baker, 1993); and have been explicitly treated and manipulated as two independent factors (e.g., Sharma, 1990; Woodside and Davenport, 1974). In business sales research, both qualitative studies (Bashein and Markus, 1997) and quantitative studies (Humphreys and Williams, 1996)

have either relied upon or have confirmed that receivers can base their evaluations of seller credibility on two dimensions.

As noted above, the terms used for these two dimensions vary. For example, in the business sales literature, expertise is associated with the notion of “technical product attributes” (e.g., is the supplying firm capable of providing acceptable products?) and trustworthiness is associated with the notion of “interpersonal process attributes” (e.g., is the salesperson eager to satisfy me as a customer?) (Humphreys and Williams, 1996). Similarly, research on inferred communicator biases has been based on the concepts of a “knowledge bias” (i.e., related to competence or expertise) and a “reporting bias” (i.e., related to trustworthiness or safety) (Eagly, Wood, and Chaiken, 1978). The convergence among differing studies is evidence of the nomological validity of the two character dimensions as predictors of source credibility (Bagozzi, 1994, pp. 24-25), and supports the use of these two dimensions in studies of source evaluations.

#### Inferences about Source Suitability

Although two character dimensions may underlie the criteria receivers use in inferences about source *credibility*, inferences about source *suitability* appear to depend on the role the source plays in a given situation (e.g., Bettinghaus, 1980; Cronkhite and Liska, 1976; Rogers and Bhowmik, 1971; Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer, 1970). In a given situation, inferences about source expertise and trustworthiness may be used with a prior summary credibility assessment. Also, a prior summary credibility assessment may be augmented or modified by receiver reference to separate source cues, such as dynamism or source-receiver similarity (e.g., Applbau and Anatol, 1972; Kleiven 1979; Markham, 1965; Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer, 1970). In promotional business

communications, studies of source suitability must either test or control for the effects of at least three different issues: (1) aggregate or summary source credibility derived by receivers as discussed above, (2) receiver perceptions of the personal responsibility of the source, and (3) the role of the receiver as a buyer.

### Personal Responsibility of the Source

The concept of source responsibility is related to the notions of commission, foreseeability, and intentionality (Kaplan and Sharp, 1974). Source responsibility is related to a receiver's assessment of the source's foreknowledge of the potential consequences of having the receiver adopt the source's position. The lowest level of perceived source responsibility is associated with the idea of commission, which implies that the source is not likely to know of possible negative consequences for the receiver. The next level of perceived source responsibility is foreseeability, which carries the implication that the source does not know of possible negative consequences, but can foresee such consequences. The highest level of source responsibility is intentionality, which implies to the receiver that the source deliberately does not inform the receiver about likely negative consequences. In the context of person-based promotional communications, a source who is perceived by a receiver as acting as a communication vehicle for a firm may be evaluated differently than a source who is perceived as acting on his or her own behalf.

The reason is that the credibility of a source-as-a-vehicle may be perceived as less relevant than the credibility of the firm represented. Depending on the situation, the firm and not the person may be perceived as the responsible party by the receiver. An example of this notion is given by research into advertiser credibility or company

reputation (e.g., Goldberg and Hartwick, 1990). Thus, a sales representative for a well-known firm is likely to be evaluated in the context of that firm's reputation.

### Role of the Buyer

In addition to source responsibility attributions, a separate issue of importance in business promotions is the role of the buyer. In particular, implicit assumptions that professional buyers and consumers evaluate sources using similar criteria may not be warranted. A professional buyer is likely to operate in a more restricted and structured manner than is a consumer. Therefore, the functions expected of the source (i.e., the salesperson) are likely to be more tightly specified in the case of a professional buyer. Furthermore, the need to engage in negotiations is more likely in the case of a professional buyer than in the case of a consumer, particularly in the developed economies. Given the need for negotiations, a buyer may be more likely to assess cues related to source tendencies for compliance with buyer needs and demands.

Compliance in turn is related to the idea of differences in power between a source and a receiver (McGuire, 1985, p.262). Negotiators are likely to prefer to deal with opposing parties who are less powerful. This line of reasoning suggests that professional buyers may seek cues that confirm their own higher status relative to the salespersons with whom they deal. By extension, receiver perceptions of the relative status of the source may influence how the source is assessed.

Swan, Trawick, Rink, and Roberts (1988) surveyed 187 professional buyers and, through factor analysis, generated a four-component interpretation of criteria for determining whether a salesperson is worthy of trust. Except for honesty-related measures, which loaded on three out of the four factors, items related to a salesperson's

willingness to put the buyer's interests first accounted for two of the four factors found. The other two factors related to competence (i.e., the salesperson as a source of accurate information) and salesperson likeability.

Using a multivariate analysis of variance procedure to examine the responses of 173 purchasing executives, Hawes, Mast, and Swan (1989) generally confirmed the results of the Swan, Trawick, Rink, and Roberts (1988) study, and labeled the willingness-to-put-the-buyer-first component, "customer orientation." In a survey of 73 professional buyers, Humphreys and Williams (1996) operationalized "customer-oriented interaction processes" with items such as the following: "eagerness to satisfy me as a customer" and "being innovative in responding to customer needs." Thus, studies of salesperson perceptions by professional buyers seem to indicate that in this type of source-receiver relationship cues related to power and compliance become relevant. Additionally, these studies imply that receiver inferences about source trustworthiness may have a provisional nature (Hawes, Mast, and Swan, 1989).

In the case of consumers, evaluations of a source's suitability are likelier to be based on an initial assessment of the source's credibility. Nonetheless, the identification of the source with a well-known firm or brand may reduce the relevance of the source's personal attributes in the receiver's decision-making process. Furthermore, the implication that trustworthiness assessments are provisional may also be relevant in the case of consumers. Finally, these considerations, in general, support the position taken by Cronkhite and Liska (1976) on the need to define or control the criteria by which receivers evaluate the suitability of a source.



### Source Effects

The last component of the Cronkhite and Liska (1976) functional approach to credibility is related to the effects of the communication process on source behaviors or perceptions about a concept other than the source. On the basis of a meta-analysis of 114 studies related to source effects, Wilson and Sherrell (1993) concluded that, in studies reporting significant findings, source manipulations can account for 9% of the explained variance. Wilson and Sherrell (p.107) categorize the reported effects as psychological characteristics or observed behavior but do not explain which of these effects relate to the source and which to other concepts.

Studies in promotion-related settings have in fact reported evidence of source effects on receiver behaviors related to non-source concepts. Woodside and Davenport (1974) tested the effects of manipulations of salesperson expertise and customer-similarity cues on purchases of an innovative item (cassette player head cleaners) by consumers already purchasing a related item (music tapes). In addition to a control condition, four experimental conditions were tested in a store by manipulating rehearsed explanations a salesclerk gave to retail customers: expert/dissimilar, expert/similar, non-expert/dissimilar, and non-expert/similar. Woodside and Davenport found that in control and non-expert/dissimilar conditions resulted in additional item purchases in 13.3% of the trials. Similar/non-expert conditions increased sales by 22%, and expert/dissimilar conditions increased sales by 45%. In expert/similar conditions, 80% of the customers purchased the additional item: a six-fold increase in sales over control conditions. In a subsequent experiment, Woodside and Davenport (1976) manipulated salesperson expertise and the retail price of a product and found that increased salesperson expertise

shifted the aggregate demand curve of the customers in the trials to the right and reduced demand elasticity.

Fiore and DeLong (1984) conducted a study that required female subjects to select apparel (sweaters) appropriate for (imaginary) young women with various personality traits, and found consistent matches between apparel characteristics and putative user personalities. Friedman and Friedman (1979) manipulated three product categories (costume jewelry, vacuum cleaners, and cookies) and four endorser conditions (no-endorser control, typical consumer, expert, and celebrity) using professionally prepared printed advertisements, and found significant product-by-endorser interactions.

Webster (1996) manipulated ethnicity (two categories: Hispanic and Anglo) and sex of interviewers and found that Anglo and female interviewers elicited more response effort from interviewees. In a similar manipulation, Petroskius and Crocker (1989) found results indicating that a spokesperson's race and sex influence perceptions of an advertised product.

Grewal, Gotlieb, and Marmorstein (1994) manipulated source credibility in print advertisements for a consumer electronic product (VCR) by describing the spokesperson as an electrical engineer (high credibility) or as a car salesman (low credibility), and found that the high credibility source reduced respondent perceptions of product performance risk. Walker, Langmeyer, and Langmeyer (1992) manipulated source attributes by asking student respondents to imagine two celebrities (Madonna and Christie Brinkley) as endorsers of three types of products (bath towels, blue jeans, and VCRs), and reported that perceptions of the attributes of these products reflected the public image of the celebrities.

With the possible exception of the Woodside and Davenport (1974; 1976) results, the reported findings of source effects may be difficult to interpret without accepting implicit assumptions about the non-relevance of possible confounding variables (Mandler, 1959). Nevertheless, in general, manipulations of source cues appear to affect receiver perceptions about concepts other than the source (e.g., Cronkhite and Liska, 1976)

A recent example of a study of source effects in which manipulations appear to be more rigorously controlled is Gelinas-Chebat, Chebat, and Vaninsky (1996). The authors of this study used manipulations of a spokesperson's voice to test respondent perceptions of source credibility, attitudes to an advertised service, and buying intentions. The vocal qualities manipulated were voice intonation (variation in the speaker's pitch) and intensity (loudness).

The experiment tested the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty and Cacioppo, 1983). To induce higher and lower involvement levels, Gelinas-Chebat, Chebat, and Vaninsky manipulated the message in a manner believed to be relevant to the respondents (university students). The low involvement message invited the subjects to pick up an Automatic Teller Machine card and the high involvement message invited the subjects to inquire about student loans.

Gelinas-Chebat, Chebat, and Vaninsky (1996) found that several of their results were contrary to predictions of the Elaboration Likelihood Model. Vocal characteristics affected respondent attitudes about the advertised service in both high and low involvement conditions. Furthermore, the relationship between source credibility and attitudes towards a service was not found to be significantly different between the two

involvement conditions. Finally, the relationship between attitudes towards the service and buying intentions was not found to be significantly different.

The Gelinas-Chebat, Chebat, and Vaninsky (1996) results echo the general conclusions about the Elaboration Likelihood Model derived by Wilson and Sherrell (1993) in their meta-analysis of source effects studies. Wilson and Sherrell (p. 108) found twelve studies in their database that included an involvement manipulation. Of the four studies that did not reference the Elaboration Likelihood Model, one study failed to support the model. Of the eight studies that did reference the Elaboration Likelihood Model, three studies failed to support the model.

Research on source evaluations often takes a sociological approach (e.g., Bourhis, Giles, Leyens, and Tajfel, 1979; DeShields, 1992). Without discounting the value of the sociological perspective, an information processing approach, such as the one adopted in this proposal, appears more likely to facilitate an understanding of how source and non-source cues are integrated by a receiver in the process of evaluation. The equivocal results of tests of a widely used information-processing model of how receivers use persuasive cues, therefore, signal a need for additional theoretical work in this area.

### Summary

The literature review on source evaluations follows a functional, information-processing approach, based in part on Cronkhite and Liska's (1976) credibility process model. Although a linear account of the elements of receiver evaluations of a source is used to organize the review, current evidence indicates that information processing is interactive and transactional.

Cues are stimuli that guide responses and may operate below a conscious level. Cues that allow a receiver to make inferences about the similarity or dissimilarity between the receiver and the source appear to be important in the source evaluation process. Receivers seem to assess source and non-source cues jointly. Thus, researchers must consider the context in which evaluations are made.

In a business context, studies of source effects in persuasive communications distinguish between the source evaluations of consumers and those of professional buyers. In addition, these studies should control for the level of responsibility attributed by the receiver to the source in a given situation. Based on the literature review, at least three categories of receiver responses can be distinguished: inferences about source traits (such as expertise, relative status, and credibility), inferences about source suitability in the situation given, and responses related to the non-source concepts involved in the communication.

Receivers can process numerous source cues in evaluating the source. Thus, researchers should carefully structure their studies to minimize the confounding effects of extraneous variables.

## CHAPTER III

### GUIDING HYPOTHESES

This chapter assembles conclusions derived from the literature review and the corresponding discussion to generate a set of guiding hypotheses. The purpose of the guiding hypotheses is to direct the formulation of research hypotheses (Hunt, 1991, pp. 131-133). As discussed in the literature review, the possibility of confounding influences indicates the need for careful definition of the cues manipulated. Thus, the stipulations on which the guiding hypotheses are based are the following. First, the source is stipulated to be a sales representative of an unspecified company. Second, the receiver is stipulated to be a consumer, not a professional buyer. Third, product categories are familiar to the receiver, but no brands are specified. The guiding hypotheses are based on the use of vocal and product cues given these stipulations.

#### Vocal Cues

Although spoken communications are the principal means of human interaction, relatively few studies in a business context have been based on manipulations of vocal cues (Gelinias-Chebat, Chebat, & Vaninski, 1996). With the growing diversification of consumer and business markets, research on the influence of linguistic traits in promotion has become increasingly relevant (Dávila, 1998; Tsalikis, DeShields, & LaTour, 1991).

In particular, spoken accents constitute a linguistic trait that has received very limited attention in the marketing literature (Dávila, 1998).

### Accents as Cues

Stable groups of people develop shared patterns that shape their interactions (Adler, 1991, pp. 19-33; Hofstede, 1994). These patterns are learned and accepted as appropriate behaviors. Languages, dialects, and accents can be construed as examples of such patterns. Because communities, like individuals, can vary along numerous dimensions (Dávila, 1998), the characteristic patterns of a community can serve as cues about the traits of members of the community. Because a person's speech patterns tend to reflect the community to which he or she belongs, beliefs about that community can influence inferences about the person, when he or she speaks. For example, one dimension along which communities can vary is status. Therefore, a person's manner of speech, such as his or her accent, can lead to inferences about that person's status (Bradac, Kinsky, & Davies, 1976; Burgoon 1970; Mulac, 1976; Mulac & Rudd, 1977; Ryan & Carranza, 1976).

Accent effects on receiver evaluations of a source have been reported in educational, employment, promotional, and general social settings (Dávila, 1998). Students in the United States were found to rate speakers of standard English more favorably than speakers of a lower status accented English (Ryan & Carranza, 1975). Also in the United States, speakers of a lower status accented English have been found to earn significantly lower wages than speakers of standard English (Dávila, Bohara, & Saenz, 1993). In England and Canada, students were found to rate speakers with a higher status accent as more intelligent than speakers with a lower status accent (Bourhis, Giles,

& Lambert, 1975). The credibility and effectiveness of salespeople has been found to be affected by spoken accent in the United States and Latin America, in manipulations of foreign versus domestic accents (DeShields, 1992; Tsalikis, DeShields, & LaTour, 1991; Tsalikis, Ortiz-Buonafina, & LaTour, 1992). That individuals can evaluate familiar accents with precision has been found in studies in Europe, Latin America, Canada, and the United States (Berk-Seligson, 1984; Bourhis, Giles, Leyens, & Tajfel, 1979; Giles & Bourhis, 1976; Doty, 1998; Kleiven, 1979). In summary, therefore, the use of spoken accents as source cues appears to be justified for research purposes.

### Product Cues

As discussed in the literature review, numerous product cues have been manipulated in the literature (e.g., Bearden & Shimp, 1982; Chattopadhyay & Alba, 1988; Childers & Rao, 1992; Kamins, 1990). However, relatively few studies have attempted to define or control particular attributes of products: Instead, studies have generally been oriented towards measures of overall product evaluations (e.g., Kamins, 1990; Ohanian, 1991).

Ritchie (1974) analyzed individual differences in the perception of twelve leisure activities. Because several of these activities are associated with goods and services (e.g., golf, bowling, movies), Ritchie's study appears to be relevant to the definition of product attributes. The four dimensions of perception found in Ritchie's study are the following: active-passive, individual-group, simple-difficult to perform, and involving-time filling (Ritchie, 1974, p. 46).

Similarly, Feick and Higie (1992) demonstrated differential source effects by controlling for a defined product attribute: preference heterogeneity. Preference



heterogeneity is defined by "the extent to which individual tastes and preferences for a good or service vary across consumers (p. 10)," and is classified into two categories by Feick and Higie (1992, p. 10): high preference heterogeneity ("low consensus in evaluation"), and low preference heterogeneity ("high consensus in evaluation"). Thus, the definition and control of specific product cues in an experiment appears to be feasible (e.g., Kerlinger, 1986, p. 299; Mandler, 1959).

### Propositions

This study has been oriented by a series of general research questions. The first of these general questions relates to the influence of receiver attributes on evaluations of a source. The literature review and the corresponding discussion indicate that inferences about two categories of source traits may influence how a source will be evaluated. Whether these two categories, character traits and social traits, can be treated as separate predictors of assessments of source credibility is not clear.

A second basic research question concerns how message content influences receiver perceptions about the source. The discussion and the literature review imply that just as the source can influence inferences about the object of a communication, so can the attributes of an object cause a change in the perceived attributes of the source.

The final general question addressed in this study concerns the combined influence of source and message content cues on the manner in which a receiver evaluates a communication situation. The discussion of the preceding questions and the source credibility model proposed by Cronkhite and Liska (1976) imply that a receiver interprets the elements of a message as a unit.

From these overall considerations, a series of propositions or guiding hypotheses can be developed. First, speech patterns elicit receiver inferences about speaker traits and attributes. Thus, manipulations of speaker accents will induce changes in receiver evaluations of a speaker. Among the speaker attributes that appear to be signaled by a speaker's manner of speech are similarity to the receiver (e.g., Bourhis, Giles, Leyens, & Tajfel, 1979) and status with respect to the receiver (e.g., Ryan & Carranza, 1975). Source-receiver similarity inferred from vocal cues may lead a receiver to assume receiver-source status similarity (e.g., Adler, 1991). Thus, the following guiding hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis 1:** The level of attributed speaker-receiver status similarity is positively related to the level of manner-of-speech speaker-receiver similarity perceived by the receiver.

Similarity has been associated in the literature with trustworthiness (e.g., De la Zerda Flores, and Hopper, 1975) and expertise with status (e.g. Dávila, 1998). Furthermore, expertise attributions may be influenced by inferences about similarity (e.g., Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer, 1970) and trustworthiness (e.g., Hawes, Mast, & Swan, 1989). Thus, the following propositions or guiding hypotheses are presented:

**Hypothesis 2:** The level of inferred source trustworthiness is positively related to perceived source-receiver similarity.

**Hypothesis 3:** The level of inferred source expertise is positively related to perceived source-receiver similarity, inferred source status, and inferred source trustworthiness.

On the other hand, inferences about social traits may be conceptually separate from inferences about character traits (e.g., Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer, 1970). Thus, receiver inferences about social traits and about character traits may be separate predictors of overall receiver evaluations of the source. In particular, inferences about source credibility appear to depend upon inferences about source similarity, status, expertise and trustworthiness (Hovland, 1953; Simons, Berkowitz, & Moyer, 1970; Ohanian, 1990).

The saliency of a particular cue in inferences about source credibility appears to be situationally bound. The Cronkhite and Liska (1976) proposal and the optimal communicator effectiveness propositions of Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer (1970) and Rogers and Bhowmik imply that source credibility inferences and similarity attributions will influence overall source suitability evaluations. The following guiding hypotheses are therefore proposed:

Hypothesis 4: Inferred source credibility will be positively related to attributed source similarity and status.

Hypothesis 5: Inferred source credibility will be positively related to inferred source expertise and trustworthiness.

Hypothesis 6: Inferred source suitability will be positively related to attributed source similarity and inferred source credibility.

Through qualitative analysis, McCracken (1989) has theorized that products acquire meaning through communication processes and can convey this meaning to consumers. Experiments appear to support the notion that evaluations of people associated with a product influence perceptions of the product (Hamid, 1972; Kamins,

1990). Similarly, perceptions about products appear to influence perceptions of people (Fortenberry, MacLean, Morris, & O'Connell, 1978).

Therefore, given equivalent objects of interest, manipulations of associated but external cues should affect evaluative decisions related to the object of interest. The discussion of the literature implies that, given cues both about the product and about the source, perceived product attributes may be adjusted by source-related cues. Similarly, perceived source attributes may be adjusted by product-related cues. Thus, with respect to product and source cues in a promotional message directed at consumers, the following guiding hypotheses are derived:

**Hypothesis 7:** Both product and source cues will influence receiver evaluations of a product.

**Hypothesis 8:** Given identical product cues, product attribute evaluations will vary directly with associated source cues.

**Hypothesis 9:** Given identical source cues, source attribute evaluations will vary directly with associated product cues.

### **Summary**

This chapter proposes nine guiding hypotheses related to the manner in which vocal cues and product cues can influence receiver evaluations of a speaker and of a product, given consumers as buyers. The first three hypotheses adopt the position that the various receiver inferences about character and social traits are interdependent. The next three hypotheses are based on the idea that these inferences can be treated as separate predictors of overall assessments of the source. The two following hypotheses are related to the influences of product cues and source evaluations on evaluations of a product. The

final hypothesis is concerned with the influence of product cues on inferences about the source.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is concerned with questions about the influence of source and product cues on a receiver's inferences and general evaluations related to the source and to the product. A functional, information-processing approach informs the research, which was experimental in nature and involved manipulations of treatments and conditions for the collection of survey data.

The growing internationalization of business implies a need for research in marketing environments that have not been as extensively studied as have the United States and Europe. As Sheth and Sisodia (1999) have observed, increasing consumer and business market diversity is acting as a change driver in established market-centric concepts, which were derived from studies of well-known consumer and business populations. Furthermore, more research into linguistic cue effects in marketing settings is needed (a) because scant marketing research has been reported related to this most basic type of human communications and (b) because interactions among linguistically diverse groups of buyers and sellers are increasing (Dávila, 1998; Gelinas-Chebat, Chebat, & Vaninsky, 1996; Tsalikis, DeShields, and LaTour, 1991).

In addition, "the main technical function of research design is *to control variance* (Kerlinger, 1986, p. 284)." Experimental studies, therefore, require that confounding

effects be held to a minimum and that experimental subjects be as well matched as is reasonable (Miller, 1991, p.23). As noted in earlier discussion, however, the control of unwanted systematic variability in studies of source effects is both important and difficult, because humans appear to evaluate each other in reference to multiple cues. These considerations signify that not only should manipulations be well defined but also that the possibility of extraneous variable influence on experimental results should be reduced by design.

Together, the need for research in less-studied marketing contexts, the need for more research on linguistic cue effects, and the requirement for control of variance justify the choice of a foreign but internally homogeneous research setting. The specific setting selected for the research is the municipality of Talca, a mid-sized community in central Chile with well-established industrial, commercial, agricultural, educational, and service sectors. By selecting a regionally, ethnically, and culturally homogeneous population, the confounding effects of the corresponding influences are likely to be controlled. Aside from socioeconomic categorization, respondent variability in sex, age, occupation, and psychographic dimensions will not be controlled. Hence, the expectation is that experimental results will be generalizable along these respondent characteristics.

