

The Art of Corporate Storytelling
*Exploring the effects of jargon and dramatic storytelling on reputation, trust and
customer-company identification in the light of corporate stories.*

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ABSTRACT

Over the past decades, storytelling has become an increasingly important tool in corporate marketing and branding. Yet, it appears to be unclear what the perfect approach to creating an effective corporate narrative is. Literature confirms that there is a lack of empirical research on corporate stories in general, especially when it comes to the implementation of jargon-like language. Moreover, various sources point towards the positive effects dramatic storytelling in corporate storytelling on trust and reputation. This paper delves into the use of jargon and dramatic storytelling elements in corporate stories, more specifically the effect they have on corporate reputation, perceived trust and customer-company identification, whilst exploring the effect of the organizational type. Hence, an empirical study with a 2x2x2 design was conducted in which respondents read and evaluated 1 of 8 fictional texts about fictional organizations that contained elements of jargon and dramatic storytelling. The sample of the study consisted of 171 Dutch students with an average age of 22 from different educational institutions that were collected through personal networking and online student groups. In order to analyze the results from these respondents a multivariate analysis was conducted, which presented no significant effects. This can be explained by possible limitations in the research design or the wrong target group. In the end, the study proposes further research on the topic of corporate stories and points towards a re-evaluation of elements of drama and jargon in corporate stories.

Keywords: corporate story, jargon, dramatic storytelling, reputation, trust, customer-company identification

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1. INTRODUCTION

“Philip Morris is a family of companies. We are parents, neighbors, friends and involved citizens in communities around the nation and around the world. We are dedicated to our jobs, our families, our communities and to helping others. We have a long history of giving to community activities, including hunger, the Arts, job training, education, domestic violence and disaster relief. We are committed to working with a variety of groups to improve the quality of life in our communities.”

Philip Morris’ short corporate mission and vision statement is a textbook example of a corporate narrative. In their case study, McDaniel and Malone (2015) elaborate on how Philip Morris’ management changed the company’s narrative, and how this alteration affected the organization and its employees. In the case of Philip Morris, a tobacco company, the corporate narrative strived to display the organization as caring and highly responsible for its customers and employees, in contradiction to the profit-oriented and self-defensive attitudes they had in the past. Although the effects of the changed corporate story were limited, it displayed an attempt to alter the perception of the employees and the outside world on the company. Over the past decades, storytelling has become an increasingly important tool in corporate marketing and branding.

Similarly to the case of Philip Morris, corporate storytelling has helped many organizations to distinguish themselves from other brands (Kaufman, as cited in Delgado-Ballester & Fernández-Sabiote, 2016). Akgün, Keskin, Ayar and Erdogan (2015) see corporate storytelling as a promotional tool that can ameliorate brand recognition and identification. Moreover, corporate storytelling can create an emotional investment towards the organization itself and the product or service they are promoting (Aaker and Smith, as cited in Akgün, Keskin, Ayar, & Erdogan, 2015). Research from Lundqvist, Liljander, Gummerus and Van Riel (2013) underlines the positive aspects of corporate stories, as they concluded that customers were more positive and more willing to pay for a product after being exposed to a corporate story. Weber and Grauer (2019) support these theories by classifying a corporate story - about an innovation or an innovator - as a way to create trust and reliability.

Generally speaking, creating an improved perception towards a brand seems to be the overarching goal of corporate stories, although the approach in which the goal is achieved appears to be twofold. Corporate stories are employed to ameliorate a company’s corporate reputation and brand identity. The duality appears within the creation of the stories, as they can be created and carried out by both the company itself - through a unified message from the top layer of the organization or through the employees. The former is usually aimed at customers and consumers, whilst the latter has internal communication at its core. This research will focus on the external communications, so testing how corporate stories have an effect on the perception of the customer.

Research seems to cement corporate stories as a valuable business tool. Still, the amount of empirical research on the topic is limited. Moreover, Delgado-Ballester and Fernández-Sabiote (2016) report that in their sample of Spanish companies, only 25% of the organizations actually use corporate storytelling. Although this low implementation rate is not representative for all organizations in the world, it does not reflect its added value. Although there has been an extensive amount of research on corporate stories, the exact content of the corporate story remains unclear. Literature concisely describes it as factual corporate information with storytelling elements. Essentially, this description boils down to a mission and vision statement, as such a message provides corporate information and touches upon the past and the future of an organization, leaving room for storytelling elements (Berbegal-Mirabent, Guerrero, & Mas-Machuca, 2018).

Nonetheless, it is unclear which elements of a corporate story would work the best for organizations, as there is a lack of empirical research that statistically proves the effectiveness of corporate stories (Janssen, van Dalen, van Hoof, & van Vuuren (2012). Similarly, Ruy, Lehto, Gordon and Fu (2018) argue for empirical validation of the effects of corporate storytelling. Thus, research has been done regarding the content of corporate narratives, but these are not backed up by statistical analysis or empirical research.