### Experimental Design

Figure 2 illustrates the experimental design. Information provided by local college faculty familiar with speech patterns in Talca suggested that local residents could be grouped into three accent classifications, corresponding to upper, middle, and lower socioeconomic class divisions. In addition, prior University of Talca research had established the boundaries of upper, middle, and lower class neighborhoods in the city

(Rojas-Méndez, 1995). The research, therefore, is based on trials with samples drawn from each of the three categories of neighborhoods.

### Sample and Data Collection

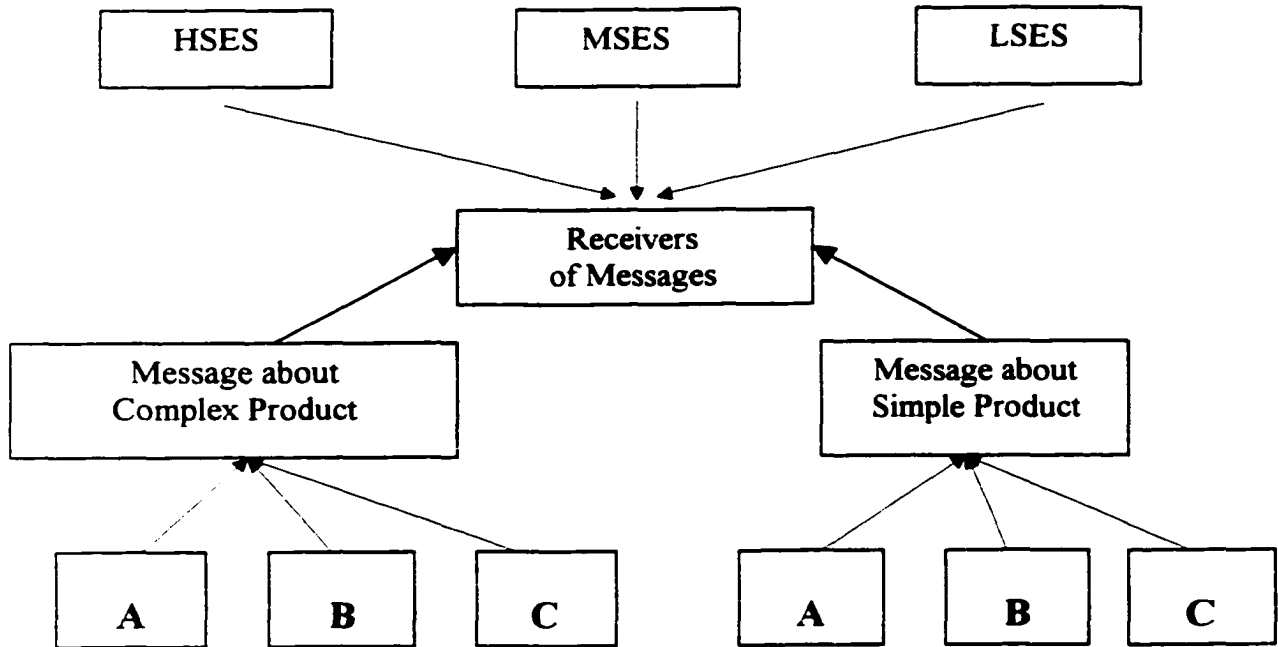
A message for each of two products was recorded in three accents: upper class, middle class, and lower class. Thus, six recordings, one for each of the accent-product combinations, were used in the survey. Individually, respondents heard only one of these combinations. Collectively, however, respondents from each of the three socioeconomic classes heard all combinations. Thus, the experimental design produced eighteen cells: three speaker accents by two products by three socioeconomic classes of respondents.

The use of categorical treatments and metric criterion variables implies the use of analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedures. Although additional statistical procedures, including correlation and regression analysis, were utilized in processing the data collected from the proposed field experiment, the research design is predicated on the MANOVA procedure. Multivariate analysis of variance, like all inferential statistical techniques, is based on sets of assumptions. In the case of MANOVA, the assumptions are the following (Bray & Maxwell, 1985):

1. Observations are derived from a random sample of the population being studied.
2. Observations are statistically independent.
3. Within groups, the dependent variables are multivariate normal.
4. Across groups, the variance-covariance matrices are equal.



**Figure 2: Experimental Design**



**Explanation of Illustration**

**Neighborhoods surveyed**

HSES: Upper class neighborhood

MSES: Middle class neighborhood

LSES: Lower class neighborhood

**Speaker accents utilized**

A: Upper class accent

B: Middle class accent

C: Lower class accent

The research was conducted by selecting a disproportional stratified sample (Zikmund, 1994, p. 374) drawn from neighborhoods according to socioeconomic class. Because a probability sample was drawn and single trials were run with individual respondents, the first and second MANOVA assumptions were met. MANOVA is robust to departures from multivariate normality. Regarding the assumption of equality of covariance matrices, however, for unequal sample sizes MANOVA test statistics appear not to be robust (Bray & Maxwell, 1985, p. 34).

Thus, a balanced design was sought with equal numbers of respondents from each of the three socioeconomic classes. An objective in this study was to obtain at least the minimum number of observations per cell, which is understood for MANOVA to be one more than the number of dependent variables. Therefore, as a minimum, observations were required from 162 respondents. A satisfactory number of respondents would be twenty per cell, or 360 observations in all, as recommended in Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black (1998, p. 342), to meet assumptions related to effect sizes and power requirements.

### Stimulus Materials

The preparation of stimulus materials involves three aspects: recording appropriate accents, selecting two products, and preparing uniform promotional messages. The only source cue desired in the experiment is spoken accent. Because source-receiver similarities and dissimilarities appear to influence a receiver's source-related inferences and evaluations, three accents corresponding to the selected responding groups were required for the field experiment.

### Selection of Accents

To obtain appropriate spoken accents, speakers from areas identified as representative of the required socioeconomic categories were approached and asked to read and record prepared promotional messages for an experiment. To help the speakers feel confident and familiar with the materials to be read, they were encouraged (a) to practice the messages repeatedly and (b) to re-record if necessary. Three recordings for each level were retained after being judged as most representative by the two interviewers, who were doing this as part of a senior thesis project.

To control for researcher and interviewer bias, independent judges were recruited to judge and classify the recordings on the basis of how closely the recorded speaker's pronunciation patterns matched the required spoken accents. To control for misclassification by the judges, an actor recorded the messages in Talca accents different from his own. These imitation-accent messages were mixed with genuine-accent recordings and presented without additional information to the judges. Accent evaluations by judges who mistook the imitation accents for genuine accents were discarded. Three judges did not appear to mistake the imitation accents for genuine accents and, on the basis of their collective assessment, one recorded accent was selected as most representative for each socioeconomic group.

### Selection of Products

To control for extraneous product-related cues, the field experiment was based on messages about unbranded products. That is, although several related brand or firm names are well known to Chilean consumers, no brand or firm names were included in the messages for the field experiment. Two products were selected on the basis of three

criteria. First, each product category selected had to be known and potentially acquirable by respondents from each of the three socioeconomic classes. Second, the product categories selected had to be characterized by low preference heterogeneity (Feick & Higie, 1992). Third, the selected products had to differ on a measurable attribute. The selected product attribute was product complexity, because prior research suggested that consumer product perceptions vary along this dimension (Ritchie, 1974, p. 48).

To determine suitable products for the field experiment, a written pre-test was conducted among 61 undergraduates at the University of Talca. Appendix 2 contains the instrument used, and Appendix 3 is a translation into English of the Spanish original. The pre-test also served to test the reliability of the corresponding scale, which was created to conduct this research. One requirement of the functional approach is that source effects on receiver perceptions of concepts other than the source should be measured. Hence, a contribution of this pre-test to the study relates to testing the applicability of the product complexity instrument to the field experiment. Table 1 lists the products included in the pre-test, the mean complexity ratings for each product, and the product and overall coefficient alpha calculated for the proposed product complexity scale.

On the basis of the above mentioned criteria, discussions with Talca faculty and students, and the results of the pre-test, two products were selected for the field test: cellular phones and health insurance. Both product categories are service oriented, appear to be low in preference heterogeneity (e.g., Feick & Higie, 1992), and are considered well known to the targeted respondents. In addition, the two products appear to be different in perceived product complexity (e.g., Ritchie, 1974, p. 48).

**Table 1: Product Complexity Pretest**

Product	Mean Score	Cronbach Alpha
VCR	17.9	.83
Savings account	19.8	.80
Computer	25.5	.82
Securities	31.7	.88
Cellular phone	14.6	.86
Health insurance	22.8	.84
Microwave oven	15.9	.90
Retirement fund	23.1	.80
Combined/overall	21.3	.89

### Promotional Message

Although a field experiment is intrinsically subject to variability in settings, the components of the message and the medium by which it is communicated can be controlled. To reduce variability due to structural features of the message, the message was crafted to be extremely similar for both types of products. The basic tenor of the message draws from the sales pitch successfully tested by DeShields (1992). The product messages are listed below. Each Spanish version is followed by its English translation.

#### 1a. Health Insurance Message (Original version in Spanish):

*Sabe usted, me da gusto representar a esta empresa de seguros de salud.*

*Muchas ISAPRE's ofrecen estos seguros porque la protección de la salud es muy importante para cualquier persona. Casi todo mundo sabe que la clase de servicios médicos que garantizan las ISAPRE's varía, según el costo del seguro que se compre.*

*Pero, para la mayoría de las personas, puede ser complicado tener que escoger entre los diferentes tipos de cobertura. Por esta razón, en mi empresa analizamos la situación de cada cliente a nivel personal y, por un precio competitivo, le ofrecemos la cobertura médica más conveniente según sus necesidades y posibilidades.*

**1b. Health Insurance Message (English translation):**

You know, I like representing this health insurance company. Many ISAPRE's (Chilean health insurance companies) offer these insurance policies because health protection is important for anyone. Almost everyone knows that kind of medical services guaranteed by ISAPRE's varies, depending on how much the purchased insurance costs.

But, for most people, choosing among different types of coverage can be confusing. That is why, in my company we look at each client's situation on a personal level and, for a competitive price, we offer him (or her) the most convenient medical coverage in accordance with his (or her) needs and budget.

**2a. Cellular Telephone Message (Original version in Spanish):**

*Sabe usted, me da gusto representar a esta empresa de telefonía celular. Muchas compañías ofrecen estos servicios porque para cualquier persona es muy importante estar bien comunicado. Casi todo mundo sabe que el nivel de servicios de telefonía celular varía, dependiendo de diferentes costos y condiciones.*

*Pero, para la mayoría de las personas, puede ser complicado tener que escoger entre las diferentes opciones de servicio. Por esta razón, en mi empresa evaluamos la situación de cada cliente a nivel personal y, por un precio competitivo, le ofrecemos el servicio de telefonía celular más conveniente según sus necesidades y posibilidades.*

**2b. Cellular Telephone Message (English translation):**

**You know, I like representing this cellular telephone company. Many companies offer these services because staying in touch is important for anyone. Almost everyone knows that the level of cellular phone services varies, depending on different costs and conditions.**

**But, for most people, choosing among different service options can be confusing. That is why, in my company we look at each client's situation on a personal level and, for a competitive price, we offer him (or her) the most convenient cellular phone service in accordance with his (or her) needs and budget.**

**By making the lexical and syntactic features of the two messages uniform, the expectation was that unwanted variance due to these features would be controlled. Hence, with respect to experimental stimuli, the deliberately manipulated cues related to the source and to the product were expected to be the sole influence on receiver perceptions.**

**Research Hypotheses**

**The study involved empirical tests based on the guiding hypotheses discussed in the previous chapter. Empirical testing may entail the reformulation and extension of the original hypotheses into research hypotheses (Hunt, 1991, pp.131-133).**

The first of the guiding hypotheses is based on the idea that inferences made by a receiver about source-receiver similarity and about source status are correlated. The literature appears not to take a position on whether receivers are likely to associate the two estimates. However, the position taken in the guiding hypothesis is in the affirmative on logical grounds, recognizing that a reasonable argument can be made for the perceptual distinction of the two constructs. In addition, an expectation can be derived from the literature that receivers will infer that speakers with higher class accents have higher socioeconomic status (e.g. Dávila, 1998). Thus,

**H<sub>1</sub>: A positive and significant correlation will obtain between receiver estimates of receiver-source similarity with respect to socioeconomic status and corresponding receiver estimates regarding source manner-of-speech.**

**H<sub>1a</sub>: Receiver estimates of the socioeconomic status of speakers will vary directly with class accents. The highest socioeconomic status estimates will correspond to upper class accents and the lowest status estimates will correspond to lower class accents.**

The second guiding hypothesis proposes that perceived source-receiver similarity and inferred source trustworthiness are positively related. Although Simons, Berkowitz and Moyer (1970) noted that similarity and status assessments appear to be conceptually different from trustworthiness and expertise inferences, the proposed hypothesis takes the position that receiver estimates of source similarity and trustworthiness are likely to move in the same direction (i.e., positive or negative). The Cronkhite and Liska model (1976) implies that changing the situation will change inferences about the source. Thus,

**H<sub>2</sub>: A positive and significant correlation will obtain between receiver estimates of source trustworthiness and of source-receiver similarity in manner-of-speech.**



H<sub>2a</sub>: Given products of differing perceived complexity, receiver estimates of source trustworthiness will vary directly with class accents for complex products, but will be higher for same class accents for simpler products.

The third guiding hypothesis is based on similar considerations as those discussed with respect to the second hypothesis. In addition, the third hypothesis considers the evidence from the literature that inferences about source trustworthiness may be provisional and may underlie additional inferences about source traits (Hawes, Mast, & Swan, 1989). Hence, the third guiding hypothesis proposes that inferences about source expertise are related to perceptions of source-receiver similarity and inferences about source status and trustworthiness. Sharply lower expertise ratings are likely for sources perceived as being of lower status than the receiver. Thus,

H<sub>3</sub>: Receiver estimates of source-receiver similarity, source status, and source trustworthiness are positively related to receiver estimates about source expertise.

H<sub>3a</sub>: Receiver estimates of source expertise will be higher for sources with upper class accents than for sources with lower class accents.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth guiding hypotheses are concerned with two overall receiver evaluations of the source: (1) whether the source is credible, and (2) whether the source is suitable. Also, these hypotheses are consistent with the premise that social traits and character traits act as separate predictors of receiver assessments of the source. The Cronkhite and Liska (1976) functional approach implies that receiver evaluations of general source traits precede the more specific evaluation of a source's suitability in a given situation. Furthermore, the sixth guiding hypothesis proposes that source-receiver

similarity will influence receiver estimates of source suitability. In addition, the literature suggests a relationship between source status and overall source evaluations. Thus,

**H<sub>4</sub>: Receiver estimates of source-receiver similarity in manner of speech and source status will be positively related to receiver estimates of source credibility.**

**H<sub>4a</sub>: Receiver estimates of speaker credibility will be higher for speakers with accents of similar or higher class than their own than for speakers with lower class accents.**

**H<sub>5</sub>: Receiver estimates of source trustworthiness and expertise will be positively related to receiver estimates of source credibility.**

**H<sub>6</sub>: Receiver estimates of source-receiver similarity in manner of speech and source credibility will be positively related to receiver estimates of source suitability.**

**H<sub>6a</sub>: Receiver estimates of source suitability will be higher for sources with similar or higher class accents than for sources with accents perceived as corresponding to a class lower than that of the receiver.**

The prior hypotheses are interrelated. The last three hypotheses are predicated on the notion that source and non-source cues will be processed jointly by the receiver. The design of the stimulus materials and the interview process as planned lead to the expectation that respondents will process the source and product cues simultaneously.

As designed, the experiment permits an evaluation of two types of source effects. The first type of source effects concerns the influence of inferences about source characteristics on corresponding inferences about related product attributes. This will be tested in the experiment by examining the relationship between source accent cues and receiver evaluations of product complexity. The second type concerns the influence of

the source in conditions of receiver ambivalence. The proposed experiment simulates this situation by construing the independent observations of *a priori* and *a posteriori* receiver assessments of product necessity as choices under conditions of ambivalence, in which what varies is the source. Thus,

H<sub>7</sub>: Receiver *a posteriori* estimates of product necessity will be significantly related to source accent and product type interactions.

H<sub>8</sub>: Given a specific product, receiver estimates of product complexity will be significantly related to source accent.

H<sub>8a</sub>: Higher status accents will increase the perceived complexity of the product and lower status accents will reduce the perceived complexity of the product.

H<sub>9</sub>: Given a particular accent, evaluations of source socioeconomic status will be significantly related to product type.

H<sub>9a</sub>: A more complex product will increase the perceived socioeconomic status of the source and simpler product will reduce the perceived socioeconomic status of the source.

### Instruments

Appendixes 6 and 7 contain the original Spanish version and the English translation, respectively, of the questionnaire used in the field survey. Section 1, which was administered before the recording was played, pertains primarily to general demographic information about the respondents. In addition, the items in "A" include two questions intended to define respondent pre-dispositions. Question 8 measures respondent attitudes regarding the necessity of six products, among which are included the products

used in the experiment. Question 10 is a control question to determine the respondent's subjective self-rating of personal socioeconomic status.

Section 2 was administered after the recording was played and measures the following constructs: trustworthiness, expertise, suitability, similarity in manner-of-speech, necessity of product, overall credibility, product complexity, and source socioeconomic status. Interviews with Talca faculty and students indicated that the items and scales reflected the constructs. Similarly, through extensive interviews, care was taken to ensure that the terms used are neither unusual nor carry unwanted connotations in common Chilean usage.

Except for the item related to necessity of product in message, which like the item of source status is a single measure scale, the scales were pre-tested with students in Talca and found to be reliable. The pre-test was conducted using the questionnaire in Appendix 4. Appendix 5 contains the English translation. Table 2 summarizes the results.

As indicated in Table 2, the scales developed for this research appear to be reliable. Except for the "expertise" scale, all scales appear to function reliably in their original form. Because the pre-test was conducted with college students, the decision was made to use the full-length versions of the scales.

Further, it is noted that of the two single item measures listed, only the measure of socioeconomic status was tested with the student sample (see Appendixes 4 and 5); and used to obtain respondent estimates of his or her own, as well as the speaker's, socioeconomic status. However, the product attitude measure was also be used twice in the field study: first, to capture the respondent's *a priori* attitude regarding the necessity

of the product; and, after the recording is played, to capture the respondent's a posteriori product attitude.

**Table 2: Results of Pretest of Reliability of Scales**

Construct Measured	Original Scale	Alpha (1)*	Reduced Scale	Alpha (2)**
Trustworthiness	7	.88	4	.88
Expertise	5	.49	3	.83
Similarity	4	.78	3	.84
SE Status	1	Single item	1	Single item
Credibility	7	.87	5	.87
Product Complexity	6	.82	6	.82
Suitability	4	.86	3	.88
Product Attitude	1	Single item	1	Single item

\*Coefficient alpha: based on student pre-test; scale with all original items included.

\*\* Coefficient alpha: based on student pre-test; scale reduced by deleting items.

### Summary

Kerlinger (1986, p. 280) has noted that the two basic purposes of research design are "(1) to provide answers to research questions and (2) to control variance." This chapter lists research hypotheses that will test the relationships suggested by the guiding hypotheses, which in turn derive from the research questions that drive this study.

The selection of residents of the municipality of Talca, Chile as the population of interest for the proposed research is justified on the basis of three considerations. First, the growing internationalization of business implies the need for more research emphasis in marketing environments outside the much-studied United States and European contexts. Second, the research is based on the use of a key linguistic cue, source accent. A better understanding of the influence of linguistic cues is needed because of the growing diversity of consumer markets, both internationally and within developed

Western nations. Although spoken accents vary in central Chile, the range of diversity is not as extensive as in multi-cultural environments, and this facilitates accent selection for experimental purposes. Finally, as implied in the second consideration, the study of an ethnically, regionally, and culturally homogeneous population reduces unwanted systematic variance.

In preparation for the proposed research, several pre-tests were completed. First, a pre-test was conducted that served to discriminate among products on the basis of product complexity. The pre-test was used to define the experimental product cues. Second, using independent judges, recordings with accents appropriate to the experimental design were generated. Third, pre-tests with Chilean undergraduates confirmed the reliability of the scales developed for the proposed research. In addition, in-depth interviews and discussions with Chilean faculty and students supported expectations with respect to the face validity of the constructs connected with this proposal. Finally, all reasonable precautions were taken to ensure that the materials prepared in Spanish were free of unwanted connotations given the experimental context.

## CHAPTER V

### RESULTS

This chapter describes the results of statistical procedures conducted to test the hypotheses presented in the previous chapters. The procedures utilized for this purpose included comparisons of means, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and analysis of variance.

#### Descriptive Statistics

Four hundred and fifty respondents completed survey forms. As required in the research design, equal numbers of respondents from each of three socioeconomic backgrounds, defined by place of residence, were randomly surveyed. The field survey was conducted over the course of several weeks by paid assistants, who were supervised by two graduating business students from the University of Talca. By following the mapping of Talca defined in Rojas-Méndez (1995), questionnaires were collected from 150 residents of lower socioeconomic class neighborhoods, and an identical number of questionnaires was collected in both middle and upper socioeconomic class neighborhoods. For the purposes of this discussion, a socioeconomic neighborhood classification will henceforth be abbreviated as SES. Other than this quota-filling requirement, no constraint was imposed on the random participation of respondents.

As detailed in Table 3, the final sample included more male (57.6%) than female respondents (42.4%). The proportion of males to females was a consequence of the random selection process: no deliberate effort was made to ensure equal numbers of males and females when asking potential respondents in their households to participate. Whether Chilean males are more likely to participate in the surveys than are their female counterparts is an open question that was not pursued in this research. Nevertheless, more males than females did participate in each of the three socioeconomic categories. Using analysis of variance, an examination of responses, including sex as a predictor variable for several key indicators in this research showed no significant differences between male and female respondents. Thus, the imbalance between male and female respondents appears not to have biased survey results on the variables being explored in this research.

**Table 3: Sex of Respondents**

Sex	Entire Sample		Lower SES		Middle SES		Higher SES	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Male	259	57.6	90	60.0	86	57.3	83	55.3
Female	191	42.4	60	40.0	64	42.7	67	44.7
Total	450	100.0	150	100.0	150	100.0	150	100.0

Of the entire sample, approximately three-quarters of respondents were between the ages of 21 and 44 and four of five were non-students. Table 4 indicates that the proportion of respondents under 21 years of age was greater among lower SES respondents than among middle and upper SES respondents: 14% for lower SES versus 4% and 2% among middle and upper SES respondents, respectively. Furthermore, fewer than 3% of lower SES respondents reported being university students at undergraduate



and graduate levels. In contrast, almost 9% of middle SES respondents and over 11% of upper SES respondents replied that they are either undergraduate or graduate college students, as seen in Table 5. For other studies, the results also indicate a lower proportion of participants among lower SES respondents: 4.7% among lower SES as compared with 20% and 10.7% among middle and upper SES respondents respectively.

**Table 4: Age of Respondents**

Age	Entire Sample		Lower SES		Middle SES		Higher SES	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
<21	30	6.7	21	14.0	6	4.0	3	2.0
21-30	175	38.9	54	36.0	72	48.0	49	32.7
31-44	160	35.5	48	32.0	48	32.0	64	42.7
45-64	73	16.2	23	15.3	21	14.0	29	19.3
=>65	12	2.7	4	2.7	3	2.0	5	3.3
Total	450	100.0	150	100.0	150	100	150	100.0

**Table 5: Student Status of Respondents**

Status	Entire Sample		Lower SES		Middle SES		Higher SES	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Nonstudent	363	80.7	139	92.7	107	71.3	117	78.0
Undergrad.	8	1.8	3	2.0	3	2.0	2	1.3
Grad.	26	5.8	1	0.7	10	6.7	15	10.0
Other	53	11.8	7	4.7	30	20.0	16	10.7
Total	450	100.0	150	100.0	150	100	150	100.0

Respondents were asked to report their usual means of transportation. Table 6 presents the results. To reduce the likelihood of non-responses due to a reluctance to reveal a low status mode of transport (in central Chile, bicycles), respondents were asked to answer questions with two options per category. The first category included bicycles and buses, the second included buses and taxicabs, and the third included taxicabs and personal automobiles. The results lend face validity to the socioeconomic categorizations

of the respondents. 80% of the lower SES respondents reported using bikes and buses. Almost 60% of the middle SES respondents reported using buses and cabs. In contrast, 74% of upper SES respondents reported using cabs or personal automobiles. These results appear to confirm that the neighborhoods selected served to distinguish among socioeconomic groupings in the city in which the survey was conducted.

**Table 6: Reported Mode of Transport**

Mode	Entire Sample		Lower SES		Middle SES		Higher SES	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Bike or Bus	137	30.4	132	88.0	5	3.3	0	0.0
Bus or Cab	141	31.3	16	10.7	86	57.3	39	26.0
Cab or Car	167	37.1	2	1.3	54	36.0	111	74.0
Null	5	1.1	0	0.0	5	3.3	0	0.0
Total	450	100.0	150	100.0	150	100.0	150	100.0

### Tests of Hypotheses

#### Tests of Hypotheses 1 and 1a

Hypothesis 1 proposes a significant and positive correlation between receiver estimates of source similarity with respect to socioeconomic status and corresponding estimates regarding source manner-of-speech. Hence, separate correlation analysis procedures for each SES group were conducted. Table 7 presents the results.

Test results were as follows: as hypothesized, identified similarity estimates were positively correlated for both middle SES (0.586) and upper SES (0.453) respondents at a 0.01 level of significance. For lower SES respondents, however, results did not accord with the hypothesis. Although the relevant similarity estimates were significantly

**Table 7: Estimates of Source Similarity and Source SES**

Respondent Group	Similarity-status correlation	
	Pearson Correlation	Significance (2-tailed)
Lower SES	-.451	.000
Middle SES	.586	.000
Higher SES	.453	.000

correlated at a 0.01 level, this correlation was negative (-0.451) rather than positive.

Hypothesis 1, therefore, is only partially supported.

Hypothesis 1a predicts that receiver estimates of the socioeconomic status of speakers will vary directly with class accents. Thus, mean respondent estimates of the status of speakers with accents typical of higher socioeconomic classes should be higher than those for speakers with accents that characterize the lower classes. An analysis of mean scores was conducted for estimates of speaker socioeconomic status across both product categories. The results are presented in Table 8. Lower, middle, and upper SES respondents appear to agree that upper class accents imply higher socioeconomic status. However, lower SES respondents appear to rate low SES accents differently than do middle SES respondents.

**Table 8: Receiver Estimates of Speaker SES by Accent**

Accent	Lower SES respondents		Middle SES respondents		Higher SES respondents	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Lower	6.06	1.45	2.44	.81	5.86	2.70
Middle	5.96	1.35	5.86	.57	5.92	1.44
Upper	8.44	.73	8.34	.89	6.86	.70

On a nine-point scale, whereas the mean estimate of low SES accented speaker status was 6.06 among lower SES respondents, the mean estimate for the same speakers

by middle SES respondents was 2.44. In fact, on average, lower SES respondents estimated the status of low SES accented speakers to be slightly higher than that of the middle SES accented speakers: 6.06 versus 5.96, respectively. Lower SES and middle SES respondents had similar average estimates of high SES accented speaker status: 8.44 versus 8.34, respectively.

In contrast, upper SES respondents rated high SES accented speakers with a mean score of 6.86. Furthermore, like lower SES respondents, upper SES respondents appeared to perceive little difference in status between lower and middle class accented speakers; although upper SES respondents did estimate a somewhat higher status for middle SES accents than for low SES accents. Taken together, these results appear to be generally in keeping with the underlying expectations of Hypothesis 1a, but not completely consistent with the predicted results. Therefore, Hypothesis 1a is only partially supported.

#### Tests of Hypotheses 2 and 2a

Hypothesis 2 predicts that receiver estimates of speaker trustworthiness will be positively correlated with source-receiver similarity in manner-of-speech. For all three SES groupings of respondents, the corresponding correlations were found to be significant at a level of 0.01. Table 9 presents the results of the correlation analysis. For middle SES respondents the correlation was .805, while for upper SES respondents the correlation was .403. In a result similar to that corresponding to tests of Hypothesis 1, however, a significant but negative correlation (-.277) was found for lower SES respondents. Thus Hypothesis 2 is not fully supported.

**Table 9: Estimates of Trustworthiness and Similarity**

Respondent Group	Trustworthiness-similarity correlation	
	Pearson Correlation	Significance (2-tailed)
Lower SES	-.277	.000
Middle SES	.805	.000
Higher SES	.403	.000

Hypothesis 2a provides two predictions. The first prediction is that for complex products a higher SES accent will result in higher estimates of speaker trustworthiness regardless of respondent SES background. As Table 10 indicates, the predicted relationship holds only for upper SES respondents. For both lower SES and middle SES respondents, a middle SES accent appears to elicit the highest estimates of speaker trustworthiness.

**Table 10: Trustworthiness and Accent: Health Insurance**

Accent	Lower SES respondents		Middle SES respondents		Higher SES respondents	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Lower	20.16	5.10	15.16	2.59	12.56	2.99
Middle	30.84	2.64	32.20	2.25	27.36	5.48
Upper	29.32	3.90	26.32	6.38	31.80	3.25

The second prediction in Hypothesis 2a is that, for simple products, speaker trustworthiness estimates will be higher for speakers perceived as similar to the corresponding respondents. Table 11 presents the results of the corresponding analysis. In comparison with estimates given complex products, trustworthiness estimates of lower SES accented speakers drop when respondents come from both middle and upper SES

**Table 11: Trustworthiness and Accent: Cell Phones**

Accent	Lower SES respondents		Middle SES respondents		Higher SES respondents	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Lower	22.44	7.28	8.92	3.08	9.88	2.29
Middle	31.20	4.24	32.64	3.64	26.44	2.53
Upper	28.24	2.63	24.84	5.60	33.08	2.34

backgrounds: from 15.2 to 9 and from 12.6 to 9.9, for middle and upper SES respondents respectively. As with messages pitching a more complex product, lower and middle SES respondents appear to estimate that middle SES speakers are more trustworthy than either lower or upper SES accented speakers. The results do not support Hypothesis 2a.

#### Tests of Hypotheses 3 and 3a

Hypothesis 3 predicts that source-receiver similarity, source status, and source trustworthiness are positively related to receiver estimates of source expertise. A linear regression analysis was conducted on the data corresponding to each of the three SES groupings of respondents. Adjusted R-squares ranged from .459 to .910, suggesting high levels of variance explained. Tolerance values were above .90, indicating limited multicollinearity influence on the least-square estimates.

For lower SES respondents, estimates of speaker socioeconomic status and speaker trustworthiness were positively associated with estimates of speaker expertise, with standardized coefficients of .344 and .478 respectively, at a 0.01 level of significance. Source-receiver similarity, however, was negatively associated with estimates of speaker expertise at a 0.10 significance level, with a standardized coefficient of -.126. As will be discussed in the next chapter, these results may imply merely that spoken accents are a signal of source attributes that are different and separate from

socioeconomic status. An example of such an inferred source attribute could be educational level, which may be understood as associated with but only imperfectly predictive of affluence. Adjusted R-square for the regression model for the sample of lower SES respondents was .459. Table 12 presents the results of this model.

**Table 12: Test of Predictors of Source Expertise**

Predictors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Significance
	B	Std Error	Beta		
<b>Lower SES respondents: R=.685 (Adjusted R square =.459)</b>					
(Constant)	-13.040	4.780	-	-2.724	.007
Trustworthiness	.859	.113	.478	7.601	.000
Similarity	-.429	.222	-.126	-1.937	.055
SES estimate	2.285	.420	.344	5.436	.000
<b>Middle SES respondents: R=.944 (Adjusted R square =.890)</b>					
(Constant)	-3.838	.860	-	-4.461	.000
Trustworthiness	.502	.057	.427	8.882	.000
Similarity	.199	.063	.147	3.156	.002
SES estimate	2.201	.156	.494	14.114	.000
<b>Higher SES respondents: R=.954 (Adjusted R square =.908)</b>					
(Constant)	-1.638	1.057	-	-1.550	.123
Trustworthiness	1.076	.030	.966	35.397	.000
Similarity	-.041	.058	-.24	-.705	.482
SES estimate	-.114	.181	-.020	-.627	.531

For middle SES respondents, all three predictor variables were positively associated with estimates of speaker expertise at a 0.01 level of significance. The corresponding standardized coefficients were .147 for source-receiver similarity, .427 for source trustworthiness estimates, and .494 for estimates of speaker socioeconomic status. Adjusted R-square for the regression model corresponding to middle SES respondents was .890.

Among upper SES respondents, only one variable was found to be a significant predictor of estimates of speaker expertise. At a significance level of 0.01, estimated

speaker trustworthiness was positively associated with estimated speaker expertise with a standardized coefficient of .966. This predictor alone appeared to explain over 90% of the variance in estimates of speaker expertise among upper SES respondents. The adjusted R-square for the corresponding model was .908.

The above results indicate that the predictions of Hypothesis 3 only held for the sample drawn from the middle SES population. Similarity between speaker and respondent was negatively associated with estimated speaker expertise for lower SES respondents. Among upper SES respondents, source-receiver similarity and estimated speaker socioeconomic status were not significantly related to estimates of speaker expertise. Hence, Hypothesis 3 is not supported.

Hypothesis 3a predicts that receiver estimates of speaker expertise will be directly related to the status of the speaker's accent. Thus, a high SES accent should result in higher estimates of speaker expertise. As Table 13 indicates, mean estimates of speaker expertise by each of the SES groups were found to be consistent with the predicted effects. In contrast with estimates of status, for example, a high level of agreement about the connection between speaker accent and speaker expertise appeared to hold among respondents regardless of SES background.

**Table 13: Estimates of Speaker Expertise by Accent**

Accent	Lower SES respondents		Middle SES respondents		Higher SES respondents	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Lower	9.98	2.90	8.12	2.54	8.04	2.18
Middle	25.98	8.55	30.20	4.12	27.44	4.14
Upper	33.28	1.96	31.16	4.56	31.42	3.04



Mean estimates for the expertise of speakers with a low SES accent ranged from 8.04 (upper SES respondents) to 9.98 (lower SES respondents). For middle SES accents, estimates ranged from 26 (lower SES respondents) to 30.2 (middle SES respondents). For speakers with upper SES accents, expertise estimates ranged from 31.2 (middle SES respondents) to 33.3 (lower SES respondents). Although estimates across SES groups are not necessarily directly comparable, the accent-expertise estimate relationship appeared to be similarly consistent with predictions in the three SES respondent groups. Thus, Hypothesis 3a appears generally to be supported.

#### Tests of Hypotheses 4 and 5

Hypotheses 4 and 5 are guided by the premise that character traits and social traits separately predict overall assessments of the source (cf. Simon, Berkowitz, and Moyer 1970). Thus, a single regression model incorporating both categories of traits and their interactions with receiver background can test these hypotheses. The theoretical bases and research design of this study require consideration of interaction terms in the model (e.g., Lewis-Beck, 1980, p. 67). In addition, these theoretical bases provide substantive meaning to statistically significant estimates corresponding to these interactions (e.g., Cohen and Cohen, 1980, p.336). The initial model had the following form:

<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>Independent Variables</b>
Source Credibility	Trustworthiness Expertise Similarity Relative Status Respondent Background* Respondent Background x Trustworthiness Respondent Background x Expertise Respondent Background x Similarity Respondent Background x Relative Status

*Using dummy variables for low SES background (LSES) and high SES background (HSES).*

The variables were operationalized as follows. Source credibility was measured independently by adding the item scores of the corresponding seven-item scale. Similarly, expertise and trustworthiness scores were based on the sums of their respective scales. Relative status was computed by subtracting the score of the respondent's assessment of his or her socioeconomic status from the score corresponding to the respondent's estimate of the recorded speaker's socioeconomic status. Similarity scores were computed by standardizing similarity estimates within each SES grouping: the Z-scores used permitted a combined assessment across groups in spite of large absolute differences in raw similarity scores. Respondent background, a categorical variable was operationalized by using two dummy variables: one corresponding to a LSES and the other to a HSES background.

A test of this model explained over 70 % of the variance in source credibility assessments but a variance inflation factor analysis indicated severe multicollinearity (i.e.,  $VIF > 5$ ) for several predictors. Thus, a correlation analysis was run for the set of predictors in the original model and interaction terms with high simple correlation coefficients with main effect terms (i.e., correlation coefficients of .80 or greater) were eliminated (Studenmund, 1992, pp. 271-279). By controlling for multicollinearity, much more reliable parameter estimates can be obtained (e.g., Lewis-Beck, 1995, p. 63).

The corrected regression model included the following terms:

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables
Source Credibility	Trustworthiness Expertise Similarity Relative Status Respondent Background* Respondent Background x Relative Status**

\*Both LSES and HSES dummy variables. \*\* Only HSES x Relative Status (HSESST).

The corrected regression model was run for all respondents; that is, both of the test messages influenced the results of this model. All of the variables entered the model using a stepwise procedure (probability-of-F-to-enter  $\leq .05$ ; probability -of-F-to-remove  $\geq .10$ ). R for the model was .822 and adjusted R square was .671. Therefore, in the most general case available with the data collected, the predictor variables accounted for 67% of the variance of the criterion variable. The results are reported in Table 14.

**Table 14: Test of Hypotheses 4 and 5: All Respondents**

Predictors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Significance
	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	15.418	1.161	-	13.282	.000
Trustworthiness	.619	.065	.469	9.554	.000
Expertise	.120	.054	.114	2.211	.028
Relative Status	1.350	.194	.356	6.942	.000
Similarity	2.001	.358	.172	5.589	.000
LSES	-3.518	1.121	-.143	-3.137	.002
HSES	3.742	.777	.152	4.824	.000
HSESST	.642	.313	.077	2.054	.041

Next, the regression model was run using data collected from all respondents who heard the message promoting health insurance. Again using the stepwise procedure, the predictor variables that entered were trustworthiness, similarity, expertise and the interaction term for HSES background and relative status. The interaction term was significant at a level of .10; all other entering variables were significant at .05. The model had an adjusted R square of .701. The corresponding results are in Table 15.

Finally, the model was run using data corresponding to the respondents who heard the message promoting cell phones. Using the stepwise procedure, five of the predictors entered: trustworthiness, relative status, similarity, and the dummy variables

corresponding to respondent background. All entering variables were significant at a .05 level. This model also had an adjusted R square of .701. Table 16 presents the corresponding results.

**Table 15: Test of Hypotheses 4 and 5: Health Insurance**

Predictors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Significance
	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	11.987	1.681	-	7.131	.000
Trustworthiness	.495	.093	.372	5.324	.000
Expertise	.443	.067	.416	6.576	.000
Similarity	1.161	.520	.097	2.234	.026
HSESST	.639	.344	.079	1.854	.065

**Table 16: Test of Hypotheses 4 and 5: Cell Phones**

Predictors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Significance
	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	15.127	1.395	-	10.846	.000
Trustworthiness	.681	.053	.519	12.963	.000
Relative Status	2.113	.189	.496	11.194	.000
Similarity	2.474	.461	.210	5.371	.000
LSES	-3.515	1.333	-.134	-2.637	.009
HSES	5.085	1.129	.193	4.503	.000

The general results of these tests on hypotheses 4 and 5 appear to provide partial support of the corresponding predictions. For the general case, both character traits and both social traits, as well as included interaction terms were found to be significant components of the model. However, when message content is considered, the saliency of the proposed predictor variables appears to change. In particular, inferences about expertise appear to be associated with source credibility assessment when the product is health insurance but not when the product is cell phone service. Likewise, respondent

background as such appears to be relevant in the case of cell phone service but not in the case of health insurance. This result appears to lend credence to Cronkhite and Liska's posited importance of situation in source credibility assessments. In addition, the combined results of these tests suggest that to evaluate sources receivers may simultaneously but separately use inferences about source social and character traits.

#### Test of Hypothesis 4a

Hypothesis 4a assumes that the influence of source-receiver similarity on source credibility is limited. The hypothesis predicts that dissimilarity may either increase or decrease speaker credibility estimates, depending on the relative status of the speaker and the listener. In particular, Hypothesis 4a predicts that speaker dissimilarity associated with lower speaker status relative to the receiver will result in diminished estimates of speaker credibility. However, the hypothesis does not predict that higher relative status will result in higher speaker credibility estimates.

As Table 17 indicates, when the speaker has a low SES accent than the respondent, credibility estimates are lower than for speakers with high SES accents. Thus, upper SES respondent estimates of speaker credibility for speakers with high SES accents are higher (mean estimate of 44.6) than for speakers with middle SES accents (34.4) and low SES accents (28.1). Similarly, middle SES respondent credibility estimates for middle SES accented speakers (44.5) are higher than for speakers with low SES accents (16.5).

Symmetry is broken, however, in the results of respondents listening to speakers with higher SES accents than those of the respondents. Middle SES respondent

**Table 17: Estimates of Credibility by Accent**

Accent	Lower SES		Middle SES		Higher SES	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Lower	29.16	10.03	16.52	9.23	28.12	11.39
Middle	37.36	4.98	44.52	5.06	34.44	9.46
Upper	42.76	5.32	36.42	6.97	44.58	3.87

credibility estimates given a high SES accent (36.4) were higher than those corresponding to a low SES accent (16.5); but a middle SES accent drew the highest estimates (44.6) from this group of respondents. On the other hand, lower SES respondent estimates of speaker credibility were very similar to those of upper SES respondents: 29.2 versus 28.1 for low SES accents, 37.4 versus 34.4 for middle SES accents, and 36.4 versus 35.7 for high SES accents. Thus, the pattern of results appears to support the predictions of Hypothesis 4a.

#### Tests of Hypotheses 6 and 6a

Hypothesis 6 tests the relationship between inferences about speaker credibility and respondent assessments of the speaker's suitability for the spokesperson role implicit in the survey format. This hypothesis is consistent with the Cronkhite and Liska model that distinguishes between respondent inferences about the speaker and respondent acceptance of the speaker in a given context. Linear regressions were run for each SES grouping, with source-receiver similarity as a controlling variable, given that similarity is presumed to facilitate willingness to establish relationships (e.g., Lazarsfeld and Merton 1954). Table 18 presents the results.

For each of the SES groups, at a significance level of 0.01, inferred speaker credibility was positively associated with respondent judgments that the speaker was a

**Table 18: Credibility and Similarity as Predictors of Source Suitability**

Item	Lower SES respondents			Middle SES respondents			Higher SES respondents		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
B	4.298	.495	-.299	1.350	.380	.216	-.103	.503	.066
St. Error	1.663	.035	.098	.547	.027	.044	.708	.030	.053
Beta	-	.737	-.160	-	.721	.248	-	.868	.065
t	2.585	14.075	-3.064	2.468	14.176	4.886	-.145	16.990	1.264
Sig.	.011	.000	.003	.015	.000	.000	.885	.000	.208
R	.819	-	-	.935	-	-	.919	-	-
Adj. R square	.666	-	-	.872	-	-	.842	-	-

Note: **A:** Intercept; **B:** Credibility; **C:** Similarity

suitable spokesperson. With data from lower SES respondents, the regression model explained 67% of the variance: the standardized coefficient for credibility was .737. For middle SES respondents, the model explained 87% of the variance: the standardized coefficient for credibility was .721. The model using upper SES respondent data explained 84% of the variance: credibility had a standardized coefficient of .868. As with results on other tests, the relationship between source-receiver similarity and the criterion variable (speaker suitability in this case) varied: the relationship was significant and negative for lower SES respondents, significant and positive for middle SES respondents, and non-significant for upper SES respondents. Hence, the results appear to support Hypothesis 6.

Hypothesis 6a parallels Hypothesis 4a and again provides a closer examination of the role of source-receiver similarity in source effectiveness. As before, this hypothesis predicts a complex rather than a linear and symmetric relationship between similarity and theoretically related constructs: in this case, source suitability given the situation. In particular, Hypothesis 6a posits that a respondent will judge a speaker with a lower accent than that of the respondent to be less suitable than speakers with higher accents.

On the other hand, in comparison with a speaker with an accent like that of the respondent, a respondent may or may not judge a speaker with a higher SES accent to be more suitable.

As Table 19 indicates, results appear to be consistent with the hypothesis. Both middle and upper SES respondents seem to judge speakers with accents similar to their own to be more suitable as spokespersons than speakers with accents signaling lower relative socioeconomic status. The mean estimate given high SES accents by upper SES respondents was 24.2, in comparison with 18.4 for middle SES accents and 14.2 for low SES accents. Similarly, middle SES respondents gave a mean estimate of suitability of 23.9 to speakers with middle SES accents, in contrast with a mean estimate of 8.7 for speakers with low SES accents.

**Table 19: Estimates of Speaker Suitability by Accent**

Accent	Lower SES		Middle SES		Higher SES	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Lower	14.90	5.82	8.74	4.11	14.24	5.76
Middle	21.62	4.23	23.88	3.19	18.44	5.97
Upper	24.90	2.79	18.44	3.88	24.22	2.45

Lower SES respondents appeared to judge speakers with middle and high SES accents more suitable than speakers with low SES accents: the mean estimate was 14.9 given a low SES accent, 21.6 with a middle SES accent, and 24.9 for a high SES accent. As with estimated credibility, when judging dissimilar accents, middle SES respondent estimates of speaker suitability were higher for speakers with high SES accents (18.4) than for speakers with low SES accents (8.7). The pattern of results therefore appears to support Hypothesis 6a.



### Test of Hypothesis 7

Hypothesis 7 predicts that the interaction of respondent background, spokesperson accent and product type will determine the degree of change in respondent estimates of how necessary a product is. The statistical procedure used to conduct test this hypothesis was univariate analysis of variance. The dependent variable for the procedure was the computed difference between post-message and pre-message estimates of product necessity. The independent variables were respondent SES neighborhood, spokesperson accent, and product type. The results of this test are reported in Table 20.