As a reaction to this lack of empirical research targeting the effectiveness of corporate stories, this research will aim to contribute to literature regarding the effects of corporate narratives on variables such as reputation, customer-company identification and trust. Considering the magnitude of the concept of corporate stories, this current research will focus on certain textual elements within corporate stories. These textual elements will be referred to as “dramatic storytelling” and “jargon”. The choice to explore the variable of dramatic storytelling was inspired by a study from Scheerder, Karreman and De Jong (2017), who concluded that having a character in the corporate story did not have a significant effect. In combination with a literature that emphasizes the positive aspects of heroes in corporate stories, it was therefore decided to look into the effects of a heroic character in a corporate story.

The other variable, “jargon”, was inspired by curiosity regarding the corporate stories of financial institutions. For instance, financial language can be technical and tough to understand for individuals without a background in finance, but one can say that they are crucial terms and thus belong in the text. Moreover, there appears to be a lack of research on the topic of jargon within corporate stories.

To add to the depth of the study, the effect of the type of organization will be analyzed, as an exploratory variable.

Based on the aforementioned findings, the following research question was formulated:

To what extent does the use of jargon and dramatic storytelling elements in a corporate story influence the corporate reputation, customer-company identification and perceived trust of a financial or non-profit organization?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The following theoretical framework will highlight the different variables in this current study and expand on how literature has shaped their definitions. As previously noted, the research question includes the topics of jargon, dramatic storytelling, customer-company identification, corporate reputation and perceived trust. Hence, in order to get a clear idea of how our results and use of terms should be interpreted, the next paragraphs will expand on the definitions of the variables in the research question and how they will be interpreted during the research.

2.1 - Definition of Corporate Stories

Firstly, the definitions of corporate stories in literature will be analyzed. There are different approaches towards corporate stories, Dowling (2006) defines it as an internal process: “the practice of using narration from within the organization relating to its people, practices, policies and visions to effectively engage with staff”. In the same vein, Gill (as cited in McDaniel & Malone, 2015) believes that corporate storytelling is “the process of developing and delivering an organization’s message by using narration about people, the organization, the past, visions for the future, social bonding, and work itself ... to create a new point-of-view or reinforce an opinion or behavior”. Different to Dowling’s definition, Gill implies that the aim of a corporate story is to reinforce an opinion or spark a change in behavior, whereas Dowling sees it as a means to connect with staff. Van Riel and Fombrun (as cited in Roper & Spear, 2013) focus on the external stakeholders as they write that a corporate story helps to position the company against competitors. Meyers (2014) identifies a trend in the sense that storytelling is being used more and more to reach external stakeholders in order to build customer loyalty. Scheerder, Karreman and De Jong (2017) make a distinction between corporate information and corporate stories. Whereas corporate information is plain and merely factual information, stories create a context and a structure, allowing the content to flourish and become memorable and believable. Essentially, their definition of a corporate story can be seen as factual corporate information with elements of a story. As this research will revolve around the effects of textual elements on reputation and perceived trust, two concepts impacted by external stakeholders, a combination of the definitions of Van Riel & Fombrun and Gill appears to be the most appropriate. Regarding the aim of this study and literature, a corporate story is an organization’s narrated message about people, the organization, the past, visions for the future, social bonding and the work itself, which aims to create a perspective, reinforce an opinion or behavior and establish a market position.

Thus, the main focus of a corporate story is the core of the organization, which is something this study consequently should focus on. For that reason the emphasis of this research will be placed on the mission and vision components of a corporate story. Although Illia and Zamparini (2016) argue that the core of corporate stories lies within the historical construction of an organization, literature emphasizes the importance of identity, core activities and future activities, something that can be found in mission and vision statements (Alegre,

Berbegal-Mirabent, Guerrero, Mas-Machuca, & 2018). Hence, it is justified to focus on the mission and vision element of corporate stories.

2.2 - Mission and Vision Statements

For the previously mentioned reasons, the current research will use mission and vision statements in order to answer the research questions. In terms of content, mission and vision statements are important components of a corporate story and should always be included (Scheerder, Karreman & De Jong, 2017). As they are vital components of corporate stories, it can be justified to focus on mission and vision statements. For clarification, it has to be noted that there is a fine difference between vision and mission statements, this will be elaborated upon after the two have been defined.