**Table 20: Change in Estimates of Necessity of Promoted Product**

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Model	667.911*	17	39.289	12.027	.000
Intercept	284.809	1	284.809	87.181	.000
Background	139.418	2	69.709	21.338	.000
Product	181.769	1	181.769	55.640	.000
Accent	59.164	2	29.582	9.055	.000
Background x Product	8.804	2	4.402	1.348	.261
Background x Accent	151.369	4	37.842	11.584	.000
Product x Accent	11.431	2	5.716	1.750	.175
Background x Product x Accent	115.956	4	28.989	8.874	.000
Error	1411.280	432	3.267	-	-
Total	2364.000	450	-	-	-
Corrected Total	2079.191	449	-	-	-

\**R square = .321 (Adjusted R square = .295)*

The results indicate significant main effects for each of the independent variables. In addition, three two-way interactions and one three-way interaction were evaluated. Of the two-way interactions, only spokesperson accent and respondent background

interactions were significant. The three-way interaction term for respondent background, product type, and spokesperson accent is also significant.

Scheffe and Bonferroni tests for accent effects indicate significant differences in estimates given either a low SES accent versus a high SES accent or a middle SES accent versus a high SES accent. The same tests for respondent SES background indicate that responses of lower SES respondents were significantly different from those of either middle or upper SES respondents. Within product comparisons, however, indicate that necessity estimate changes for cell phone service were significantly different only between lower and middle SES respondents (Bonferroni  $< .05$ ), but that lower SES respondents differed significantly from both middle and upper SES respondents with respect to health insurance. Nonetheless, the results generally support for Hypothesis 7.

#### Test of Hypotheses 8 and 8a

Hypothesis 8 predicts that respondent perceptions of product complexity will be related to speaker accents. Thus, correlation analyses were run for each of the SES groupings for the two product types discussed in the promotional message. As shown in Table 21, all tests indicated significant correlations, but all but one of the six tests produced negative correlations.

**Table 21: Estimated Product Complexity and Accent**

Respondent Group	Complexity-accent correlation			
	Health insurance		Cell phone service	
	Pearson Correlation	Significance (2-tailed)	Pearson Correlation	Significance (2-tailed)
Lower SES	-.489	.000	-.218	.060
Middle SES	-.364	.001	-.375	.001
Higher SES	-.256	.027	.511	.000

For the product defined as complex (health insurance), correlations were as follows between accents and assessments of complexity: -0.489 for lower SES respondents, -0.364 for middle SES respondents, and -0.256 for upper SES respondents. Thus given a relatively complex product, the lower the status of the accent, the higher the assessed complexity of the product. For a relatively less complex product (cell phones), the same relationship held for two SES groupings: -0.218 for lower SES respondents and -0.375 for middle SES respondents. For upper SES respondents, the apparent relationship is reversed. That is, the results suggest that upper SES respondents judged cell phones (but not health insurance) to be more complex when listening to a speaker with a high SES accent.

As indicated in Table 22, analysis of variance tests for each of the SES categories indicated significant main effects both for product type and speaker accent at a significance level of 0.01. The interaction term for product type and speaker accent was also significant for lower and upper SES respondents, but not for middle SES respondents. Thus, although Hypothesis 8 was generally supported, the results obtained were unexpectedly intricate.

Hypothesis 8a clarified the expected relationship between accents and product complexity. Specifically, Hypothesis 8a predicted that higher status accents would increase the perceived complexity of products and that lower status accents would reduce this perceived complexity. Tables 23 and 24 indicate a tendency toward lower perceived complexity of products with higher status accents, but the pattern is non-linear and inconsistent. As with test results for Hypothesis 8, the case of upper SES respondents and cell phones runs counter to the basic trend. Hence, Hypothesis 8a is not supported.

**Table 22: Estimated Complexity of Promoted Product**

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
<b>Lower SES neighborhood respondents: R square = .502 (Adj. R square = .485)</b>					
Model	627.193	5	1255.639	29.076	.000
Intercept	81900.167	1	81900.167	1896.496	.000
Accent	991.093	2	495.547	11.475	.000
Product	4782.727	1	4782.727	110.750	.000
Product x Accent	504.373	2	252.187	5.840	.004
Error	628.640	144	43.185	-	-
Total	94397.000	150	-	-	-
Corrected Total	12496.833	149	-	-	-
<b>Middle SES neighborhood respondents: R square = .283 (Adj. R square = .258)</b>					
Model	3097.220	5	619.40	11.375	.000
Intercept	141189.4	1	141189.4	2592.798	.000
Accent	1408.680	2	704.340	12.934	.000
Product	1548.827	1	1548.827	28.443	.000
Product x Accent	139.693	2	69.847	1.287	.280
Error	7841.440	144	54.454	-	-
Total	152128.0	150	-	-	-
Corrected Total	10938.640	149	-	-	-
<b>Higher SES neighborhood respondents: R square = .452 (Adj. R square = .433)</b>					
Model	5485.360	5	1097.072	23.782	.000
Intercept	122694.0	1	122694.0	2659.776	.000
Accent	1051.360	2	525.680	11.396	.000
Product	3028.507	1	3028.507	65.652	.000
Product x Accent	1405.493	2	702.747	15.234	.000
Error	6642.640	144	46.129	-	-
Total	134822.0	150	-	-	-
Corrected Total	12128.000	149	-	-	-

**Table 23: Accent and Product Complexity: Health Insurance**

Group/ Accent	Lower SES		Middle SES		Higher SES	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Lower	23.40	4.80	31.36	6.04	28.64	7.49
Middle	14.36	6.38	27.64	9.05	19.84	7.93
Upper	15.40	4.95	23.40	9.87	23.84	4.87

**Table 24: Accent and Product Complexity: Cell Phones**

Group/ Accent	Lower SES		Middle SES		Higher SES	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Lower	30.40	9.09	35.64	6.13	29.44	7.17
Middle	30.32	4.51	36.60	4.69	30.48	8.52
Upper	26.32	8.24	29.44	7.17	39.36	3.19

Tests of Hypotheses 9 and 9a

Hypothesis 9 proposes that, controlling for accent, the type of product promoted will influence respondent perceptions of the socioeconomic status of the speaker. To test this hypothesis, analysis of variance tests were run with measured estimates of speaker socioeconomic status as the dependent variable and speaker accent and product type as the predictor variables.

The results for the three SES respondent categories were as follows: product type was a significant predictor of estimates of speaker socioeconomic status at a 0.05 level given lower SES respondents; at a 0.10 level for middle SES respondents; and at a 0.01 significance level for upper SES respondents. In addition, for upper SES respondents, the product type-accent interaction term was significant at a 0.01 level. These results, which are presented in Table 25, appear to support Hypothesis 9.

**Table 25: Accents and Estimated Source SES**

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
<b>Lower SES neighborhood respondents: R square = .502 (Adj. R square = .484)</b>					
Model	208.780	5	41.756	28.997	.000
Intercept	6976.860	1	6976.860	4845.042	.000
Accent	197.080	2	98.540	68.431	.000
Product	7.260	1	7.260	5.042	.026
Product x Accent	4.440	2	2.220	1.542	.218
Error	207.360	144	1.440	-	-
Total	7393.000	150	-	-	-
Corrected Total	416.140	149	-	-	-
<b>Middle SES neighborhood respondents: R square = .912 (Adj. R square = .909)</b>					
Model	880.293	5	176.059	298.686	.000
Intercept	4614.827	1	4614.827	7829.112	.000
Accent	877.613	2	438.807	744.441	.000
Product	1.707	1	1.707	2.895	.091
Product x Accent	.973	2	.487	.826	.440
Error	84.880	144	.589	-	-
Total	5580.000	150	-	-	-
Corrected Total	965.173	149	-	-	-
<b>Higher SES neighborhood respondents: R square = .631 (Adj. R square = .619)</b>					
Model	325.253	5	65.051	49.32	.000
Intercept	5790.827	1	5790.827	4390.686	.000
Accent	31.453	2	15.727	11.924	.000
Product	109.227	1	109.227	82.817	.000
Product x Accent	184.573	2	92.287	69.973	.000
Error	189.920	144	1.319	-	-
Total	6306.000	150	-	-	-
Corrected Total	15.173	149	-	-	-

Hypothesis 9a explores in more detail the relationships already shown to be significant in tests of Hypothesis 9. Hypothesis 9a proposed that the more complex the product the higher the perceived socioeconomic level of the speaker. As indicated in Table 26, this appears to hold only for lower and middle SES respondents. The complex pattern of results provides only partial support for Hypothesis 9a.

**Table 26: Product Complexity and Perceived Source SES**

Group/ Product	Lower SES		Middle SES		Higher SES	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Insurance	7.04	1.69	5.65	2.57	5.36	1.75
Cellular	6.60	1.64	5.44	2.53	7.07	1.55

### Summary

The tests of the proposed hypotheses produced mixed results. Seven of these hypotheses were supported. Test results supported the prediction in Hypothesis 3a that higher status accents would be associated with higher estimates of speaker expertise. Also supported were Hypothesis 6, which predicted that credible speakers would be deemed suitable spokespersons; and Hypotheses 4a and 6a, which predicted asymmetric patterns of respondent inferences and judgments of speakers. Hypothesis 7, which predicted that estimates of product necessity would be significantly influenced by the interaction of speaker accent and product type with respondent background, was supported. Hypothesis 8, which predicted that perceived product complexity would be influenced by speaker accents, and Hypothesis 9, which predicted that product type would influence respondent assessments of speakers, were also supported. The results of the tests of these two latter hypotheses, however, exhibited unexpectedly complex patterns.

Tests of five of the proposed hypotheses yielded only partial support. An unexpected negative correlation between two separate estimates of perceived similarity was found for lower SES respondents in a test of Hypothesis 1. Similarly, a test of Hypothesis 1a indicated that lower SES respondents do not consistently associate low SES accents with lower (rather than middle) SES status. Also, lower SES respondents

appeared to infer lower speaker trustworthiness from accents similar to their own, which is contrary to one of the results expected in Hypothesis 2. The results for lower SES respondents also were contrary to the predictions of Hypothesis 4. In contrast with middle and upper SES respondents, the results for lower SES respondents indicated that speaker-receiver similarity was negatively associated with speaker credibility. Similarly, Hypothesis 5, which is directly derived from the traditional credibility model was only partially supported. For upper SES respondents, speaker expertise appeared not to be a significant predictor of credibility given a simple product. Hypothesis 9a, which predicted that greater product complexity would raise the estimated socioeconomic level of speakers, appeared not hold for upper class respondents.

Not supported were Hypotheses 2a, 3, and 8a. Hypothesis 2a predicted that for complex products, higher status accents would increase trustworthiness, whereas for simpler products, trustworthiness would increase with greater source-receiver similarity. Hypothesis 3 predicted that speaker-receiver similarity, speaker status, and speaker trustworthiness would be positively associated with estimates of speaker expertise. Finally, Hypothesis 8a predicted that the higher the status of the accent used to promote a product, the more complex the product would be perceived to be. The results for Hypotheses 2a and 8a, although unanticipated in their details, are interesting because they reflect a reversal in complexity estimates from those obtained through written surveys.



## CHAPTER VI

### DISCUSSION

The results reported in the previous chapter to provide evidence that each of the broad research questions guiding this dissertation can be answered affirmatively. Receiver backgrounds do influence how both the sources and objects of messages are perceived. Both source and object cues influence how receivers perceive the source. Also, both source and object cues influence how receivers perceive the object of the message. This chapter discusses these results, proposes a set of implications, and considers limitations of this study and directions for future research.

#### Influence of Receiver Background

The discussion begins at the starting point from a marketing perspective: with the receiver of a promotional message. By defining three distinctive respondent categories through its research design, this study permitted an evaluation of the influence of receiver backgrounds on perceptions of the source and object of the message. The descriptive data for mode of transport confirm the effectiveness of the neighborhood classifications used to categorize respondents into three socioeconomic categories. As discussed in the literature review, studies of source effects may be difficult to interpret because extraneous variables are neither controlled nor sufficiently considered (e.g., Webster, 1996).

The present study was conducted within a culturally, ethnically, geographically, and racially homogeneous sampling frame. Thus, relevant across-group differences can reasonably be assumed to be associated with the distinguishing variable, socioeconomic status: differences, for example, related to the fact and consequences of variability in educational levels or in access to material or other resources. Similarly, individual respondent differences (such as those related to innate preferences and aptitudes, for example) can be reasonably assumed to be randomly distributed across socioeconomic categories.

One view of the relevance of homophily between the source and the receiver is that greater similarity facilitates communications (e.g., Gilly, Graham, Wolfinger, and Yale, 1998). An implicit expectation in this relatively straightforward view is that persuasive messages are more effective if the source is similar to the receiver. An alternative view sees homophily as a complex construct (e.g., Lazarsfeld and Merton, 1954; Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer, 1970). According to this more sophisticated view, similarity between a source and a receiver may either help or impede communications, depending on the communication situation and on the attributes along which similarity is assessed. The results of this study are consistent with the more sophisticated view of homophily: cues signaling source-receiver similarity may or may not induce more favorable receiver perceptions of the source.

Similarly, two perspectives can be taken with respect to receiver perceptions of object cues. From one perspective, if the objects of the message (in this case, two products) are familiar to all respondents and do not change across respondent categories, which is the intended case in this study, then variations in respondent perceptions of the

objects should be randomly distributed across respondent categories. An alternative perspective, with the same assumptions regarding the objects of a message, is that respondent background will influence all aspects of the communication process, including respondent perceptions of the objects. From this second perspective, which received some support in this study, differences in perceptions of objects of messages are likely to be found across respondent categories.

### On Perceptions about Source

Given the same speaker and product, respondents from different SES backgrounds appeared to evaluate speakers differently. In general, as expected, assessments of speakers appeared to be related to respondent perceptions of speaker-respondent similarity or dissimilarity. The pattern of results discussed in the previous chapter suggests that middle and upper class respondents prefer similar speakers. On the other hand, an examination of the results across tests of hypotheses indicates that respondents from the lower socioeconomic class neighborhoods appeared to favor speakers with middle and high SES accents, rather than speakers with whose accents these respondents could presumably identify.

Some results appear to have a ready explanation. For example, lower SES respondents appeared to feel that speakers with low SES accents are lower in expertise than their counterparts with higher status accents (Table 13), a logical belief given the comparatively limited access of the less affluent to educational and training opportunities. This explanation appears less useful for understanding why lower SES respondents appeared to believe that speakers with low SES accents are less trustworthy than speakers with higher status accents (Tables 10 and 11).

However, an interesting related result concerns lower SES respondent estimates of the affluence of the speakers. Lower SES respondents appeared to believe that low SES accented speakers were about as affluent as middle SES accented speakers (Table 8). Besides suggesting a stronger level of identification with low SES accents by the lower SES respondents than the previously mentioned results could indicate, this result seems to support the notion that different aspects of similarity may have different influences on receivers (Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer, 1970; Rogers and Bhowmik, 1971).

Thus, although accent cues resulted in less favorable evaluations from lower SES respondents for speakers with whom these respondents would presumably identify, different individual cues or groups of cues related to these speakers could make these evaluations more favorable. Nonetheless, the reasonable interpretation of the aggregate results of this study seems to be that a given source is evaluated differently by receivers from different backgrounds, even within a population that is homogeneous across many of the variables cited in the literature (e.g., Webster, 1996).

#### On Perceptions about Object of the Message

The results of this study provide evidence that respondent background influences perceptions of the objects of the messages, cell phone services and health insurance, with respect both to product necessity and product complexity (Tables 20 to 24). As discussed in the previous chapter, however, the pattern of results did not reflect expected responses.

In the pretest with students, which did not involve listening to recorded messages, health insurance was estimated to be more complex than cell phone service. Because of this, similar estimates of the relative complexity of the two product categories were expected in the field survey. In the field survey, respondents heard a recorded

promotional message before being asked to provide these estimates, using the same product complexity scale that was used with the student sample (Appendix 2 and 3). Surprisingly, as a comparison of the results described in Tables 23 (health insurance) and 24 (cell phones) demonstrates, respondents in the field survey appeared to perceive cell phones as more complex than health insurance.

These results will be reviewed in the discussion on implications of this research, in conjunction with related results to be discussed in the following sections. Thus, although these results are unexpected and require additional consideration, their broad implication is that respondent background may affect perceptions of the object of the message.

### Influence of Source Cues

As discussed in the literature review, the effect of the source on the perceptions of messages is a fundamental issue in communications studies. This research brings a single, controlled type of source cue --- spoken accent --- to bear on the question of how receivers respond to different sources of messages. The results indicate that receivers do discriminate among sources and that sources do influence receiver perceptions (e.g., Tables 10, 11, 13, and 17). This part of the discussion considers receiver inferences about source traits and related inferences about the object of the message.

### On Inferences about Social Traits

Though historically brief, the research stream on the influence of perceived social traits on interpersonal processes is extensive, as was indicated in the literature review. The notion of homophily and the related idea of source-receiver similarity appear to be

especially relevant to studies of persuasive communications. Often, however, inferences associated with these traits are confounded either implicitly (e.g., Berlo, Lerner, and Mertz, 1970, pp. 574-575) or explicitly (e.g., Davila, 1998) with inferences about a conceptually different set of traits, which have been labeled character traits in this study.

This study appears to show that receivers separately evaluate the social and character traits of the source. Lazarsfeld and Merton (1954, p. 23) viewed similarity in status and similarity in values as subsets of a single construct. The social traits considered in the present study are conceptualized and operationalized in a related but different manner.

The measure for *similarity* used here presumes a comparison of the source against the receiver. On the other hand, the measure for *status* presumes comparisons against the general community, and thus implicitly involves not just the source but also the receiver. The differences in basis for comparison appear to provide an explanation for the results described in Table 7, which examine the correlation between estimates of similarity and status, and in addition appear to justify the separation of the two constructs.

Tables 14, 15, and 16 indicate that similarity is positively associated with a key criterion in communications studies, source credibility. In addition, respondents generally appear to attribute greater affluence to sources with higher SES accents (Table 8). The saliency of inferences about source traits appears to be influenced by the object of the message. In the general case (Table 16), status inferences appear to have more weight in a receiver's overall assessments than do estimates of source-receiver similarity. However, while for the product understood a priori to be simpler (cell phones), source status appears to be an important predictor of how sources are evaluated (Table 16); for

the more complex product (Table 15), only high SES respondents appear to include source status in overall assessments of the source. Thus, collectively, these results suggest that inferences about both source similarity and source status do predict how messages are evaluated, but that source-receiver similarity estimates are more likely to be applied across communication situations.

#### On Inferences about Character Traits

The continuing reliance on character traits in models of source effects was discussed in the literature review; and evidence for the theoretical centrality of two categories of traits, expertise and trustworthiness, was presented. The results of this study appear to confirm the importance of receiver inferences about the character traits of the source. The results, however, call into question whether the two traditional dimensions of expertise and trustworthiness are equally relevant to receivers.

Hovland (1953, p. 35) noted that he was unable in experiments to illustrate the distinction between effects due to expertise (which Hovland labeled “expertness”) and those due to trustworthiness. The present research benefits from the development and demonstration of reliable English-language scales by Ohanian (1991) and DeShields (1992).

As indicated in Table 14, both of the traditional character dimensions appear to influence overall assessments by receivers; although, in this general case, trustworthiness inferences appear to carry more weight. For the product defined a priori as the more complex (health insurance), the importance of inferences about source expertise and trustworthiness appears to be approximately equivalent (Table 15). However, when respondents made overall judgments about source credibility based on a message

promoting a simpler product (cell phones), these respondents appeared to rely only on their inferences about the trustworthiness of the source. Thus, the relative saliency of the two traditional credibility dimensions appears to vary with the communication situation, but trustworthiness inferences appear to be more necessary in the formation of overall assessments by the receiver.

#### On Inferences about Object Attributes

The unexpected responses with respect to perceptions of the products are evident in the results viewed from the perspective of controlled changes in source cues. Table 22 describes the significant main effects of these source cues (accents) for all respondents, as well as the interaction effects of these cues with product category that are significant for all but middle SES respondents. Table 21 reveals that, with one exception, the higher the presumed SES classification of the accent the lower the perceived complexity of the product: the actual mean scores of responses are in Tables 23 and 24.

That perceptions of the objects of the messages might vary with source cues is consistent with the basic premises of this research. However, higher class accents appear to induce higher estimates of speaker expertise (Table 13); which suggests that greater source expertise in connection with a given product makes that product seem simpler.

#### Influence of Object Cues

The interactive, transactional nature of the processing of messages (e.g., Krulee, Tondo, and Wightman, 1983) suggests that just as changes in source cues influence perceptions of the objects of messages, so may changes in object cues influence



perceptions of the source of the message. The results of this research appear to support this supposition.

#### On Inferences about the Source

Table 25 indicates that the type of product mentioned in the message is a significant predictor (significance level  $< .10$ ) of respondent estimates of the affluence of the source. However, mean estimates of the three respondent groups, summarized in Table 26, imply that the feedback effects of product type into inferences about the source may be relatively unimportant.

#### Implications

This research appears to confirm that overall assessments of promotional messages are influenced by receiver background, as well as by cues in the message situation related to source traits and to the object of the message. This section considers implications of the results obtained with reference to four groups of issues: matching sources to the selected audience, matching sources with the intended object of the message, modeling source credibility, and meeting audience needs in promotional messages.

#### Matching Sources to Receivers

This study highlights the need to craft promotional messages and their elements for their specific intended audiences. The significance of source cues across test results implies that the selection of the perceived source may be a pivotal decision for the success of promotional messages. Although this research relied on spoken cues related to

social class, in principle any controllable cue could have been used that allowed respondents to discriminate among alternate sources with respect to any useful attribute.

In this study, an otherwise homogeneous population was split into categories based on socioeconomic classification. That significant differences were found in how these groups of respondents reacted to the same sources is a remarkable result. For communicators in more heterogeneous communities, the implication is that careful source (or source cue) management may improve effectiveness.

From the perspective of communicating to the respondents selected for this study, the challenge of the lower SES audience is the most interesting. The general results imply that signaling source-receiver similarity may be useful in increasing the effectiveness of communications. However, the formula appears to be counterproductive with low status respondents.

As noted in earlier discussion, low SES respondents appeared to assume that speakers with lower class accents are about as affluent as middle class speakers. Consideration of this result in the context of Rogers and Bhowmik's (1971) notion of relevant similarity suggests that receivers may respond to some similarity signals favorably but unfavorably to others. This implication, if valid, may be especially important for lower status respondents. In this study, the spoken accent cue itself may have acted as an unfavorable similarity signal, whereas different source cues might possibly obtain a favorable similarity response from the same lower class respondents.

#### Matching Sources to Products

Respondent estimates of product complexity in this study were the reverse of those expected from the pretest. Nevertheless, respondents made significant use of their

inferences of source expertise in the case of the product expected a priori to be seen as more complex (health insurance), but not in the case of the presumably simpler product (cell phones).

The implication of these results is that sources should be selected who correctly signal those attributes that receivers will process in evaluating the message about a particular object. Conversely, particular source attributes, such as celebrity status are superfluous, if they are not useful to receiver evaluations of a message about a given object.

### Modeling Source Credibility

The results of this research have several implications with respect to models of source credibility. The first is that a functional, information-processing approach permits detailed analyses in communications studies, without impeding the exploration of the broad social interaction themes usually associated with sociological approaches (e.g., DeShields, 1992). In particular, this research appears to demonstrate the utility of the framework proposed by Cronkhite and Liska (1976).

A second, deeper implication concerns the composition of the models. The research results presented indicate that source effects models should include constructs related to receiver perceptions both of social and character traits of the source. Furthermore, although parsimony is desirable in models, sufficiency is also necessary. This research implies that studies of social interactions must either restrict relevant variables by design or operationalize and incorporate a wide range of *potentially* influential predictors. This implication holds whether or not underlying theory provides for these additional predictor variables. As anticipated in the literature review, a logical

consequence of these considerations is that many misleading conclusions may currently form part of the literature on source effects.

A third, more practical implication of the results concerns the specific constructs used in this study. In particular, this research implies that source expertise is only conditionally useful to receivers formulating general assessments, but that trustworthiness inferences are fundamental. In addition, the results of this research suggest that studies of source effects may not require two general measures of overall source evaluations, as appear to be necessary from the Cronkhite and Liska (1976) perspective. Table 18 and a comparison of Tables 17 and 19 appear to illustrate that measuring estimates of source suitability is superfluous given estimates of source credibility.

#### Meeting Receiver Needs

The interesting results with respect to the perceived complexity of health insurance and cell phones invite consideration of important but more speculative implications. To summarize, respondent perceptions of the relative complexity of the products selected for the field study were the reverse of what the pretest had indicated should result. In addition, speakers with greater estimated affluence and expertise generally appeared to induce estimates of lower product complexity.

Assuming that no significant inadvertent errors influenced the present study and that the respondents in the sampling frame are not unique in their processing of promotional messages, the unexpected results should derive from a real effect. What the results seem to indicate is that these respondents preferred to rely on the speakers rather than on their own understanding of the product.

Perhaps because source expertise is less valuable to respondents in the case of an easily understood product such as cell phones, respondents could not substitute the speakers' advice for their own processing of product attributes as easily as in the case of more complex products. Given this, the apparent willingness of high SES respondents to rely on lower status speakers, especially with respect to cell phones, may suggest that diverse opportunities to reduce processing are seized by receivers (for example, the confirmation that lower status individuals can use a seemingly simple product).

The result is reminiscent of the literature on the use of proxies or agents by consumers in making shopping decisions (e.g., Forsythe, Butler, and Schaefer, 1996, Hollander and Rassuli, 1999; Mowen and Minor, 1998, pp. 495, 613; Solomon, 1986; Stern, Solomon, and Stinerock, 1992). These proxies or agents are usually referred to either as "surrogate consumers" (e.g., Mowen and Minor, 1998, 613; Solomon, 1986) or as "surrogate shoppers" (e.g., Hollander and Rassulli, 1999). Hollander and Rassulli (1999) argue that the term "surrogate shoppers" is more appropriate because these proxies or agents help the consumer shop, not consume. However, the same term ("surrogate shoppers") is used in reference to decoys used in retail settings for undercover tests of customer service or security systems (e.g., Muus, 1995). For simplicity, the term "surrogates" will be used here to refer to these proxies or agents. In the corresponding literature, an agency relationship between the surrogate and the consumer is presumed to exist in the consumer's mind, if not in fact (e.g., Hollander and Rassulli, 1999, p. 104). Hence, the explicit expectation by the consumer is that the surrogate makes recommendations with the consumer's best interests in mind (e.g., Mowen and Minor, 1998, p. 613). In addition, surrogates are presumed to receive payment for assisting the

shopping decisions of consumers (Hollander and Rassulli, 1999, p. 102; Solomon, 1986, p. 208). A central idea in this stream of literature, therefore, is that consumers deliberately seek out surrogates for help in making shopping decisions. Several reasons for the use of surrogates have been proposed. For example, one proposed motive is lack of confidence or inexperience on the part of the consumer (e.g., Stern, Solomon, and Stinerock, 1992, p. 81). Another proposed motive is an overabundance of alternatives in many product categories (e.g., Forsythe, Butler, and Schaefer, p.446). Still another is consumer aversion to the task of shopping itself (e.g., Hollander and Rassulli, 1999, p. 102). In a comment that is especially relevant to the result being discussed, however, Solomon (1986, p. 209) speculated that consumers shop through surrogates to "minimize processing by transferring decisional responsibility to external sources . . . ."

In contrast with the expectations of the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Caccioppo and Petty, 1985), Solomon (1986) proposed that consumers with access to surrogates were as likely to avoid decisions in conditions of high-involvement as in conditions of low-involvement. In fact, empirical results imply that higher involvement is linked with increased usage of surrogates (Forsythe, Butler, and Schaefer, 1990, pp. 455-456). Furthermore, Mowen and Minor (1998, p. 613) note the extensive use of surrogates by affluent consumers seeking to reach or retain an important objective: social status. In general, the surrogate literature suggests that consumers may often find surrogates to be useful (e.g., Hollander and Rassulli, 1999, 103-105). Viewed from the perspective of the present study, the implication of empirical results in research on surrogates (e.g., Mowen and Minor, 1998, p. 613) seems to be stronger and more basic --- consumers will use surrogates if they can.

Conversely, with the literature on surrogates as background, the result being discussed here appears provocative. The interaction of the respondents in the present research with the putative spokespersons cannot reasonably be classified among those of consumers with their chosen surrogates. The scenario faced by the respondents in this study elicited their impressions of an unseen, unknown speaker and his promotional message. The surrogate literature is based on the notion of consumers shopping through decision making intermediaries. Nevertheless, the empirical parallel seems clear. Subject to further research, this result of the present study suggests that a basic, underlying tendency to avoid decision making affects consumer responsiveness both to persuasive messages and to surrogates, and, by extension, may affect other phenomena reported in the literature.

From this perspective, promotional messages may be understood as (also) serving a receiver need that appears to have received little, if any, attention in the marketing literature. This need perhaps can be conceptualized as a need for leadership or for decision making by others. Promotional messages developed in conformity with this view should presumably posit an audience composed not of skeptical, independent-minded decision makers, but of receivers seeking advice, easy decisions, and clear instructions. The sources for these messages, therefore, should project attributes appropriate to these receiver needs.

### Limitations

This study has a number of limitations, particularly as a result of the restrictions designed into the research. The study was conducted in a highly homogeneous community. Any interpretation of the results reported here would be improved by

replication studies in other communities. A study in a different, non-Chilean, but similarly homogeneous setting would constitute a valuable next step by providing a crosscheck to these results and provide needed guidance for future attempts to confirm the generalizability of the results. In addition, the source cue utilized was spoken accent. As suggested in the discussion, different source cues may elicit a different pattern of responses than those observed here. Further, respondents were categorized by socioeconomic status. Other categorization schemes may provide additional insights. For example, if receiver socioeconomic status is held constant, does the influence of spokesperson status depend on family life cycle stage (e.g., Gilly and Enis, 1982), occupational group membership (e.g., Rassuli and Harrell, 1996), or individual value systems (e.g., Vinson, Scott, and Lamont, 1977)? The study had an exploratory character. Future studies, based on yet-to-be-developed comprehensive theoretical models, may provide a more efficient and useful confirmatory approach.

#### Future Research Directions

Even when limited to questions related to promotional messages, the study of source effects is complex and multifaceted. In addition to research related to engaging the limitations discussed above, this study can suggest several interesting research directions.

The first of these directions concerns the trustworthiness construct. The results presented here indicate that, unlike other character traits, trustworthiness plays an indispensable role in the formation of receiver assessments of a message. Future research may determine whether a taxonomy of trustworthiness might provide a better basis for analysis. An example of a related question is the following: Is there a basic level of trust



that receivers place on new sources, which can be empirically differentiated from the trust deposited in well-known sources?

A second research direction concerns the distinction between professional buyers and consumers. As suggested in the literature review, professional buyers may not use the same criteria as consumers in evaluating sources. Do professional buyers assess the same types of attributes as consumers do? If so, do they assess these attributes in the same way? If not, which source attributes are relevant to professional buyers but not to consumers, and vice versa?

A third research direction is related to the problem of communicating promotional messages to lower status receivers. Expressed in a reduced form, the key issue is as follows: either similar principles apply to lower status receivers as to other receivers, or different principles apply. Should members of low status communities be avoided as sources in promotional messages? Do combinations of source cues exist, which permit lower status receivers both to identify with lower status sources and to respond favorably to the corresponding messages? If so, are there general rules for these combinations or are specific combinations required for particular cases?

A fourth direction for future research relates to the result suggesting that consumers tend to seek external guidance or leadership when they are required to make decisions. The observed effect, which parallels fundamental aspects of surrogate usage by shoppers as discussed in the literature, strongly suggests the need for additional exploration. Further research possibilities are not limited to the areas of promotional communications and surrogate shopping. A wide range of phenomena discussed in the literature (e.g., brand preference, country-of-origin effects, word-of-mouth effects,

reference group influence, celebrity endorsement effects, adoption and diffusion of innovations, first mover advantage, etc), may be different manifestations of a generalized preference for decision avoidance by consumers.

In the context of the present study, an example of an opportunity for additional research concerns the question of status. Consumer awareness of and preoccupation with status has been shown to influence buying decisions. Prasad (1975), for example, found that higher socioeconomic status buyers were less likely than their lower status counterparts to shop for socially conspicuous products in discount stores. With respect to promotional messages, future research may demonstrate whether the reliance on external decision makers is manifested differently among higher status consumers than among lower status consumers. Thus, do lower status buyers seek to surrender their decisions to leaders, who serve as models to emulate, whereas higher status buyers prefer to regard their external decision makers as assistants?

To conclude, numerous opportunities for additional research remain with respect to source effects. This study has examined certain aspects that had been insufficiently studied in the literature and clarified issues, such as the joint relevance of social and character trait inferences, which had previously been confused or confounded. Nevertheless, as this discussion chapter has confirmed, the ancient questions of how to construct effective communications are likely to continue to challenge researchers and practitioners.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Although the importance of the source to message effectiveness has been stipulated since classical times, how and when a source influences a receiver is understood only in general terms. This dissertation contributes to the body of research on source effects in persuasive communications.

#### Summary

This dissertation consists of seven chapters. Chapter I poses the questions pursued in this research and presents the plan that guided its development. Chapter II reviews literature related to inferences based on source cues. Chapter III presents a set of guiding hypothesis or research propositions, while Chapter IV describes the research methodology and develops the set of hypothesis that are tested. Chapter V presents the results of this research and Chapter VI discusses these results and their implications. This final chapter summarizes the contents of the dissertation and the theoretical considerations discussed in Appendix 1.

The literature review adopts a functional approach to source evaluations (Cronkhite and Liska, 1976). After consideration of the nature of cues, examples are provided of manipulations of cues about people and products. Homophily and similarity are discussed as constructs of special relevance to source evaluation research. The

discussion on receiver assessments of source credibility concludes (a) that the trustworthiness and expertise dimensions are widely accepted predictors of credibility, and (b) that similarity and status assessments also influence credibility evaluations and are conceptually different constructs from trustworthiness and expertise (Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer, 1970).

In a marketing setting, source suitability evaluations are determined by (a) assessed credibility of the speaker, (b) the role of the receiver (which influences the saliency of source-receiver similarity and relative status)(e.g., Hawes, Mast, & Swan, 1989), and (c) the perceived level of source responsibility (Kaplan & Sharp, 1974). The chapter closes with a discussion of source effects on concepts different from the source.

Chapter III presents nine guiding hypotheses from which the research hypotheses to be tested empirically are derived. The guiding hypotheses encompass four basic aspects of the functional approach to source evaluations.

The first aspect is related to the use of source cues to generate inferences about source traits. Of particular relevance is the role of receiver attributes in the inference generation process. The second aspect is related to overall source evaluations: in particular, evaluations of source credibility and source suitability. Central to this aspect is the content of the message, which, having controlled for receiver attributes, defines the situation on which source evaluations are based. The third aspect is related to source effects on concepts other than the source: that is, inferences about and evaluations of the product. This aspect addresses the basic question of effectiveness in influencing receiver perceptions about the content of the message. The final aspect is related to the interactive and mutual effects of product and source cues on inferences about the source and the

product. This entails an examination of the idea that a receiver evaluates the elements of a communication situation in relation to each other.

Chapter IV discusses the experimental design of this research, the preparation of questionnaire items and the development of the experimental hypotheses. Chapter V presents the results of tests conducted using a sample of 450 respondents from the Chilean community of Talca.

Chapter VI discusses these results and considers a series of derivative implications. Especially interesting were the results suggesting easy respondent acceptance of external leadership in exchange for reductions in decision making tasks. Although unanticipated, these results may signal the usefulness of a new paradigm in studies of promotional message effectiveness and may be relevant to studies of a wide range of marketing phenomena. The chapter discusses the limitations of the present study and presents suggestions for future research.

This dissertation was oriented by three basic questions: (a) Do receiver attributes influence perceptions about the source and about the object of the message? (b) Do source and object cues influence receiver perceptions about the source? (c) Do source and object cues influence receiver perceptions about the object of the message? This research indicates that the general response to each of these questions is in the affirmative.

Although this study contributes additional insights into the influences of source and cues, the review of the literature suggests the need for alternative models for cue utilization. Thus, Appendix 1 develops a theoretical stimulus-response framework and proposes a theoretical cue evaluation mechanism. The name "angel wing mechanism" is proposed for the cue evaluation mechanism and the name "angel wing model" is

proposed for the corresponding theoretical model. The development of the theoretical models relies on two basic premises: humans have evolved in a normal (i.e., normally variable) environment and natural systems tend toward parsimony.

At the individual level, an innate presumption of normality informs the manner in which data from life experiences are perceived, interpreted, and stored. Social interactions, culture, and mass communications make similar experiences likely, but identical life experiences are unlikely between any two individuals in a society. In consequence, information processing in an individual is based upon a subjective normality: i.e., a dynamic model of normality learned from individual experiences.

Parsimony implies that the amount of information processing done will be dictated by the minimum amount of information processing needed for an adequate response. A stimulus-response framework consistent with this premise is proposed. In addition, a multi-purpose evaluation mechanism is posited for the execution of selection and evaluation processes in this framework. The mechanism is modeled by using the standard normal density function and the standard cumulative distribution function. The theoretical model and mechanism are labeled the “angel wing model” and “angel wing mechanism,” respectively, in reference to the graph of the resulting evaluation function.

The general implications of the proposed mechanism are considered. The relationship of the angel wing model to a well-known probability-based decision model, prospect theory, is discussed. In addition, the implications of the model for decisions given conditions of ambiguity, false choice, and dilemma are discussed. It is shown that, under such conditions, cues that are external to the object of interest will be likely to

define the choice. The theoretical section concludes by noting the apparent utility of the angel wing model for interpretations of diverse phenomena reported in the literature.

### Contributions

Several contributions may be derived from this research: The research was conducted in Latin America and thus contributes to filling the growing demand for international research (e.g., Sheth & Sisodia, 1999).

The field survey used linguistic cues; specifically, spoken accents. Thus, two related contributions are proposed: (a) one with respect to phonic cues in general (e.g., Gelinas-Chebat, Chebat, and Vaninsky, 1996), and (b) another with regard to the effects of similar and dissimilar manner-of-speech in marketing interactions (e.g., Tsalikis, DeShields, & LaTour, 1991).

Although guidance was sought when available from similar prior instruments, the measures designed for the proposed experiment (a) have original content and (b) have been tested in a language other than English.

The literature review in this dissertation organizes diverse bodies of literature on source effects functionally, which permits a structured perspective on related theoretical proposals and empirical results.

The findings of this research and the discussion of their implications may prove useful to practitioners engaged in the crafting of promotional messages and in the selection and training of spokespersons. In addition, these findings and the proposed theoretical models may suggest a more useful analytical approach to studies related both specifically to source effects in persuasion and generally to human responses to marketing and environmental cues.

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## APPENDIX 1

### THEORETICAL MODELS

This appendix presents an alternative framework for describing how stimuli are processed and proposes a model of the cue evaluation mechanism. The premise is that receivers use the same information-processing capabilities to evaluate source cues and non-source cues. The organization of the discussion is in three parts. The first discusses considerations underlying the development of the proposed models. These considerations include the value of parsimony in explanations, the presumption of normality, and the need for information filtering processes. The second part describes a theoretical stimulus-response framework. The final part discusses the proposed cue evaluation mechanism. A summary of the discussion concludes the appendix.

#### Parsimony

Jakobson (1972) implies that the contemporary perspective of linguistics science co-evolved with, was inspired by, and inspired similar changes in approaches to pursuing knowledge in mathematics and physics. (Jakobson strongly hints, for example, that Winteler, a schoolteacher in Arau, planted relativistic ideas in the mind of one of his students, the then-youthful Albert Einstein.) Leaving aside speculations about who influenced whom, approaches to pursuing knowledge in very diverse fields of inquiry do

seem to converge at many levels (e.g., Gould, 1996, 17-29; Hunt 1991, 17-26; Kerlinger, 1986, 4-14; Weinberg, 1993, 132-165).

Can the working perspectives among the various scientific disciplines converge to the point of unification? Consider, for example, the value of parsimony in scientific explanation. “(We) demand a simplicity and rigidity in our principles before we are willing to take them seriously.” says Nobel prize-winning physicist, Steven Weinberg (1993, p. 149),” . . .not only is our aesthetic judgment a means to the end of finding scientific explanations and judging their validity --- it is part of what we mean by an explanation (emphasis in the original document).” Given this, Weinberg’s interpretation of the discovery of the genetic code seems poignant from the perspective of social science:

Molecular biologists invented all sorts of elegant principles that might govern this code . . . . The answer found in the early 1960’s turned out to be very different. The genetic code is pretty much a mess; some amino acids are called for by more than one triplet of base pairs, and some triplets produce nothing at all. The genetic code is not as bad as a randomly chosen code, which suggests that it has been somewhat improved by evolution, but any communications engineer could design a better code. The reason of course is that the genetic code was not designed; it developed through a series of accidents . . . . Of course the genetic code is so important to us that we study it whether it is beautiful or not, but is a little disappointing that it did not turn out to be beautiful. (pp. 162-163)

The convergence in scientific approaches is more likely due to the world’s influence on its students than to the reverse. But if eons of evolution have not made the

genetic code parsimonious, what can be said regarding the principles - - - presumably cobbled together in a geological eye blink - - -, which explain the individual and collective behavior of people? Can principles of a “fundamental character (Weinberg, p. 163)” even be said to exist in the social sciences? Philosophers of marketing science (e.g., Bagozzi, 1994, pp. 3-6; Hunt, 1991, p. 108) believe such principles do exist and can be discovered. If so, what is the nature of such principles? In a separate reference to the genetic code, Salvador E. Luria, a Nobel prize-winning biologist, wrote the following opinion:

The harmony of the genes has something of the same grandeur as the harmony of the heavenly sphere, but with the difference that the harmony of the genes is not immutable. It is rather a flowing chorale, superbly adapted to the present, yet evolving to remain in tune with an uncertain future. (1973, p. 63).

Why is the same natural mechanism “a mess” to Weinberg and “a flowing chorale” to Luria? A possible reason is that these two scientists differ only in their frame of reference, but agree regarding the power of parsimony. Weinberg understands a parsimonious genetic code in terms of situational efficiency: the smallest toolkit that can do today’s job. Luria understands this code in terms of adaptational efficiency: the smallest toolkit that can cope with plausible jobs today or tomorrow.

Reasoning by analogy, the following is posited. For structurally stable phenomena, higher environmental variability implies lower situational efficiency and higher adaptational efficiency in the laws that specify the structural stability. Furthermore, in general, parsimony implies simple specialized mechanisms in conditions favoring situational efficiency and simple multi-purpose mechanisms in conditions favoring



adaptational efficiency. Given that human behavior must suit highly variable conditions, the principles that specify human behavior are likely to be based on simple multi-purpose mechanisms.

### Normality

People appear to be capable of learning to predict with reasonable accuracy the likely consequences of different environmental events (Bandura, 1977, p.58). Bandura theorized that humans verify the validity of their conclusions about the environment by referring to experiential evidence (Bandura, 1977, pp. 181-182). In other words, people learn what is normal and how to respond to normality. Of course, that people can extract uniformities from normality (as proposed by Bandura) does not imply that normality is uniform. Nevertheless, information-processing models, such as the Elaboration Likelihood Model, implicitly assume that cues are processed against an invariant background.

Normality in the natural environment, as in the statistical sense, implies variability of particular instances around a common mean. In turn, this implies that an information-processing system that can function in the natural environment must be capable of functioning against a variable background. Such a normality-based information-processing system can operate from an implicit general case to assimilate information about highly variable particular cases. Although, to my knowledge, they are not explained in terms of normality, pattern recognition models are consistent with this notion (Reed, 1973, pp. 223-226), as are models of speech recognition (Krullee, Tondo, & Wightman, 1993).

An individual's life experiences are unique in some aspects and similar in other aspects to the experiences of other individuals. Therefore, subjective normality (i.e., the internal frames of references about case categories acquired by an individual) varies from individual to individual.

### Patterns of Inaccuracy

By definition, a normality-based information-processing system presumes normality (i.e., variability around a mean). Given normality, responses consistent with the assumption that a given cue originates in a typical cue-related object are usually appropriate: e.g., quacks and walks like a duck, ergo a duck. Furthermore, given a normal environment, if few examples from a category are known (perhaps only one example), the likelihood is that these examples are typical rather than extreme members of their category. These considerations imply that a normality-assuming information-processing system will tend towards particular patterns of inaccuracy. If what is known determines what is presumed typical and what is typical is most likely, cues from an extreme case in a category will either be interpreted as being from a more typical case or will be assumed to represent a case from a different category. Furthermore, if the category cases on which presumed typicality was based are extreme cases, truly typical cases may be assessed as extreme or as belonging in a different category. Examples of these tendencies abound in the human behavior literature.

Gestalt principles of perceptual organization that underlie optical illusions, such as similarity, proximity, and closure (Mowen & Minor, 1998, pp. 79-81), may reflect a human tendency to misread cues. A response bias appears to exist that results in greater accuracy in identifying frequently occurring phenomena and lesser accuracy in

identifying phenomena that occur infrequently (Reed, 1975, p. 225). This bias appears to cause overestimates of the likelihood of high probability events and underestimates of low probability events (Slovic & Lichtenstein, 1968), as well as overestimates of perceptual accuracy (Klein & Yadav, 1989).

Stereotyping as a social phenomenon is understood as an example of oversimplification in judging individuals of an out-group (Bandura, 1977, p. 184). A phenomenon referred to as “projected similarity” appears to lead an observer to assume that other people are more similar to the observer than they are (Adler, 1991, pp. 80-81) and, thus, to cause inaccuracies in assessing others who are different from the observer (Doty, 1998). Trait judgments of others appear to be based on an implicit scale that biases evaluations (Peabody, 1967, p. 16).

In marketing studies, consumers have been found to be susceptible to plausible but exaggerated reference prices (Urbany, Bearden, & Weilbaker, 1988) and to overvalue initial product judgments (Kardes, 1986). The initial product judgment effect appears to be similar to the primacy effect (Jones, Rock, Shaver, Goethals, & Ward, 1968), a tendency by observers to make overall ability judgments by relying on the initial instead of the complete performance of stimuli persons.