First of all, mission statements provide great strategic value in stating the purpose and direction of an organization, explaining why it exists and why it is different from similar businesses (Mersland, Nyarko, & Szafarz, 2019; Seeber, Barberio, Huisman, & Mampaey, 2017). Wintermute (2019) proposes an extensive definition, as he argues that mission statements are used to “explain the organization, its framework, its purpose, its strategies, its services or products, its consumers or patrons, and the values and priorities of its stakeholders and at the same time, differentiates it from others with similar services or products.” There appears to be overlap between the two, as vision statements are said to focus on the competitiveness and distinctiveness of an organization (Kim, Hwang, Cho & Jang, 2019). However, the difference lies in the fact that a vision statement focuses on the future of the organization, creating an ideal that the organization strives to become. In terms of content, it displays the direction the organization wants to go in and how that can be achieved.

Alegre, Berbegal-Mirabent, Guerrero and Mas-Machuca (2018) list several sets of components of mission statements, of which the one presented by Bart (as cited in Alegre, Berbegal-Mirabent, Guerrero and Mas-Machuca (2018) appears to be the most recent and most complete:

“(1) organizational purpose or *raison d’être*; (2) statement of values/beliefs/philosophy; (3) distinctive competence/strength of the organization; (4) desired competitive position; (5) relevant/critical stakeholders identified; (6) statement of general corporate aims/goals; (7) one clear and compelling goal; (8) specific customers/markets served; (9) concern for employees; (10) concern for shareholders; and (11) a statement of vision” (p. 462).

These 11 listed components provide the basis for a great deal of mission statements and will be seen as the most important components.

Research has associated mission/vision statements with strong financial performance, employee motivation and ethical behaviour, although those factors are also very dependent on the degree to which an organization actually carries out their mission statement (Alegre et al., 2018). An organization can set expectations in their mission statements, but if they fail to live up to them, the mission statements will have no significant effect.

All in all, whereas a mission statement elaborates on the kind of activities an organization is currently doing, vision statements focus on the future. The following paragraphs will expand on the dependent variables in the current study and how they are influenced by mission and vision statements.

2.3 - Corporate Reputation

Corporate reputation has been defined many times in literature. Andersen and Sorensen (1999) opt for an abstract approach, as they define reputation as “a bundle of attributes and their relations”. More specific is the definition from Chun (as cited in Grover, Kar, Ilavarasan, 2019), who refers to corporate reputation as the “cumulative impressions of internal and external stakeholders”. Likewise, Keh and Xie (2009) observe reputation based on institutional theory and, therefore, characterize corporate reputation as a global impression that reflects the perception of a collective stakeholder group (Fombrun & Shanley, as cited in Keh & Xie; Olins, as cited in Keh & Xie, 2009). In the same vein, they suggest that corporate reputation is an evaluation, which is either classified as good or bad (Weiss, Anderson, & MacInnis, as cited in Keh & Xie, 2009; Roberts & Dowling, as cited in Keh & Xie, 2009). Based on these definitions, one could say that reputation is a concept that is constructed from impressions or evaluations. These impressions or evaluations could be based on the contents of a mission or vision statement. Trust also plays a role in the concept of corporate reputation, as “trust is seen as a belief, a sentiment or expectation about the exchange partner that results from the partner’s expertise, reliability and intentionality”. When a customer trusts a company, they consider the company’s activities to be reliable and fair, positively influencing the reputation (Walsh, Mitchell, Jackson & Beatty, 2009). The importance of corporate reputation has been accentuated by past research, as that has suggested that corporate reputation positively affects financial performance (Podolny, as cited in Keh & Xie, 2009; Fombrun, as cited in Keh & Xie, 2009) or giving behavior (Meijer, 2009), which are relevant findings to keep in mind for the type of organization.

Overall, it can be concluded that corporate reputation is a relevant factor in research on mission statements. Building on the aforementioned definitions, one can assume that the more faith there is in an organization from a public standpoint, the stronger the reputation of that organization is. In the context of a mission statement, having a good reputation could improve the understanding of the contents of the text.

2.4 - Trust

A lot of studies have delved into the nature of trust and how it is exactly constructed. Mayer and Davis (as cited in Aeron, Jain, Kumar, 2019) came up with a simple and basic definition of trust, as they state that it is the willingness to be vulnerable to the actions of another party. This element of vulnerability is expanded upon by Nawi, Al Mamun, Nasir, Muniady (2019), who define trust as “the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based