Collectively, therefore, the evidence implies a tendency toward patterns of inaccuracy that can be interpreted by assuming a presumption of normality. Limited experience may suffice to define subjective categories and typicality (e.g., the primacy effect, initial product judgment effect, stereotyping). Presumed typicality may result in inappropriate or counterproductive generalizations (projected similarity, response bias, stereotyping) and categorizations (e.g., apples falling and planets orbiting, psychic

distance and homophily, initial product judgments and primacy effects)in inferences from cues.

### Learning Normality

According to Bandura (1977), humans learn to cope with the environment by testing the conclusions they draw from observations against experiential evidence. This evidence can take the form of enactive, vicarious, social, or logical verification. Enactive verification results from the direct experience of the consequences of a person's own actions. Vicarious verification is obtained by observing the consequences of the actions of another person. Social verification results from the comparison of a person's own thoughts with the thoughts of others. Logical verification occurs when a person evaluates the logical implications of his or her conclusions about the environment (Bandura, 1977, pp.181-182). As suggested above, although subjective normality varies from individual to individual, in a social environment individuals are likely to share some similar experiences with others and to engage in vicarious and social verification.

### Interpersonal Environment

People in stable groups share experiences and develop shared expectations that define the patterns that shape their interactions and influence their individual responses to the environment. The resulting social interaction patterns in turn contribute to the shaping of shared experiences and expectations by the people in a group. Thus, to participate and function in a stable group, individuals learn appropriate interaction patterns and responses. Research on family and peer group influences on consumer behavior is based upon, and has supplied supporting evidence for, the supposition that

individuals can learn from others how to behave in their environment (e.g., Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Childers & Rao, 1992).

When a community transmits its learned patterns across generations, the set of patterns transmitted can be construed as the community's culture (e.g., Adler, 1991; Hofstede, 1994). A community's culture can be described on the basis of how its patterns teach its members to regard people (good, evil), the natural world (people-dominant, nature-dominant, people-nature in balance), human relations (hierarchical, collective, individualistic), activity (to be, to control, to do), time (oriented to the past, the present, the future), and space (public, mixed, private)(Adler, 1991, pp. 19-33). Individuals in stable groups are likely to have similar components in their subjective normalities, because they learn similar values and share a range of similar experiences. Individuals from collectivistic societies, but not from individualistic societies, for example, appear to assume that self-sacrifice for the sake of the group is better than giving priority to personal interests (Chen, Brockner, & Katz, 1998). Culture, thus, is another important influence in the formation of subjective normality.

#### Mass Communication

Of particular relevance for marketing is the influence of mass communications in the learning of subjective normality by consumers. Almost thirty years ago, George Gerbner (1972) cited the Scottish patriot Andrew Fletcher: "If a man were permitted to write all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of the nation(p. 153)." Harris (1989, pp. 14-15) postulated the existence of four types of measurable media effects: (1) behavioral effects, manifested in the actions of people exposed to the media; (2) attitudinal effects, reflected in changes of people's attitudes; (3) cognitive effects,

which result in changes in the way people think; and (4) physiological effects, which cause somatic changes. Parenti (1994, p. 103) has suggested that media effects are common and significant:

In modern mass society, people rely to a great extent upon distant image-makers for their cues about a vast world. In both entertainment and news shows, the media invent a reality much their own. Our notion of what a politician, a detective, a corporate executive, a farmer, an African, or a Mexican-American is supposed to be like; our view of what rural or inner city life should be; our anticipations about romantic experience and sexual attractiveness, crime and foreign enemies, dictators, and revolutionaries, bureaucrats and protestors, police and prostitutes, workers and communists — all are heavily colored by our exposure to movies and television shows.

In a similar vein, Richins (1995) has used both social comparison theory and information integration frameworks to propose that idealized advertising messages in the media are producing unrealistic expectations among consumers about life and material possessions.

In general, the question for this proposal is not whether media images follow a systematic, long-term plan. The question is whether the vicarious and social verification processes of audiences discriminate between events witnessed in the real world and stories crafted for entertainment in the media. To my knowledge, no inherent mechanism of discrimination has been posited other than conscious intervention, and a parsimonious interpretation implies that no automatic discrimination mechanism exists other than the evaluation of cues.

To the extent that media images have cues that induce audiences to interpret the images as artificial and unnatural, therefore, will audiences ignore these media images as sources of vicarious and social verification. Studies of media influence suggest that audiences do interpret media content as valid environmental experiences (e.g., Harris, 1989; Richins, 1995). Thus, by separating evaluative assessments of the media from descriptive aspects, a picture emerges of the importance of modern mass communications to the shared subjective normality of people.

### Subjective Normality

To summarize, this posits that information processing occurs in reference to a background of normality rather than of uniformity. At the individual level, the implicit assumption of normality results in the translation of life experiences into a set of internal frames of reference, which I call subjective normality. Thus, subjective normality is a dynamic model of normality that is continuously being built from individual experiences. The notion of subjective normality is consistent with evidence of implicit scales of judgment (Peabody, 1967), tendencies toward unwarranted generalization and categorization (e.g., Mowen & Minor, 1998; Kardes, 1986), and pattern recognition (Reed, 1973; Krulee, Tondo, & Wightman, 1983).

### Filters

Although surrounded by environmental data, a person's ability to extract and process environmental information is limited. First, human senses have a limited range and sensitivity: "Sensation and perception occur only when a stimulus is appropriate and intense enough to activate a particular sense receptor (Cacioppo & Petty, 1983, p. 26)." Second, beyond these sensory limits, human processing capabilities appear to be limited (Slovic & Lichtenstein, 1968). To increase the likelihood of processing important

environmental data, therefore, an information-processing system that is limited in capacity is likely to include filters that impede the intake of less important data.

### Processing Capacity

The limitations of human processing capacity have been repeatedly demonstrated (e.g., Mowen & Minor, 1998, pp. 78-81; Slovic & Lichtenstein, 1968). In the consumer research literature, experiments in persuasion and decision making have examined these limitations in various ways. For example, Klein and Yadav (1989) examined adaptive decision making processes by manipulating the number of dominated alternatives (low, moderate, high) in a choice set, and found that decision makers appear not to understand the global choice context but rather to rely on prior expectations or simple attribute assessments (pp. 419-420). In addition, both physiological arousal (Sabonmatsu & Kardes, 1988) and time-compression of communications (Moore, Hausknecht, & Thamodaran, 1986) have been shown to disrupt respondent cognitive elaboration capacities. Human information processing limitations, of course, can be understood as a justification for a reliance on environmental cues.

### Selectivity

Experimental results support the notion that human intake of information tends to be selective. As noted above, prior expectations (Klein and Yadav, 1989), initial judgments (Kardes, 1986), and implicit scales (Peabody, 1967) appear to serve as proxies for details available in the environment. Furthermore, Wheelless (1974) found that prior attitudes toward sources and concepts appear to be significant predictors of the type of information receivers will select or reject. Thus, the evidence is consistent with the ideas



of a subjective normality, a limited processing capacity, and selectivity in accepting environmental data.

### Awareness

As indicated above, cues are understood to operate primarily below the level of awareness (Deutsch & Krauss, 1965, pp. 86-87; Flexner, 1987). The notion that “the forces that drive our behavior are largely unconscious, and hence are not available for scrutiny” is fundamental to psychoanalytic theory (Mowen & Minor, 1998, p. 202). The psychophysiological approach to stimulus response posits a process of integration of stimuli in the central nervous system that precedes awareness of stimuli (Cacioppo & Petty, 1983, p. 26). This implies that conscious control of stimulus-response processes is uncertain and tenuous. Thus, “Bodily responses of which people are unaware . . . may affect attitudes by changing the manner in which an attitudinal stimulus is processed (Petty & Cacioppo, 1983, p. 86).” Furthermore, evidence of variable but non-random monitoring (i.e., consciousness) and assembly of information about the environment into memory implies the mediation of a classifying or organizing process (Reed, 1973, pp. 224-225).

### Decision Making

By interpreting the function of a stimulus-response system to be the production of responses that are likely to be appropriate (Reed, 1973, p. 225), the system can be conceptualized as a decision-making framework. Assuming a tendency toward parsimony, an adaptive decision-making system can be understood to preferentially process less data rather than more data. This implies the utility of positing a framework

consistent with the psychology-of-simplification decision-making categories proposed by Howard and Sheth (1969, p. 27).

Rearranging the Howard-Sheth decision categories from least-required-processing to most-required-processing yields the following preferential hierarchy: (1) routinized response behavior, (2) limited problem solving, and (3) extensive problem solving. To the extent that human information processing is consistent with this hierarchy, the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1983, pp. 90-91) appears conceptually restricted. Neither the “central” nor the “peripheral” routes apply in the preferential information-processing condition of routinized response. Furthermore, when problem solving is required, a parsimonious interpretation suggests that limited problem solving, conceptually similar to the notion of a “peripheral route”, will be attempted first (e.g., Klein & Yadav, 1989). A “central” route of extensive problem solving is thus unlikely to be engaged without both the need and the opportunity to do so (e.g., Moore, Hausknecht, & Thamodaran, 1986; Sabonmatsu & Kardes, 1988).

#### A Stimulus-Response Framework

This section presents and describes a stimulus-response framework consistent with the above discussion. The framework is illustrated as a flow process (See Figure 3). Thus, the caveats about the interactive nature of the information-processing system are reiterated (e.g., Krulee, Tondo, & Wightman, 1983; Minsky, 1986). The framework as a whole can be interpreted as an elaboration of the information integration step posited in Schmidt’s stimulus-response sequence (cited in Cacioppo & Petty, 1983, p.26).

*Normality is not comfortable. The nature and intensity of the multiple normal discomforts and imbalances are manifested in an ebb and flow of needs and motivations.*



The framework posits a scanning process that intercepts and blocks as much incoming data as is consistent with current subjective normality regulated needs. Further, the framework posits an iterative function that compares admitted data by the scanning process with current needs and motivations. Only data that are neither a definitely adequate match nor a definitely inadequate match are processed further. Other data are organized to inform subjective normality during and after the occurrence of a consistent response: a routinized response, in the first iteration. In addition, evaluative iterations are posited to inform subjective normality via the organizing process, and to cause progressive readjustment of criteria as the frame of reference is adjusted (Estes, 1982, p.379).

Data that are neither adequate nor inadequate matches with requirements are posited to enter a decision-related process. Elements of the data (i.e., cues) and frames of reference provided by subjective normality are sorted into background and foreground components and evaluated. Generally, at the first iteration, inputs from subjective normality are posited to provide the background against which selected cues are processed. The processed output is matched again against criteria (Estes, 1982). For simplicity, this step is illustrated in Figure 4 as an internal stimulus. Again, only data (i.e., the processed output after each iteration) that are not definitely adequate or inadequate are submitted to the decision-related process. After the first iteration, the processed output may function as the background against which salient features of the data are evaluated or re-evaluated. Excessive noise can impede or totally block continuing iterations (e.g., Easterbrook, 1959; Anderson & Revelle, 1982; Moore, Hausknecht, & Thamodaran, 1986).

Through the mediation of the organizing process, consciousness monitors surface manifestations of the stimulus-response system (e.g., Cacioppo & Petty, 1983, p. 26). Finally, the graphic model notes that an external observer detects only somatic and self-reported results of the activity of the stimulus-response system.

To summarize, the stimulus-response framework illustrated in Figure 3 has the following characteristics. First, unlike alternative models, it assumes normality not uniformity. Second, the framework assumes that the human stimulus-response system is driven by a need for selectivity because information-processing capabilities are limited. This implies that the stimulus-response system tends to reduce rather than to increase the amount of data processed. Thus, although vast amounts of data are processed, far larger amounts of available data in the environment are not. Third, most of the functioning of the framework occurs below the level of awareness.

#### Theoretical Evaluation Mechanism

Many existing models of human decision making seem to assume the primacy of cognition: e.g., economic decision models (e.g., Samuelson, 1976; Becker, 1976), the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1983). Perhaps because of this assumption, such models appear to presume that human inference processes must mirror rational optimization. Thus, observations such as: “The study results highlight a perceptual problem (italics added): decision makers overestimate their own accuracy (Klein & Yadav, 1989, p. 419).”

I posit that a natural data evaluation mechanism consistent with a subjective normality-based stimulus-response framework is likely also to be based on the presumption of normality. As indicated earlier, a subjective-normality approach implies

that the evaluation mechanism will weigh (and favor) familiar instances more heavily than unfamiliar cases (e.g., Peabody, 1968; Reed, 1973; Slovic & Lichtenstein, 1968). Available empirical evidence, as discussed above, appears to be consistent with a subjective-normality approach.

### Plausibility

Furthermore, from the perspective of plausibility, an evaluation mechanism that presumes normality seems more likely than one that presumes uniformity. High variability, not stability or uniformity, has characterized living environments (e.g. Gould, 1996; Luria, 1973). Because of this, a suitable stimulus-response system must be characterized by one of the following four general descriptions.

A first alternative is a system with mechanism or set of mechanisms with unlimited processing capacity that can continuously examine every detail in the environment and organize optimal responses on an ongoing basis. At least for humans, the evidence appears to preclude such a system (e.g., Moore, Hausknecht, & Thamoradan, 1986; Sabonmatsu & Kardes, 1988).

A second alternative is a system that obtains optimal responses to the environment from a large and well-coordinated set of specialized stimulus-evaluation mechanisms, which are different from each other. That the sensory system is composed of several types of specialized organs suggest that such a stimulus-response system is possible, but evidence that human responses to stimuli are often not optimal implies that the second alternative is not plausible.

A third possibility is a system that uses an adaptive multi-purpose mechanism that permits adequate responses to stimuli after minimal processing effort. That human

responses appear to be generally adequate but often not optimal is evidence that the third alternative is plausible.

A combination of the second and third descriptions results in a final possibility, a stimulus-response system that responds adequately to the environment by means of a set of different specialized evaluation mechanisms. If the third alternative is plausible, the fourth is likely also to be plausible.

### Implications of Parsimony

Parsimony, however, implies that a stimulus-response system based on an adaptive multi-purpose evaluation mechanism is likelier than a system based on a set of specialized mechanisms. I posit, therefore, that the human stimulus-response system functions using a normality-based multi-purpose evaluation mechanism.

Parsimony further implies that such a mechanism can be modeled by devices also based on the idea of the greater likelihood of what is typical and the lesser likelihood of what is not typical. Therefore, I propose that the normalized density and cumulative probability functions (i.e.,  $N [0,1]$ ) can be used to model the posited evaluation mechanism. In particular, the standard normal density function can represent a subjective normality-based frame of reference in a decision or evaluation process. A normalized cumulative probability function can represent the changing relative attention to evidence about a salient feature in a stimulus as the feature approaches or moves away from typicality.

In cue research, the decreasing subjective importance of additional evidence (or cues) about a particular instance has previously been modeled using a base-2 logarithmic function (Easterbrook, 1959, p. 194): i.e.,  $F(x) = \log_2 x$ . To the best of my understanding,

however, the logarithmic function model is intended as a simulation of empirical results and is not derived from theoretical reasoning. Similar predictions can be obtained using other mathematical models: e.g.,  $F(x) = \arctan(x)$ . Given the desirability of theoretical grounding (e.g. Bagozzi, 1994, pp. 3-7; Hunt, 1991, p. 49), this proposes that the cumulative probability function ( $N[0,1]$ ) is a preferable model. To my knowledge, neither the standard normal density function nor any similar mathematical function has been used before as a frame-of-reference model.

### The Angel Wing Model

The posited multi-purpose evaluation mechanism generates evaluations of particular events or objects by combining the influence of a frame of reference with the subjective importance of a salient attribute of the object or event. A mathematical expression of the output of the mechanism is as follows:

$$\text{Equation 1: } F(z) = (1/2\pi) \left[ \int e^{-z^2/2} dz + e^{-z^2/2} \right],$$

where  $z$  is the distance from the subjective mean of the frame of reference, expressed as a  $z$ -value on a standard normal distribution (mean equals zero and variance equals one, i.e.  $N[0,1]$ ).

The highest subjective value of  $F(z)$ , beyond which additional subjective gains are not obtained, is determined by solving the following equation:

$$\text{Equation 2: } \int e^{-z^2/2} dz = e^{-z^2/2},$$



$$\therefore z \cong 0.802968$$

The critical lowest value for  $F(z)$ , beyond which net subjective losses are sustained, is determined by solving the following equation:

$$\text{Equation 3: } \int e^{-z^2/2} dz = -e^{-z^2/2}$$

$$\therefore z \cong -0.802968$$

The model of the proposed mechanism is illustrated in Figure 4. The graph of  $F(z)$  illustrates the changes in subjective evaluations as the evaluated feature changes. To me, the shape of the graph looks like an outline of depictions of an angel's wing. I propose, therefore, the term "angel wing model" for the theoretical multi-purpose evaluation model. For consistency, I further propose that the mechanism described by the model be called the "angel wing mechanism."

#### Implications of the Angel Wing Model

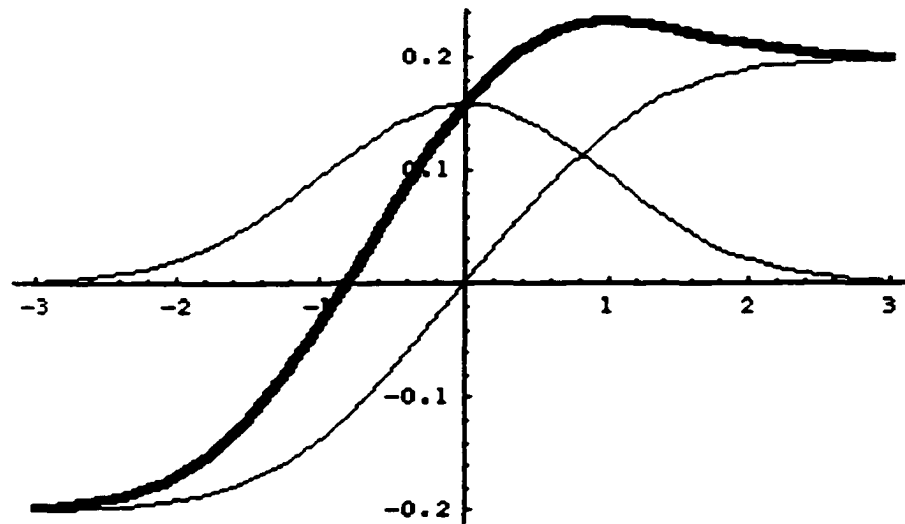
The multi-purpose nature of the angel wing model is manifested in two manners of use in the stimulus-response framework. The first relates to the various selection and evaluation processes in the stimulus-response system. The second is connected to the diverse types of evaluation that may be required. In the following discussion, numbers will be rounded for convenience in exposition. The convention used for these numbers is the customary one. Decimal values of 0.5 or above will be rounded to the next higher unit. Numbers below 0.5 will be rounded to the next lowest unit. Although reference is

made to observations from other studies, the discussion is based on the model but is speculative because, to my knowledge, no empirical evidence is currently available.

With respect to the first proposed manner of use, the angel wing model predicts that for a given subjective-normality specified need, the scanning process will admit for closer evaluation a stimulus endowed with at least 20% of the required features. To refer to a prior example, this implies that camouflage need not be perfect to be effective. At the preliminary evaluation stage, a stimulus with 80% or more of the required features will elicit a routinized response. Stimuli that do not immediately meet the 80% criterion will either be further evaluated or rejected. I speculate further that the rejection criterion value is 50%, as determined by the current frame of reference. As indicated earlier, evaluative iterations may readjust criteria, as the frame of reference is adjusted (Estes, 1982, p. 379). Thus, the multi-purpose nature of the angel wing mechanism is expected to result in its use at various stages of the stimulus-response system. Furthermore, the angel wing mechanism is expected to suit the diverse types of evaluation that may be required. Evaluations are diverse not only in cues (features) and frames of reference but also in orientation and nature. Orientation requires that two aspects of the evaluation situation be specified.

The first is the subjective position of the individual on the frame of reference. In some situations, the subjective position is likely to be at the 50% mark: e.g., in assessments of the status of others. In other situations, the subjective position may be at 100% mark: e.g., in assessments of identity between self and others, or one object and other objects.

**Figure 4: Angel Wing Model**



### The Angel Wing Model

**Note:** Bold line represents angel wing function in all illustrations. Illustration is based on the standard normal distribution. The theoretical zero percent (0%) probability mark is left of the negative (-) 3 position on the horizontal axis, the fifty percent (50%) probability mark is at center or zero (0) point, and the theoretical hundred percent (100%) probability mark is to the right of the positive (+) position. All illustrations based on the angel wing model were graphed using Mathematica 3.0.

A second aspect of orientation relates to whether both positive and negative features of an object, relative to the decision maker's point of reference, are being evaluated. Thus, in assessing another person, the evaluator may perceive only cues signaling that other person's lower status. On the other hand, as when considering the selection of an alternative to a known reference object, the decision maker may respond to cues that signal both more positive and more negative levels of relevant attributes.

An additional set of specifications is related to the nature of the evaluation: that is, whether the decision involved in the evaluation is acceptance or rejection or a choice between alternatives. If an alternative object is not being considered, an object of interest is evaluated through inferences from its features. If the object is rejected, depending on subjective normality-determined needs, features from an alternate object may or may not be admitted for evaluation. If the evaluation concerns a choice between alternatives, the features of the alternative objects are compared. In such a case, I speculate that the object that first meets the 80% criterion will be selected.

#### Illustrations of Angel Wing Model Applications

Applying these considerations to the behavior of the angel wing model, the following effects can be illustrated: choice under uncertainty, ambiguity, dilemmas, and false choice, and preference level given one evaluational object. Because of the widespread recognition of prospect theory (e.g., Abelson & Levi, 1985, pp. 246-253; Mowen & Minor, 1998, pp. 387-389), the angel wing model interpretation of evaluations under choice will first be discussed in relation to that theory.

Kahneman and Tversky (1979) contributed an explanation for a violation of the tenets of utility theory in human decision making. In particular, people appear to value

gains that are certain more than they do arithmetically-equivalent gains that are probable; and to prefer losses that are uncertain to arithmetically-equivalent certain losses.

Kahneman and Tversky stipulated the existence in human decision processes of a value function that substitutes decision weights for probabilities and that is estimated on marginal gains and losses rather than on final outcomes. Kahneman and Tversky gave the name “prospect theory” to their proposal.

Like the angel wing model, prospect theory assumes subjective frames of reference, but as Abelson and Levi (1985) note, the prospect theory value function “is not given in closed mathematical form, but on the basis of inference from a number of choice problems (p. 246).” In consequence, a number of experiments have been conducted to determine the posited decision weights empirically. The angel wing model, of course, can provide straightforward predictions for conceptually simple questions such as choice between financial alternatives.

Rounding numbers for expository purposes, the angel wing model predicts that individuals who rely on subjective risk assessments will prefer certain gains until the net value of the possible gains is perceived as approximately 60% higher than that of the certain gains. In addition, the model predicts that a gradually diminishing preference for certainty for individuals who believe they have consolidated net gains beyond the upper critical point.