on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party”. This definition appears to be very complete, although it forgets to touch on the outcome of actions performed by the other individual in the definition. Gambetta (2000) sheds a consequentialist light on trust, defining it as the expectation “that another person (or institution) will perform actions that are beneficial, or at least not detrimental, to us regardless of our capacity to monitor those actions”. When applying the concept of trust to financial institutions, Ennew and Sekhon (2007) present a financial trust index and a couple of conditions for trust. Firstly, trust depends on the existence of risk. When there is no risk and an outcome is already confirmed, there would be no hazard of distrust. Moreover, they argue that interdependence plays a key role in trust, since a lack of dependence between the main actors means that there is no reason even trust each other in the first place. Furthermore, vulnerability plays a role, as indicated in the definition of Nawi, Al Mamun, Nasir, Muniady (2019). Ennew and Sekhon (2007) conclude that if vulnerability, risk and interdependence are present, there will be a role for trust. In the light of financial institutions, its importance is accentuated. Sapienza and Zingales (2012) argue that “without trust, cooperation breaks down, financing breaks down and investment stops”. Sapienza and Zingales’ research also highlights the consequences that trust can have on an organization, showing that trust has an impact on financial depth. These findings can be connected to the conclusion of Walsh, Mitchell, Jackson and Beatty (2009), who found that trust and reputation were intertwined. Likewise, it can be assumed that a lack of trust negatively affects the reputation of an organization. Institutions that provide better mechanisms are more important in times of distrust than in times of trust (Calderon, Chong, Galindo; 2001). For this research, the definition of Nawi, Al Mamun, Nasir, Muniady (2019) will be used as the basis for this study, with elements of consequence from Gambetta (2000).

Taking the aforementioned definitions into account, the importance of trust on mission statements becomes clear. If a mission and vision statement creates a lack of trust with a customer or consumer, this could be harmful for the performance of the organization. As noticed by Alegre et al. (2018), a mission statement is only an intention of performing certain actions and not necessarily reality. Having a discrepancy between the mission of an organization and the actual conduct could potentially be harmful for trust of consumers. Therefore, it is vital that organizations make sure that their mission and vision statements are in line with their behavior.

2.5 - Customer-Company Identification

A great deal of research behind the concept of customer-company identification is based on social psychology theories. Two examples of these are social identity theory and self-categorization theory (Sommerfeld & Paulssen, 2019). Customer-company identification, often dubbed consumer-company identification, is formed when consumers establish a relationship with an organization, satisfying their self-defining needs and their self-distinctiveness (Li, Liu, Huan, 2019). Sommerfeld and Paulssen (2019) refer to the variable

as the shared destiny between external customers and the organization, pointing towards a relationship based on common values and expectations. In a broader sense, clarity, distinctness and attractiveness can create the foundation for identification between the customer and the organization in question (Hornsey, as cited in Gürlek & Tuna, 2019).

There appears to be a distinct relation between trust and customer-company identification, as an increased customer-company identification is often associated with trustworthiness in family firms. Although this cannot necessarily be generalized for other companies, it is argued that the values of family firms - longevity, relational qualities and familial values - often create a sense of identification with customers (Zanon, Scholl-Grissemann, Kallmuenzer, Kleinhansl, & Peters, 2019). In a similar sense, the perceived corporate identity of an organization can drive consumer-company identification (Baskentli, Sen, Du & Bhattacharya, 2019). Overall, this perceived identity could be reinforced with the reputation of the organization and the degree of trust towards it.

Dramatic storytelling can spark an emotional bond with customers, as they are likely to relate their own personalities to the personality and actions of the heroic brand persona (Berry, from Ruy, Lehto, Gordon, & Fu, 2018). Moreover, Mossberg and Nissen Johansen (as cited in Liljander, Gummerus, van Riel, 2013) argue that people enjoy stories as long as they can relate to the characters. A good corporate story and thus the customer-company identification is depending on dramatic storytelling. Jargon can be a confusing factor in a text (Yuthas, Rogers, & Dillard, 2002) and can therefore be a barrier between the organization and the consumer, as it discourages the consumer to get on the same wavelength as the organization.

2.6 - Jargon

There is a shortage on literature that elaborates about the use of jargon or specific terminology in storytelling, let alone corporate storytelling. As terminology, often referred to as jargon, is a concept that is heavily subdue to the context that it is used in, it is therefore not peculiar that there is little to no research about its effect in corporate stories or mission and vision statements. The study of terminology is defined as the “collection of technical terms which can be analysed from cognitive, linguistic and communicative perspectives” by Al Obaidani (2018, p. 161). In this definition “technical terms” can be seen as synonymous to jargon, which itself is defined as “the language and vocabulary that is normal to certain people in a trade, profession, or other group” (Ong, Dani & Johari, 2013). In their study about jargon amongst librarians, Naismith and Stein (1989) use the term jargon to allude to technical language, although the two are not always synonymous. Taking the moderating variable of organization into account, financial institutions often use jargon as the financial vocabulary is very rich and extensive (Business Australian Government, 2018). For example, large asset managers have websites that are filled with jargon that does not fit into the vocabulary of the average citizen. For asset managers and other investor companies, the use of this can be justified, as investing is something that should only be done by professionals who are aware of what they are doing and are therefore more likely to be familiar

with the terminology. However, for banks and financial institutions that have the general public as their target group it is questionable whether the use of technical financial terms can be rationalized, even when they are correctly used. As an illustration, in a study from James (2018), it was concluded that technical financial terms made charitable giving instruments less attractive. In that sense, it can be understood that jargon reduces the intention of donation. If the use of jargon can have such an effect on the attractiveness of a charitable giving instrument, it can be assumed that jargon also affect other components of the organization - trust, for example. If an individual thinks donating to a certain organization is not worth it, it could mean that there is a decrease in trust. Yuthas, Rogers and Dillard (2002) furthermore express that organizations can use jargon to reduce the comprehension of a message. Such interactions can potentially lead to difficult and user-unfriendly situations. A multitude of such situations could be detrimental to an organization its reputation. Although those situations occur long after one reads a mission/vision statement, it would be interesting to see if there is an association between the use of jargon and corporate reputation. Expanding on the finding by Yuthas, Rogers and Dillard, it can be hypothesized that jargon has a bad impact on customer-company identification. Since customer-company identification emphasizes the unity between the customer and the organization. If the organization emits messages that are difficult for the consumer to understand, that can be harmful to customer-company identification.

In this current study, terminology, jargon and technical language will be used synonymously and will be defined similar to the definition by Ong, Dani & Johari (2013), being “jargon, terminology and technical language is the language and vocabulary that is normal to certain people in a trade, profession, or other group”.

Overall, it is expected that the use of jargon will have a negative effect on reputation, trust and customer-company identification. Therefore, the following hypotheses have been created:

H1: There is a negative effect of the use of jargon in a corporate story on corporate reputation.

H2: There is a negative effect of the use of jargon in a corporate story on customer-company identification.

H3: There is a negative effect of the use of jargon in a corporate story on perceived trust.

2.7 - Dramatic Storytelling

The dramatic storytelling variable refers to the inclusion of elements of dramatic storytelling in corporate stories or mission and vision statements. An overarching term for this is textual tone, as the element of drama puts an emphasis on the text. Research on textual tone has predominantly focused itself on media platforms, especially within the spectrum of financial institutions. For instance, textual tone has been used to analyze how investors act in times of pessimism in the media landscape (Galdi & Gonçalves, 2018). For this research, the focus will be on textual elements that spark sentiments such as empathy or sympathy, instigated by heroic

or dramatic storytelling. For example, if a corporate story actively revolves around the actions of an heroic figure, the text will have a heroic tone.

Ruy, Lehto, Gordon and Fu (2018) emphasize that having a brand persona in the story can create an emotional bond with the readers, as they can relate to the brand persona. Through this bond, the organization often intends to achieve narrative transportation, meaning that the reader will have changed its behavior (Escalas, as cited in Liljander, Gummerus & van Riel, 2013; Green & Brock, as cited in Liljander, Gummerus & van Riel, 2013). Based on these findings, it can be assumed that there is a positive influence of dramatic storytelling on customer-company identification. Moreover, this heroic story often provides the readers with a historical connection, which often helps to reinforce the rationality and credibility of the story (Ruy, Lehto, Gordon & Fu, 2018). Increased rationality and credibility based on a corporate story could have a positive effect on trust and reputation, as it has the potential to give the organization a better name and enables the consumer to trust the product or service they are affording.

Fog, Budtz, Munch and Blanchette (as cited in Scheerder, Karreman & De Jong, 2017) give a case specific example by mentioning a Cuban cigar brand, that branded itself as “Fidel Castro’s favorite” and used that element to achieve economic success. It can be assumed that such elements can also be used in mission and vision statements. All in all, in this research dramatic storytelling will refer to the use of dramatic or heroic story elements in corporate stories. Therefore, dramatic storytelling is defined as “the use of dramatic or heroic elements, seeking to spark an empathic and emotional response”.

It is expected that using dramatic storytelling will have a positive effect on corporate reputation, customer-company identification and perceived trust. Hence, the following hypotheses have been created:

H4: There is a positive effect of the use of dramatic storytelling in a corporate story on corporate reputation.

H5: There is a positive effect of the use of dramatic storytelling in a corporate story on customer-company identification.

H6: There is a positive effect of the use of dramatic storytelling in a corporate story on perceived trust.

2.8 - Type of Organization

In this exploratory part of the study, the type of organization plays the role of a moderator. The two types of organizations in this study are a non-profit organization and a for-profit organization. Generally, corporate storytelling has helped many organizations to distinguish themselves from other brands (Kaufman, as cited in Delgado-Ballester & Fernández-Sabiote, 2016). However, it has to be noted that every type of organization can be perceived differently. For example, research from Järvinen (2014) concluded that consumer trust appears to be lower

towards banking services than towards other services. Similarly, a study by Scheerder, Karreman and De Jong (2017) conclude that non-profit organizations are appreciated more after corporate stories, in contrast to for-profit organizations, where a modest negative effect is shown. Such biases could potentially influence the way in which a mission and vision statement is perceived. For that reason it is assumed that the type of organization has a moderating effect on the independent variable.