Regarding the preference for uncertain losses, the angel wing model predicts that losses that are certain will not be accepted until the net magnitude of alternative probable losses is 60% greater. Furthermore, the model predicts that individuals will continue to

prefer further uncertain losses if they perceive that their current net losses are beyond the lower critical point.

Figure 5 illustrates the cutoff points with vertical lines that cross the X-axis. The cutoff points correspond to the  $F(z)$  values in Equations 2 and 3 above. In terms like those used by Kahneman and Tversky (1979, p. 279), the graph of the angel wing model as applied to the phenomenon addressed by prospect theory is concave for gains, is considerably steeper for losses than for gains, and is generally convex below the lower critical value.

A conceptually more complex set of evaluations that can be examined with the angel wing model includes ambiguities, false choices, and dilemmas. In the model, an “ambiguity” results when two or more acceptable alternatives in a choice set produce identical evaluations. Thus, rather than defining a preference, the model (as a representation of the underlying mechanism) collapses around the alternatives at one point. Under this condition, choice is not possible and the decision becomes random or arbitrary.

A related problem occurs when a choice must be made between alternatives evaluated as equally negative or equally positive. In these conditions, this posits that mirroring can occur. The condition of equally negative alternatives is labeled a “false choice”. Figure 6 illustrates the false choice effect. The subjective position is at the 50% mark on the graph. The illustration describes the sharp drop-off in preferences for alternatives to the present position.

**Figure 5: Prospect Theory Effect**

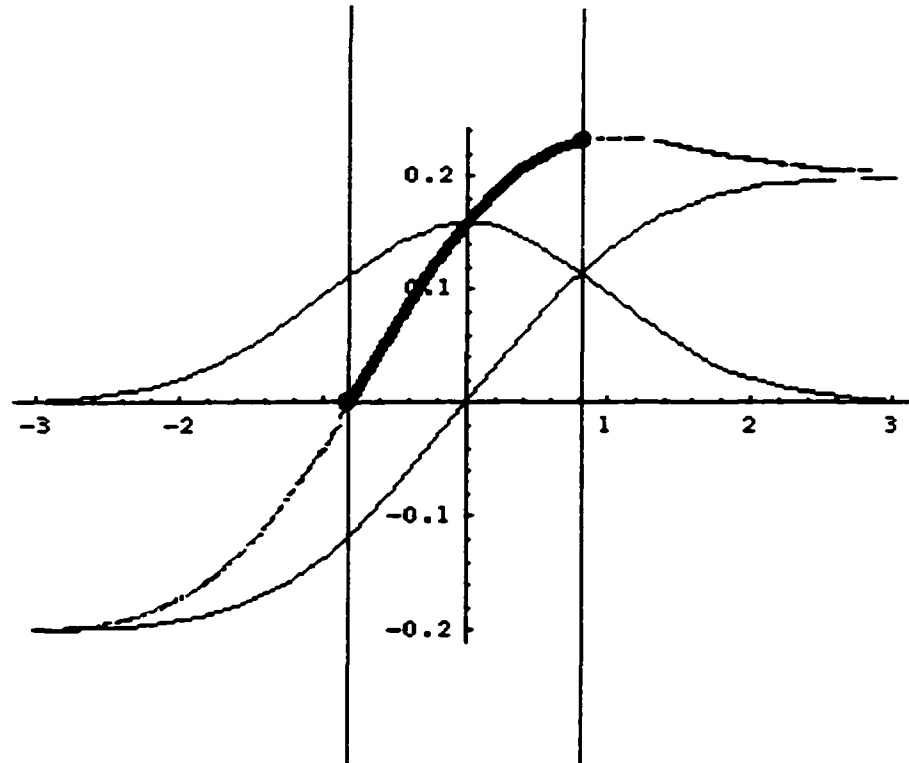
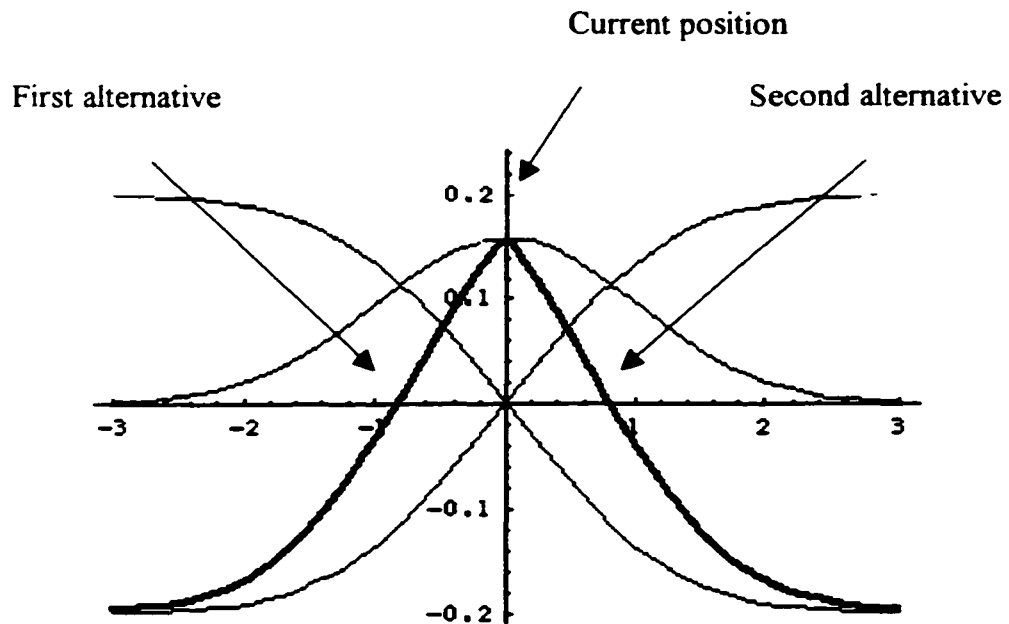


Illustration of an ambiguity: Identical evaluation of two alternatives

Note: Illustration is based on the standard normal distribution. The theoretical zero percent (0%) probability mark is left of the negative (-) 3 position on the horizontal axis, the fifty percent (50%) probability mark is at center or zero (0) point, and the theoretical hundred percent (100%) probability mark is to the right of the positive (+) position. All illustrations based on the angel wing model were graphed using Mathematica 3.0.

**Figure 6: False Choice Effect**



**False Choice Effect: Evaluation of two equally negative alternatives**

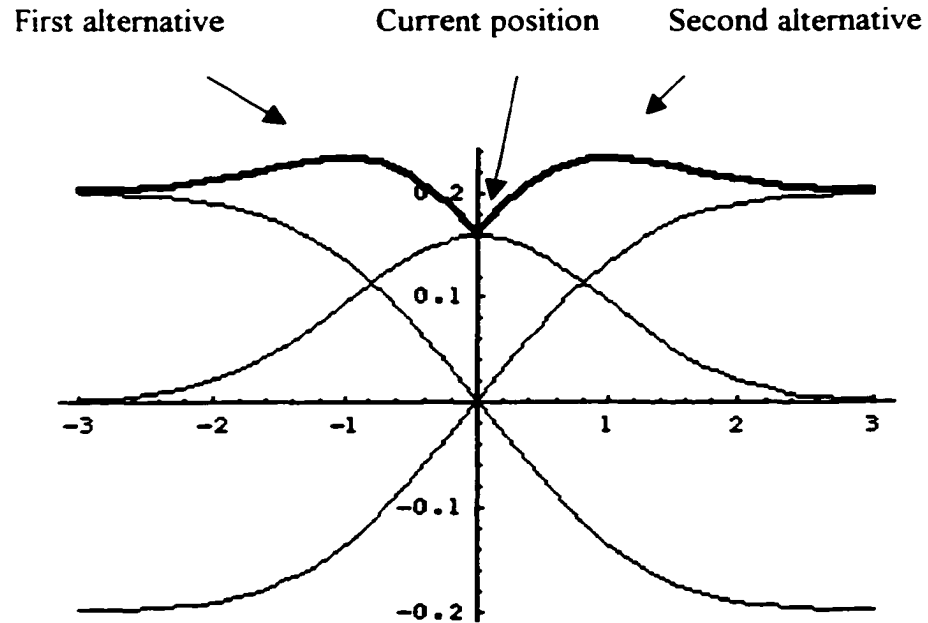
Note: Illustration is based on the standard normal distribution. The theoretical zero percent (0%) probability mark is left of the negative (-) 3 position on the horizontal axis, the fifty percent (50%) probability mark is at center or zero (0) point, and the theoretical hundred percent (100%) probability mark is to the right of the positive (+) position. All illustrations based on the angel wing model were graphed using Mathematica 3.0.



Another problematic choice condition is between equally positive alternatives. This type of choice is labeled a “dilemma”. Two types of dilemma are possible according to the model. The first occurs when the subjective position is at the 50% mark: i.e., the choice is related to a new experience. The type I dilemma is illustrated in Figure 7, which shows a rapid increase in preference for both alternatives up to dual cutoff points. The second type of dilemma occurs when the subjective position is at the 100% (i.e., identity) mark: i.e., the choice is in reference to a currently known or accepted alternative. Figure 8 illustrates a Type II dilemma. The preference function illustrated in Figure 8 is known in a related context as the “butterfly effect” (Mowen & Minor, 1998, p. 72-74).

To summarize, in dilemmas, false choices, and ambiguities, the features of the objects in the choice set do not permit ranking of these objects. Hence, by definition, a decision that favors a particular object cannot be based on features intrinsic to that object. Therefore, such a decision is susceptible to external influences: e.g., source cues with respect to two products that are perceived by a consumer as mutually substitutable.

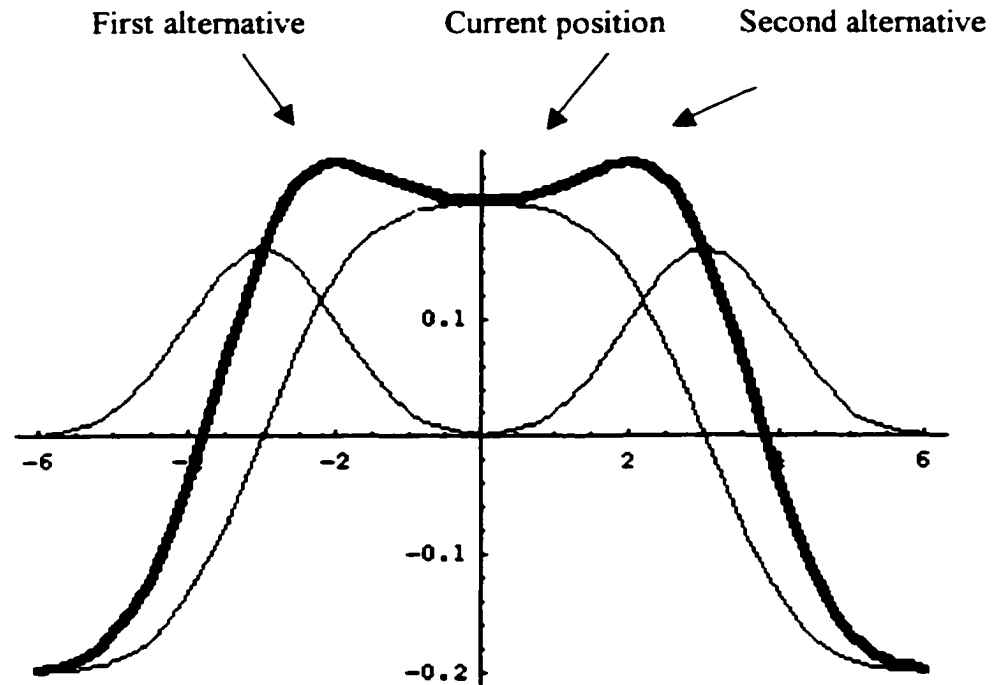
The angel wing model stipulates that the evaluation of a particular object of interest is determined jointly by the position of its features relative to the mean value of the relevant category of objects and normal frame of reference centered around the same mean. Consequently, the evaluation function reaches its highest value before the highest possible position of the features relative to the mean of the relevant category of objects. In effect, the normal frame of reference pulls the most preferred position towards the center (i.e., the reference mean) and away from the theoretical position of maximum gains.

**Figure 7: Dilemma Effect**

Type I Dilemma Effect: Two equally positive alternatives from a subjective position at the fifty percent (50%) mark.

Note: Illustration is based on the standard normal distribution. The theoretical zero percent (0%) probability mark is left of the negative (-) 3 position on the horizontal axis, the fifty percent (50%) probability mark is at center or zero (0) point, and the theoretical hundred percent (100%) probability mark is to the right of the positive (+) position. All illustrations based on the angel wing model were graphed using Mathematica 3.0.

**Figure 8: Butterfly Effect**



Butterfly Effect: Evaluation of two equally positive alternatives from a subjective position at the one hundred percent (100%) mark .

Note: Illustration is based on the standard normal distribution. The center point on the horizontal axis represents identity with a reference object. Extreme points to the right and left at positive and negative six (+6, -6) represents complete difference from the reference object. All illustrations based on the angel wing model were graphed using Mathematica 3.0.

Applying this idea to the concept of similarity, for example, seems to confirm the parallel propositions of Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer (1970, p.12) and Rogers and Bhowmik (1971, p.532), which were derived from empirical evidence. These propositions predict that to maximize the effectiveness of communications, the receiver should perceive the source to be alike in some respects and different in others.

To yield this conclusion, the subjective position is set at the 100% mark. In theory, source cues could position the source at the 0% similarity mark (completely unlike the receiver), the 100% mark (identical to the receiver in every respect), or somewhere between the 0% mark and the 100% mark. Rounding numbers, the angel wing model predicts that the optimal source will be perceived as similar to the receiver in 80% of his or her traits, and dissimilar in the remaining traits. I speculate here that the relevant in-group/out-group border defines the 50% mark in this type of evaluation.

To summarize, the theoretical evaluation mechanism described by the angel wing model is based on the presumption of subjective normality. Therefore, normalized distribution and cumulative probability functions, which describe normal variability and probability, are used to create the proposed model. The examples presented in the discussion illustrate the applicability of the angel wing model to diverse phenomena related to human inference processes based on environmental cues. Furthermore, several of the examples provided may indicate that the angel wing model is capable of retrodicting past phenomena (Hunt, 1991, p. 129).

### Summary

An information-processing approach appears to be better suited than a sociological approach to research questions about source evaluations in the context of

specified situations and topics (e.g., Cronkhite & Liska, 1976). Because source effects studies testing the leading information-processing model, Petty & Caccioppo's Elaboration Likelihood Model, have yielded equivocal results (e.g., Wilson & Sherrell, 1993), an alternative theoretical approach has been proposed.

Two basic premises inform the theoretical development presented in this chapter. The first is that a search for the most parsimonious among plausible alternative systems is likely to yield more robust theoretical constructs. The second is that human information-processing systems evolved to deal with normality and, thus, are likely to be predicated on normality.

Thus, subjective normality is a consequence of an innate presumption of environmental normality. Subjective normality is constructed by individuals from their life experiences and is likely to be validated by means of enactive, vicarious, social comparison, and logical verification. The interpersonal, cultural, and mass communication environments are the basis for vicarious and social comparison verification and influence enactive verification. Therefore, similar life experiences among individuals are likely, although identical life experiences are unlikely.

Because human capabilities are limited, the human information-processing system is posited to be selective. In general, the system is posited preferentially to process less rather than more data to generate an appropriate response to environmental stimuli. Furthermore, the system is posited to function primarily beyond the level of awareness and generally to be beyond conscious control. As stipulated, subjective normality informs and regulates the information-processing system.

A theoretical stimulus-response framework is developed that assumes subjective normality, filtering processes, and evaluation processes. Applying rules of parsimony, the framework is assumed to be consistent with Howard and Sheth's (1969) psychology-of-simplification decision categories. The stimulus-response framework, therefore, is based on a hierarchical rule that implies that most environmental data will be ignored, data that are not ignored will preferentially be used to trigger a routinized response, and data not suited to a routinized response will be processed as little as possible.

The stimulus-response system is posited to use a multi-purpose mechanism in selective and evaluative processes. The mechanism, like the stimulus-response system, is normality-based. The normalized distribution and cumulative probability functions are used to generate a model of the proposed mechanism.

When graphed, the resulting evaluation function resembles depictions of an angel's wing, thus I have proposed that the proposed model of the theoretical mechanism be called the "angel wing model." Further, I have proposed that the mechanism itself be called the "angel wing mechanism." Several implications of the model are presented. Among these are implications related to empirically-derived effects and propositions such as Kahneman and Tversky's (1979) prospect theory, the "butterfly effect" (Mowen & Minor, 1998, pp. 72-74), and the idea of optimal communicator similarity (Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer, 1970, p.12; Rogers and Bhowmik, 1971, p.532). That the angel wing model can illustrate these diverse effects may be a reflection of its usefulness.

## APPENDIX 2: PRODUCT COMPLEXITY PRETEST (ORIGINAL)

### Formulario Confidencial: Opiniones sobre Bienes y Servicios

Independientemente de su interés personal en los bienes o servicios indicados a continuación: En general, ¿qué opina de los siguientes productos desde la perspectiva de un consumidor?

1. Producto: **Videocasetera (VCR)**

Requiere muchos conocimientos	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requiere pocos conocimientos
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complejo
Difícil de entender	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Facil de entender
Facil de usar	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Difícil de usar
Sencillo	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Nada sencillo
Comprensible para cualquiera	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Comprensible para muy pocos

2. Producto: **Cuenta de Ahorros Bancaria**

Requiere muchos conocimientos	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requiere pocos conocimientos
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complejo
Difícil de entender	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Facil de entender
Facil de usar	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Difícil de usar
Sencillo	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Nada sencillo
Comprensible para cualquiera	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Comprensible para muy pocos

3. Producto: **Computador**

Requiere muchos conocimientos	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requiere pocos conocimientos
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complejo
Difícil de entender	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Facil de entender
Facil de usar	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Difícil de usar
Sencillo	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Nada sencillo
Comprensible para cualquiera	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Comprensible para muy pocos

4. Producto: **Inversiones en Bolsa**

Requiere muchos conocimientos	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requiere pocos conocimientos
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complejo
Difícil de entender	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Facil de entender
Facil de usar	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Difícil de usar
Sencillo	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Nada sencillo
Comprensible para cualquiera	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Comprensible para muy pocos

## (Appendix 2, continued)

5. Producto: **Teléfono Celular**

Requiere muchos conocimientos	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requiere pocos conocimientos
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complejo
Difícil de entender	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Fácil de entender
Fácil de usar	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Difícil de usar
Sencillo	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Nada sencillo
Comprensible para cualquiera	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Comprensible para muy pocos

6. Producto: **Seguros de Salud (ISAPRE)**

Requiere muchos conocimientos	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requiere pocos conocimientos
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complejo
Difícil de entender	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Fácil de entender
Fácil de usar	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Difícil de usar
Sencillo	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Nada sencillo
Comprensible para cualquiera	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Comprensible para muy pocos

7. Producto: **Horno de Microondas**

Requiere muchos conocimientos	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requiere pocos conocimientos
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complejo
Difícil de entender	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Fácil de entender
Fácil de usar	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Difícil de usar
Sencillo	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Nada sencillo
Comprensible para cualquiera	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Comprensible para muy pocos

8. Producto: **Fondo de Pensión (AFP)**

Requiere muchos conocimientos	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requiere pocos conocimientos
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complejo
Difícil de entender	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Fácil de entender
Fácil de usar	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Difícil de usar
Sencillo	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Nada sencillo
Comprensible para cualquiera	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Comprensible para muy pocos



## APPENDIX 3: PRODUCT COMPLEXITY PRETEST (TRANSLATION)

### Confidential Questionnaire: Opinions about Goods y Services

Aside from your personal interest in the goods and services listed below, in general, what is your opinion about the following products *from the point of view of a consumer?*

1. Product: **Videocassette Player (VCR)**

Requires much knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requires little knowledge
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complex
Hard to understand	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Easy to understand
Easy to use	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Hard to use
Uncomplicated	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complicated
Anyone can comprehend	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Few can comprehend

2. Producto: **Cuenta de Ahorros Bancaria**

Requires much knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requires little knowledge
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complex
Hard to understand	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Easy to understand
Easy to use	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Hard to use
Uncomplicated	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complicated
Anyone can comprehend	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Few can comprehend

3. Producto: **Computador**

Requires much knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requires little knowledge
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complex
Hard to understand	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Easy to understand
Easy to use	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Hard to use
Uncomplicated	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complicated
Anyone can comprehend	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Few can comprehend

4. Producto: **Inversiones en Bolsa**

Requires much knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requires little knowledge
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complex
Hard to understand	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Easy to understand
Easy to use	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Hard to use
Uncomplicated	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complicated
Anyone can comprehend	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Few can comprehend

## (Appendix 3, continued)

5. Producto: **Teléfono Celular**

Requires much knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requires little knowledge
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complex
Hard to understand	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Easy to understand
Easy to use	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Hard to use
Uncomplicated	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complicated
Anyone can comprehend	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Few can comprehend

6. Producto: **Seguros de Salud (ISAPRE)**

Requires much knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requires little knowledge
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complex
Hard to understand	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Easy to understand
Easy to use	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Hard to use
Uncomplicated	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complicated
Anyone can comprehend	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Few can comprehend

7. Producto: **Horno de Microondas**

Requires much knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requires little knowledge
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complex
Hard to understand	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Easy to understand
Easy to use	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Hard to use
Uncomplicated	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complicated
Anyone can comprehend	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Few can comprehend

8. Producto: **Fondo de Pensión (AFP)**

Requires much knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requires little knowledge
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complex
Hard to understand	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Easy to understand
Easy to use	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Hard to use
Uncomplicated	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complicated
Anyone can comprehend	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Few can comprehend

## APPENDIX 4: STUDENT SURVEY (ORIGINAL)

### EVALUACION DE REACCIONES ANTE MENSAJES PROMOCIONALES GRABADOS

Este estudio busca extender nuestros conocimientos sobre las opiniones de los consumidores respecto a los mensajes promocionales grabados. Agradecemos de antemano su amable colaboración con este estudio. Atendiendo a la naturaleza *estrictamente confidencial* de este estudio, le solicitamos que sus respuestas sean completamente francas, pues *no existen respuestas correctas ni incorrectas*.