Regarding the presence of jargon, both non-profit organizations such as charities as well as financial institutions have their own forms of jargon, meaning that it is evidently present in both organizations and could henceforth be used for communication purposes. It is nevertheless questionable to what extent it is appropriate for different organizations to use jargon, since the use of jargon can be confusing for the reader (Yuthas, Rogers, & Dillard, 2002). A distinction can be made in the spectrum of organizational purpose and customer expectations. For instance, organizations that specialize in asset management, a financial service, target experienced investors who are knowledgeable when it comes to the world of finance, including the financial vocabulary. For that reason, it appears to be responsible for an organization to use jargon in their mission statements. In contrast, non-profit organizations, charities in particular, should be attractive for people who want to support a good cause. With that target in mind, it seems superfluous to use jargon, as that could potentially spark uncertainty for people that want to contribute to a good cause but are not fully aware of technical terms from the realm of non-profit organizations.

When it comes to dramatic storytelling, non-profit organizations tend to use more emotionally driven stories, as their goal is to gather money for a cause or tackle a global issue. Such a story can trigger people into donating money. For financial institutions, this is less the case, as they are often large public organizations and have a different purpose and target audience - supporting the client in their financial affairs. As the world of finance is quite complex, it is not justifiable nor desired for these institutions to use a multitude of dramatic storytelling elements, as that could take away from the clarity and conciseness of the communicated message. It is expected that there is a moderating effect of the type of organization on dramatic storytelling and jargon in corporate stories, which is why the following hypothesis has been created:

H7: There is a moderating effect of the type of organization on the effects of dramatic storytelling and jargon in a corporate story on reputation, trust and customer-company identification.

A full overview of the hypotheses can be found in Table 2.8.1.

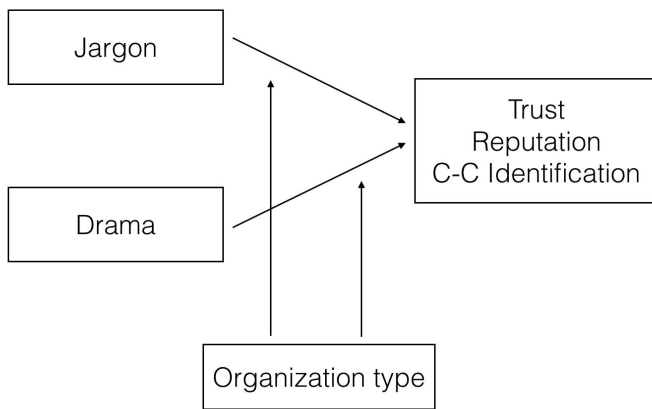
Table 2.8.1 - Overview of Hypotheses
Overview of Hypotheses

#	Hypothesis
1	There is a negative effect of the use of jargon in a corporate story on corporate reputation.
2	There is a negative effect of the use of jargon in a corporate story on customer-company identification.
3	There is a negative effect of the use of jargon in a corporate story on perceived trust.
4	There is a positive effect of the use of dramatic storytelling in a corporate story on corporate reputation.
5	There is a positive effect of the use of dramatic storytelling in a corporate story on customer-company identification.
6	There is a positive effect of the use of dramatic storytelling in a corporate story on perceived trust.
7	There is a moderating effect of the type of organization on the effects of dramatic storytelling and jargon in a corporate story on reputation, trust and customer-company identification.

2.9 - Research Model

Based on the aforementioned theoretical information and the hypotheses, a research model was constructed, examining the effects of jargon and dramatic storytelling on corporate reputation, customer-company identification and perceived trust along with an element of exploratory research on the possible moderating effect of the type of organization. The model is illustrated in Figure 2.9.1.

Figure 2.9.1 - Research Model



3. METHODS

The following paragraphs will elaborate on the methods that were chosen in order to answer the research questions. Firstly, the research design and the testing procedures will be expanded upon, before delving into the stimulus materials. Consequently, the manner in which the results will be measured will be explored. Lastly, the reliability and validity of the scales will be reported, along with the respondents of the survey.

3.1 - Research Design

This research will aim to answer the research question and find out if there is an effect of jargon and dramatic storytelling elements in the mission and vision part of a corporate story on customer-company identification, reputation and trust. Moreover, exploratory research will be conducted regarding the moderating effect of the type of organization. Overall, the research will consist of a 2x2x2 between respondents experiment. In this experiment, respondents will be exposed to 1 of the 8 different conditions that either purposely highlight or leave out elements of jargon and drama. Moreover, in order to address the exploratory part of the research, the 8 conditions are divided over 2 different types of organizations, so that a possible moderating effect can be identified. Fittingly, a multivariate analysis of variance will be used to analyze what the main effects and moderating effects in the research.

3.2 - Procedure

The following paragraphs will elaborate on the process of pre-testing the stimulus materials and strategies for gathering the respondents of the survey.

3.2.1 - Gathering Respondents

This section will expand on the methods that were employed in order to get a sufficient amount of respondents. By means of convenience sampling and snowball sampling, Dutch-speaking

respondents that were between 18 and 27 years old within the personal network of the researcher were contacted via communication applications and subsequently asked to fill out the survey. Moreover, online platforms such as SurveySwap and Facebook were used in order to gather more respondents from other regions. On several occasions respondents failed to meet the age criteria, their data was not used in the research. It was chosen to target Dutch-speaking individuals, as the language of the survey and thus the manipulations was in Dutch. This choice was made in order to limit the possible bias that an ethnical background can have. For instance, an individual that grew up in a country where banks had poor reputations can unconsciously place distrust in a bank just because it is a bank. Vice versa, an individual with a positive outlook on banks can have prejudices that can skew the results of the survey.

In regard to the specific age range, this choice was made based on the assumption that individuals from the age of 18 through 27 are in the process of choosing their first bank. Most individuals in the respective age range are likely to have a bank account at a certain bank, although that is likely to have been set up by their parents or caretakers. Hence, people from this age range will be exposed or are already exposed to different kinds of banks and are thus a relevant group for banking institutions. In similar sense, this group has an often newfound access to a greater amount of money, meaning that they are relevant for charities as well.

3.2.2 - Data analysis

For the data analysis, SPSS will be used. After finishing the data collection, all data will be exported from Qualtrics and imported into SPSS. Firstly, irrelevant variables will be deleted from the dataset, such as IP-address and time of completion, and the data will be prepared for analysis. Firstly, a manipulation check will be done by means of an independent t-test. Consequently, a factor analysis will be conducted, in order to explore the interrelations between the variables. To evaluate the reliability of the scales, the Cronbach's Alpha will be calculated. Subsequently, constructs will be created in order to perform a two-way MANOVA analysis and test for the main effects and possible moderating effect.

3.3 - Materials

The following paragraphs will expand on how the manipulation materials were tailored to the specific conditions defined in the previous paragraphs. The fictional mission statements were constructed as follows: one introductory paragraph that briefly mentions the history of the organization and its three core values, followed by three short paragraphs that expand on the core values. The overview of the manipulations is shown in Figure 3.3.1. All manipulation materials can be found in Appendix A.

Figure 3.3.1 - Overview of Manipulations

	Jargon?	Dramatic Storytelling?	Text #
For-profit organization	No	No	Text 1
	Yes	No	Text 2
	No	Yes	Text 3
	Yes	Yes	Text 4
Non-profit organization	No	No	Text 5
	Yes	No	Text 6
	No	Yes	Text 7
	Yes	Yes	Text 8

3.3.1 - Jargon in manipulation materials

In order to implement as much jargon as possible in the four conditions, the Australian Business Jargon (2018) and the Glossary of Philanthropic Terms (2018) were used. These sources provide an online jargon dictionary for their respective branches and will be the foundation for the texts that contain jargon. For example, the first condition does not specify on the type of bank that NWJB is - as that would be complicated and jargon - whereas the third condition does mention it: “NWJB is a Dutch multinational banking and financial services holding company”. Moreover, by finding synonyms for ‘simple’ terms, the texts were made more technical. For instance, the term “sustainable development goals” was abbreviated to “SDGs”, as it is used so often in the sector that it does not need to be spelled out. The aim of this variable is to create a technical narrative, something that can only be fully understood by somebody in that specific field. However, due to the limited length of a mission statement, the texts could not be saturated with jargon. Moreover, the classification of something as jargon is rather subjective. Someone with a background in corporate banking would not refer to a term as “venture capital” as jargon, whilst someone who lacks that prior knowledge would be more inclined to classify it as jargon.

3.3.2 - Dramatic storytelling in manipulation materials

The aspect of dramatic storytelling was implemented into four different conditions. Elements of dramatic storytelling include adding details that are technically redundant. An example is the following sentence: “On a rainy day in 1956, Wim Janssen quit his job as an accountant and founded NWJB”. For the outcome of the story, it is not necessary to know that it was a rainy day, as it does not lead to any repercussions. However, it does make the story more physical and

enables the reader to paint a picture. An important factor in the variable of dramatic storytelling is the profiling of the founder of the two organizations (Wim Janssen) as a heroic figure. Literature alludes to the fact that a heroic figure helps to reader to empathize with the organization and to spark an emotional reaction. Passages such as “Sustainability inspired our founder to come in action” or “Janssen wanted to change the world” create a reason for the reader to believe that Janssen was a good and charismatic leader. This also triggers emotion, as the occurrence of obstacles and the way the leader and organization dealt with them can create an emotional bond with the reader (Roper & Spear, 2013). An example of an obstacle or unfavorable situation that is featured in the manipulation material is the following: “Non-profit organizations were too busy competing with each other than actually changing the world”. The aim of the manipulation material is to create an emotional narrative and push Wim Janssen as a heroic character, as heroic characters generally stimulate internal and external brand perceptions (Guber, 2007, Kelley & Littman, 2006 as cited in Liljander, Gummerus, & Van Riel, 2013).