#### A. Datos Generales

1. ¿Su sexo? Masculino  Femenino
2. ¿Edad? Menos de 21 años  De 21 a 30 años  De 31 a 44 años   
De 45 a 64 años  65 años o más
3. ¿Estudia actualmente? No  Pregrado  Posgrado  Otro
4. ¿Trabaja? No  Sí  ¿Horas aproximadas por semana? \_\_\_\_\_
5. ¿Lugar donde vive Ud.? Dirección:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*Casa propia*  *Casa de padres*  *Casa de otros familiares*   
*Pensión*  *Casa arrendada para su uso*
6. ¿Costo mensual de arriendo de su residencia? \_\_\_\_\_
7. ¿Quién cubre el costo de arriendo? Ud.  Sus padres/familiares   
Otros
8. En relación con su uso personal de automóviles:
  - a) ¿Tiene Ud. auto propio? Sí  No
  - b) Si tiene auto propio, ¿es un modelo nuevo o muy reciente? Sí  No
  - c) ¿Cuántos autos tiene su familia inmediata? \_\_\_\_\_
9. ¿Cómo calificaría sus antecedentes? Rurales  Urbanos
10. Con la siguiente escala del 1 al 9, ¿cómo calificaría Ud. el nivel socioeconómico de su familia?  
*Interpretación: Calificación de "1"      Algunas carencias*  
*Calificación de "5"      Nunca falta, pero nunca sobra*  
*Calificación de "9"      Regularmente existen excedentes*  
Recursos limitados            Recursos abundantes  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

(Appendix 4, continued)

**B. Información para el resumen de impresiones**

1. En el formulario anexo, marque con equis (X) los cuadros correspondientes a las impresiones que Ud. captó de la persona que habló en la grabación.
2. Para cada indicador de impresiones hay siete (7) cuadro disponibles para que Ud. señale su respuesta.
3. Observe que los indicadores de impresión en algunos renglones van de impresión positiva (favorable) a impresión negativa (desfavorable), mientras que en otros renglones van de impresión negativa a impresión positiva.
4. Deberá marcarse *un solo cuadro por renglón numerado*.

**Ejemplo 1:** Si Ud. percibe que quien habló no está lo suficientemente calificado para representar el producto mencionado en la grabación, marque un cuadro que corresponde a una impresión negativa. **En este ejemplo, los cuadros que corresponden a una impresión desfavorable están al lado izquierdo:** mientras más definitiva sea su impresión, más a la izquierda debe estar el cuadro que marque.

- a) *Impresión algo negativa:* 9. No calificado  Calificado
- b) *Impresión muy negativa:* 9. No calificado  Calificado

**Ejemplo 2:** Note Ud. que en algunos casos la anotaciones *positivas* pueden ser a la izquierda y las *negativas* a la derecha, mientras que *en otros casos* las anotaciones *positivas* pueden ser a la derecha y las *negativas* a la izquierda.

- a) *Impresión bastante positiva:* 3. Honrado  No es honrado
- b) *Impresión menos positiva:* 2. Deshonesto  Honesto

(Appendix 4, continued)

**FORMULARIO CONFIDENCIAL: MENSAJES PROMOCIONALES GRABADOS****C. Resumen de Impresiones**

- |                               |   |                        |
|-------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| 1. Digno de confianza         | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | No digno de confianza  |
| 2. Dishonesto                 | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Honesto                |
| 3. Honrado                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | No honrado             |
| 4. Confiable                  | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | No confiable           |
| 5. Sincero                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | No sincero             |
| 6. Experto                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | No experto             |
| 7. Sin experiencia            | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Con experiencia        |
| 8. Con conocimientos          | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Sin conocimientos      |
| 9. No calificado              | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Calificado             |
| 10. Sin habilidad             | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Con habilidad          |
| 11. No se puede confiar en él | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Se puede confiar en él |
| 12. No da seguridad           | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Da seguridad           |

**D. Opiniones Generales**

1. Si Ud. tuviera interés en el producto o servicio mencionado en la grabación:
  - a) ¿Qué tan probable sería que Ud. quisiera tratar con la persona que escuchó?  
 Nada probable       Muy probable
  - b) ¿Considera probable que esta persona pueda dar el nivel de servicio que Ud. prefiere?  
 Nada probable       Muy probable
  - c) ¿Le gustaría iniciar y mantener una relación comercial duradera con esta persona?  
 Definitivamente no       Definitivamente sí
  - d) ¿Preferiría *tratar* con la persona que escuchó en la grabación o *evitar* a esta persona?  
 Prefiero tratar       Prefiero evitar
  
2. ¿Cuánto cree Ud. que se parece en su forma de hablar la persona en la grabación a . . .
  - a) los vecinos de su lugar de origen?  
 Nada parecida       Muy parecida
  - b) sus parientes cercanos?  
 Nada parecida       Muy parecida
  - c) sus amigos?  
 Nada parecida       Muy parecida
  - d) a Ud.?  
 Nada parecida       Muy parecida

## (Appendix 4, continued)

3. ¿Le interesó el producto mencionado en la grabación?

(a) Ningún interés (b) Muy poco interés (c) Interesante, pero no para obtenerlo (d) Tengo intención de obtenerlo (e) Ya cuento con él.

4. En general, ¿qué opina Ud. de la persona en la grabación?

Nada convincente	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Muy convincente
Dudo de él	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	No dudo de él
Muy creíble	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Nada creíble
Conoce el tema	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	No conoce el tema
Nada persuasivo	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Muy persuasivo
Dice la verdad	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Miente
No le creo	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Le creo

5. Independientemente de su interés personal en el producto o servicio mencionado, en general ¿qué opina Ud. de este producto o servicio?

Requiere muchos conocimientos	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requiere pocos conocimientos
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complejo
Difícil de entender	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Fácil de entender
Fácil de usar	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Difícil de usar
Sencillo	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Nada sencillo
Comprensible para cualquiera	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Comprensible para muy pocos

6. Usando una escala del 1 al 9, ¿como calificaría el nivel socioeconómico de la persona que escuchó en la grabación?

Recursos limitados	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Recursos abundantes
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	

APPENDIX 5: STUDENT SURVEY (TRANSLATION)

EVALUATION OF REACTIONS TO RECORDED PROMOTIONAL MESSAGES

This study seeks to extend our understanding of consumer opinions regarding recorded promotional messages. Your cooperation with this study will be greatly appreciated. Because your responses will be *strictly anonymous*, please be completely frank in your answers in the understanding that there are *no correct or incorrect answers*.

A. General Information

1. Sex? Male  Female
2. Age? Under 21  21 to 30  31 to 44   
45 to 64  65 or older
3. Are you a student? No  Undergraduate  Graduate  Other
4. Do you work? No  Yes  Approximate hours per week? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Where do you live? Address:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*Own home*  *Parents' home*  *Home of other relatives*   
*Rooming house*  *Rented house*
6. Monthly rental payment for place of residence? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Who pays for your rental expenses? You  Your parents/relatives   
Others
8. With regard to your personal use of automobiles:
  - a) Do you have your own car? Yes  No
  - b) If you have a car, is it a new or recent model? Yes  No
  - c) How many cars does your immediate family have? \_\_\_\_\_
9. How would you classify your background? Rural  Urban
10. On the following scale from 1 to 9, how would you rate your family's socioeconomic background?  
*Interpretación:* Score of "1" *Some unmet needs*  
Score of "5" *Never too little, never a lot*  
Score of "9" *Usually more than enough*  
Limited resources  Abundant resources  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

(Appendix 5, continued)

**B. Instructions for answering summary of impressions**

1. On the form provided, *place an "X"* on the squares which correspond to your impressions about the person who spoke in the recording..
2. For each indicator of impressions, there are seven (7) squares available for you to place your answer.
3. Observe that the indicators of impressions go from a positive impression (favorable) to a negative impression (unfavorable) on some lines, while they go from a negative impression to a positive impression in other lines.
4. Cross only one square on each numbered row.

**Example 1:** If you perceive that the person who spoke is not sufficiently qualified to represent the product mentioned in the recording, mark a square which corresponds to a negative impression. *In this example, the squares which correspond to an unfavorable impression are to the left side:* the more definite your impression, the further to the left should the square be that you cross.

- a) *Somewhat negative:* 9. Unqualified  Qualified
- b) *Very negative:* 9. Unqualified  Qualified

**Example 2:** Note that in some cases the *positive* marks may be on the *left* side and the *negative* marks may be on the *right* side, while in other cases the positive marks may be to the right and the negative marks to the left.

- a) *Very positive:* 1. Dependable  Undependable
- b) *Less positive:* 5. Insincere  Sincere



(Appendix 5, continued)

**CONFIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE: RECORDED PROMOTIONAL MESSAGES****C. Summary of Impressions**

- |                              |   |                   |
|------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1. Trustworthy               | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Untrustworthy     |
| 2. Dishonorable              | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Honorable         |
| 3. Honest                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Dishonest         |
| 4. Dependable                | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Undependable      |
| 5. Sincere                   | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Insincere         |
| 6. Expert                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Not an expert     |
| 7. Inexperienced             | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Experienced       |
| 8. Knowledgeable             | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Not knowledgeable |
| 9. Unqualified               | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Qualified         |
| 10. Unskilled                | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Skilled           |
| 11. Cannot be trusted        | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Can be trusted    |
| 12. Does not give confidence | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Gives confidence  |

**D. Opiniones Generales**

1. If you were interested in the product or service mentioned in the recording:
  - a) How likely would it be that you would wish to deal with the person you heard?  
 Not at all likely            Very likely
  - b) Do you think it likely that this person can provide the service you prefer?  
 Not at all likely            Very likely
  - c) Would you like to initiate and maintain a business relationship with this person?  
 Definitely not            Definitely
  - d) Would you rather *deal with* or *avoid* the person you heard in the recording?  
 Prefer to deal with            Prefer to avoid
  
2. How much do you think that, in manner of speech, the person you heard resembles . . .
  - a) your neighbors in your place of origin?  
 Nothing alike            Very much alike
  - b) your close relatives?  
 Nothing alike            Very much alike
  - c) your friends?  
 Nothing alike            Very much alike
  - d) yourself?  
 Nothing alike            Very much alike

## (Appendix 5, continued)

3. Did the product mentioned in the recording interest you?

(a) No interest at all (b) Very little interest (c) Interesting, but not enough to acquire it (d) I intend to acquire it (e) I already have it.

4. In general, what is your opinion of the person in the recording?

Not convincing	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Very convincing
I doubt him	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	I don't doubt him
Very believable	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Not believable
Knows the subject	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Doesn't know the subject
Not persuasive	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Very persuasive
Tells the truth	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Lies
I don't believe him	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	I believe him

5. Aside from your personal interest, in the product or service mentioned, in general what is your opinion about this product or service?

Requires much knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requires little knowledge
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complex
Hard to understand	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Easy to understand
Easy to use	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Hard to use
Uncomplicated	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complicated
Anyone can comprehend	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Few can comprehend

6. Using a scale from 1 to 9, how would you rate the socioeconomic level of the person you heard in the recording?

Limited resources	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Abundant resources
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	

**APPENDIX 6: FIELD SURVEY (ORIGINAL)**

**EVALUACION DE REACCIONES ANTE MENSAJES PROMOCIONALES GRABADOS**

Este estudio busca extender nuestros conocimientos sobre las opiniones de los consumidores respecto a los mensajes promocionales grabados. Agradecemos de antemano su amable colaboración con este estudio. Atendiendo a la naturaleza *estrictamente confidencial* de este estudio, le solicitamos que sus respuestas sean completamente francas, pues *no existen respuestas correctas ni incorrectas*.

**A. Datos Generales**      **JRM** \_\_\_\_\_      **ID** \_\_\_\_\_

1. ¿Su sexo? Masculino       Femenino
2. ¿Edad? Menos de 21 años  De 21 a 30 años  De 31 a 44 años   
De 45 a 64 años  65 años o más
3. ¿Estudia actualmente? No  Pregrado  Posgrado  Otro
4. ¿Trabaja? No  Sí  ¿Horas aproximadas por semana? \_\_\_\_\_
5. ¿Casado (a) actualmente? Sí  No  ¿Hijos? Sí  No
6. ¿Quién cubre el costo de su vivienda? Ud.  Sus padres/familiares  Otros
7. ¿Cuáles son sus medios acostumbrados de transporte en la ciudad?
8. Del 1 al 9, califique lo necesarios que considera los siguientes bienes y servicios:  

<i>Interpretación:</i> Calificación de "1"	<i>Nada útiles ni necesarios</i>
Calificación de "5"	<i>Son útiles pero no indispensables</i>
Calificación de "9"	<i>Son muy necesarios</i>

a) Computador	Nada	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Mucho
b) Horno de microondas	Nada	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Mucho
c) Seguro de salud (medico)	Nada	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Mucho
d) Teléfono celular	Nada	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Mucho
e) Cuenta bancaria de ahorros	Nada	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Mucho
f) Cuenta bancaria de cheques	Nada	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Mucho
9. ¿Cómo calificaría sus antecedentes? Rurales  Urbanos
10. Con la siguiente escala del 1 al 9, ¿cómo calificaría Ud. el nivel socioeconómico de su familia?  

<i>Interpretación:</i> Calificación de "1"	<i>Algunas carencias</i>
Calificación de "5"	<i>Nunca falta, pero nunca sobra</i>
Calificación de "9"	<i>Regularmente existen excedentes</i>

Recursos limitados	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Recursos abundantes
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	

(Appendix 6, continued)

**B. Información para el resumen de impresiones**

1. En el formulario anexo, marque con equis (X) los cuadros correspondientes a las impresiones que Ud. captó de la persona que habló en la grabación.
2. Para cada indicador de impresiones hay siete (7) cuadro disponibles para que Ud. señale su respuesta.
3. Observe que los indicadores de impresión en algunos renglones van de impresión positiva (favorable) a impresión negativa (desfavorable), mientras que en otros renglones van de impresión negativa a impresión positiva.
4. Deberá marcarse *un solo cuadro por renglón numerado*.

**Ejemplo 1:** Si Ud. percibe que quien habló *nó* está lo suficientemente calificado para representar el producto mencionado en la grabación, marque un cuadro que corresponde a una impresión negativa. **En este ejemplo, los cuadros que corresponden a una impresión desfavorable están al lado izquierdo:** mientras más definitiva sea su impresión, más a la izquierda debe estar el cuadro que marque.

- a) *Impresión algo negativa:* 9. No calificado  Calificado
- b) *Impresión muy negativa:* 9. No calificado  Calificado

**Ejemplo 2:** Note Ud. que en algunos casos la anotaciones *positivas* pueden ser a la izquierda y las *negativas* a la derecha, mientras que *en otros casos* las anotaciones *positivas* pueden ser a la derecha y las *negativas* a la izquierda.

- a) *Impresión bastante positiva:* 3. Honrado  No es honrado
- b) *Impresión menos positiva:* 2. Dishonesto  Honesto

(Appendix 6, continued)

**FORMULARIO CONFIDENCIAL: MENSAJES PROMOCIONALES GRABADOS****C. Resumen de Impresiones**

- |                               |   |                        |
|-------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| 1. Digno de confianza         | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | No digno de confianza  |
| 2. Deshonesto                 | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Honesto                |
| 3. Honrado                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | No honrado             |
| 4. Confiable                  | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | No confiable           |
| 5. Sincero                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | No sincero             |
| 6. Experto                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | No experto             |
| 7. Sin experiencia            | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Con experiencia        |
| 8. Con conocimientos          | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Sin conocimientos      |
| 9. No calificado              | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Calificado             |
| 10. Sin habilidad             | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Con habilidad          |
| 11. No se puede confiar en él | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Se puede confiar en él |
| 12. No da seguridad           | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Da seguridad           |

**D. Opiniones Generales**

1. Si Ud. tuviera interés en el producto o servicio mencionado en la grabación:
  - a) ¿Qué tan probable sería que Ud. quisiera tratar con la persona que escuchó?  
 Nada probable       Muy probable
  - b) ¿Considera probable que esta persona pueda dar el nivel de servicio que Ud. prefiere?  
 Nada probable       Muy probable
  - c) ¿Le gustaría iniciar y mantener una relación comercial duradera con esta persona?  
 Definitivamente no       Definitivamente sí
  - d) ¿Preferiría *tratar* con la persona que escuchó en la grabación o *evitar* a esta persona?  
 Prefiero tratar       Prefiero evitar
  
2. ¿Cuánto cree Ud. que se parece en su forma de hablar la persona en la grabación a . . .
  - a) los vecinos de su lugar de origen?  
 Nada parecida       Muy parecida
  - b) sus parientes cercanos?  
 Nada parecida       Muy parecida
  - c) sus amigos?  
 Nada parecida       Muy parecida
  - d) a Ud.?  
 Nada parecida       Muy parecida

## (Appendix 6, continued)

3. ¿Qué tan necesario es el producto mencionado en la grabación?

Nada necesario  Muy necesario  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

4. En general, ¿qué opina Ud. de la persona en la grabación?

Nada convincente	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Muy convincente
Dudo de él	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	No dudo de él
Muy creíble	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Nada creíble
Conoce el tema	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	No conoce el tema
Nada persuasivo	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Muy persuasivo
Dice la verdad	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Miente
No le creo	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Le creo

5. Independientemente de su interés personal en el producto o servicio mencionado, en general ¿qué opina Ud. de este producto o servicio?

Requiere muchos conocimientos	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requiere pocos conocimientos
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complejo
Difícil de entender	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Fácil de entender
Fácil de usar	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Difícil de usar
Sencillo	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Nada sencillo
Comprensible para cualquiera	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Comprensible para muy pocos

6. Usando una escala del 1 al 9, ¿cómo calificaría el nivel socioeconómico de la persona que escuchó en la grabación?

Recursos limitados  Recursos abundantes  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

**APPENDIX 7: FIELD SURVEY (TRANSLATION)**

**EVALUATION OF REACTIONS TO RECORDED PROMOTIONAL MESSAGES**

This study seeks to extend our understanding of consumer opinions regarding recorded promotional messages. Your cooperation with this study will be greatly appreciated. Because your responses will be *strictly anonymous*, please be completely frank in your answers in the understanding that there are *no correct or incorrect answers*.

**A. General Information**                      **JRM (Neighborhood SES) ID** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Sex? Male  Female
2. Age? Under 21       21 to 30       31 to 44   
45 to 64  65 or older
3. Are you a student?      No  Undergraduate  Graduate  Other
4. Do you work? No  Yes       Approximate hours per week? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Currently married? Yes       No  Children? Yes  No
6. Who pays for your rental expenses? You  Your parents/relatives  Others
7. What are your usual means of transport in the city?

a) Bicycle or bus   b) Bus or taxi   c) Taxi or personal car

8. From 1 to 9, rate how necessary you consider the following goods and services:

<p><i>Interpretación:</i> Score of "1" Score of "5" Score of "9"</p>	<p><i>Some unmet needs</i> <i>Never too little, never a lot</i> <i>Usually more than enough</i></p>
<p>a) Computer</p> <p>b) Microwave oven</p> <p>c) Health insurance (medical)</p> <p>d) Cellular phone</p> <p>e) Bank savings account</p> <p>f) Bank checking account</p>	<p>Not at all   <input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/>    Very</p> <p>Not at all   <input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/>    Very</p> <p>Not at all   <input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/>    Very</p> <p>Not at all   <input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/>    Very</p> <p>Not at all   <input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/>    Very</p> <p>Not at all   <input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/>    Very</p>

9. How would you classify your background? Rural       Urban

10. On the following scale from 1 to 9, how would you rate your family's socioeconomic background?

<p><i>Interpretación:</i> Score of "1" Score of "5" Score of "9"</p>	<p><i>Some unmet needs</i> <i>Never too little, never a lot</i> <i>Usually more than enough</i></p>
<p>Limited resources</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/>      Abundant resources</p>
	<p>1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9</p>

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(Appendix 7, continued)

**B. Instructions for answering summary of impressions**

1. On the form provided, *place an "X"* on the squares which correspond to your impressions about the person who spoke in the recording..
2. For each indicator of impressions, there are seven (7) squares available for you to place your answer.
3. Observe that the indicators of impressions go from a positive impression (favorable) to a negative impression (unfavorable) on some lines, while they go from a negative impression to a positive impression in other lines.
4. Cross only one square on each numbered row.

**Example 1:** If you perceive that the person who spoke is not sufficiently qualified to represent the product mentioned in the recording, mark a square which corresponds to a negative impression. *In this example, the squares which correspond to an unfavorable impression are to the left side:* the more definite your impression, the further to the left should the square be that you cross.

a) *Somewhat negative:* 9. Unqualified  Qualified

b) *Very negative:* 9. Unqualified  Qualified

**Example 2:** Note that in some cases the *positive* marks may be on the *left* side and the *negative* marks may be on the *right* side, while in other cases the positive marks may be to the right and the negative marks to the left.

a) *Very positive:* 1. Dependable  Undependable

b) *Less positive:* 5. Insincere  Sincere



(Appendix 7, continued)

**CONFIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE: RECORDED PROMOTIONAL MESSAGES****C. Summary of Impressions**

- |                              |   |                   |
|------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1. Trustworthy               | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Untrustworthy     |
| 2. Dishonorable              | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Honorable         |
| 3. Honest                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Dishonest         |
| 4. Dependable                | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Undependable      |
| 5. Sincere                   | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Insincere         |
| 6. Expert                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Not an expert     |
| 7. Inexperienced             | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Experienced       |
| 8. Knowledgeable             | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Not knowledgeable |
| 9. Unqualified               | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Qualified         |
| 10. Unskilled                | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Skilled           |
| 11. Cannot be trusted        | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Can be trusted    |
| 12. Does not give confidence | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Gives confidence  |

**D. Opiniones Generales**

1. If you were interested in the product or service mentioned in the recording:
  - a) How likely would it be that you would wish to deal with the person you heard?  
 Not at all likely        Very likely
  - b) Do you think it likely that this person can provide the service you prefer?  
 Not at all likely        Very likely
  - c) Would you like to initiate and maintain a business relationship with this person?  
 Definitely not        Definitely
  - d) Would you rather *deal with* or *avoid* the person you heard in the recording?  
 Prefer to deal with        Prefer to avoid
  
2. How much do you think that, in manner of speech, the person you heard resembles . . .
  - a) your neighbors in your place of origin?  
 Nothing alike        Very much alike
  - b) your close relatives?  
 Nothing alike        Very much alike
  - c) your friends?  
 Nothing alike        Very much alike
  - d) yourself?  
 Nothing alike        Very much alike

(Appendix 7, continued)

3. How necessary is the product mentioned in the recording?

Unnecessary  Very necessary  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

4. In general, what is your opinion of the person in the recording?

Not convincing	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Very convincing
I doubt him	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	I don't doubt him
Very believable	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Not believable
Knows the subject	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Doesn't know the subject
Not persuasive	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Very persuasive
Tells the truth	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Lies
I don't believe him	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	I believe him

5. Aside from your personal interest, in the product or service mentioned, in general what is your opinion about this product or service?

Requires much knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Requires little knowledge
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complex
Hard to understand	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Easy to understand
Easy to use	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Hard to use
Uncomplicated	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Complicated
Anyone can comprehend	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Few can comprehend

6. Using a scale from 1 to 9, how would you rate the socioeconomic level of the person you heard in the recording?

Limited resources  Abundant resources  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

## VITA

Victor R. Davila

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### Educational Background

University of Texas – Pan American, Ph. D., International Business, 2000

Pan American University, B.B.A., Management, 1986

### Academic Experience

Assistant Professor of Marketing and International Business,

University of Akron, Akron, Ohio 1999-Present

Teaching Assistant, University of Texas – Pan American,

Edinburg, Texas 1995-1999

Visiting Professor, Universidad de Talca,

Talca, Chile 1997

### Business Background

Management background in marketing and plant management, with particular emphasis in maquiladora industry.

Co-founder, National Executive Committee member, and past president of the Consejo Nacional de la Industria Maquiladora de Exportación in Mexico.