3.3.3 - Type of organization in manipulation materials

The two different organizations in the manipulation materials are a fictional non-profit organization (The Polar Bear Foundation) and a fictional financial institution (NWJB). The difference between these two organizations are the activities and core values. NWJB focuses on high quality banking, tackling global issues and making their customers happy. This slightly differs from The Polar Bear Foundation who hold activism, sustainability and thinking in solutions in high regard. As sustainability is a significant current trend - based on the corporate stories that were read as an inspiration for these manipulation materials - both organizations had to focus on such an element (sustainability & tackling global issues). Moreover, several examples of corporate stories made clear that it is important or common to highlight the key activities that are performed, which is why activism and high quality banking are core values of the organizations in this study.

3.3.4 - Pre-test

To assess whether or not the aforementioned conditions were valid and reliable, the manipulation material was pretested. Each condition was presented to a native Dutch student between the age 18 and 25. After reading the text the students had to answer five open questions about the text in regard to the different variables in the study. For jargon and dramatic storytelling, the participants were asked to which extent jargon and dramatic elements were present in the text. Consequently, they were asked which terms or elements they could recognize. The questions regarding the dependent variables were based on the important characteristics of the concepts that were found in the literature. The pretest was mostly focused on the materials, which is why the questions were open-ended, in order to get an uninfluenced opinion on the text.

- To what extent does this text contain jargon? Which technical terms do you recognize?

- To what extent does this text contain dramatic elements? Does the text have a dramatic or emotional tone?
- What is your general opinion on this organization? Are they successful?
- Does the organization appear trustworthy? Are they honest and trustworthy?
- Do you feel connected to the organization? Why is that?

The respondents interpreted the pre-test material in the way it was intended, meaning that they either found jargon or elements of drama where applicable or recognized the lack of it in certain situations. For example, a respondent noticed the use of jargon in one of the jargon-manipulated texts, pointing out terms such as “venture philanthropy” and “third sector”. Other terms that were perceived as jargon - whilst also being intended to be perceived as jargon - included “multinational holding”, “private banking” and “commodity trading”. Similarly, another respondent identified dramatic elements in the drama-manipulated text, as they highlighted the use of emotional vocabulary from the founder: “a smile on the customer’s face is a smile on my face”. In addition, another respondent that read a drama-manipulated text commented that the organization appeared to be the founder’s life work, stressing the importance of the cause by means of emotions.

An interesting conclusion from one of the respondents was that the lack of jargon made them trust the organization more, along with the details on the supporters and the history of the organization. Although the texts that include jargon are not written to be less trustworthy than the other texts, this observation matches our hypothesis. Another respondent noted that the relatability of the organization depended more on the type of organization than on the other factors. This note alludes to a possible moderating effect of the type of organization in a mission statement.

In the end, it was concluded that the texts were interpreted as intended by the researcher. Therefore, after a few minor tweaks, such as a slight change in wording, the manipulation materials were considered finished.

3.4 - Measurements

In order to measure the constructs, a questionnaire was created using Qualtrics, a software that facilitates the creation of surveys. In terms of structure, the survey started with information on the content of the research, ethical considerations and the target group. Consequently, the participants encountered a form that asked for the demographics - age, gender, current occupation and highest level of education. Right after that, the respondents were given short instructions regarding the reading material in the study. Using the “Randomizer” function that is present in Qualtrics, each respondent was assigned to a random condition. After reading the text, questions about the variables were presented. For these questions, a five-point Likert Scale was chosen. For each question, the respondent can select the extent to which they agree with the

statement - highly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree or disagree, somewhat disagree or highly disagree. All of the questions that were included in the survey can be found in Appendix B.

3.4.1 - Type of organization

For the type of organization variable, 3 questions were written out in order to control whether or not the respondent had correctly read and understood the mission statement. As the stimulus materials included two types of organizations, multiple choice was used to enable the respondent to make a distinction. The questions were created based on the key characteristics of both organizations. For example, the NWJB bank can be identified as a for-profit, commercial organization. Vice versa, Polar Bear Foundation can be characterized as a non-profit, not commercial charity. Henceforth, the following questions were composed:

“The organization in this text was a...”

- Non-profit organization
- For-profit organization

“The organization in this text is a...”

- Bank
- Charity

“The organization in this text is...”

- Commercial
- Not commercial

3.4.2 - Jargon

The questions for the independent variable of jargon were based on the definition that was established in the theoretical framework: “jargon, terminology and technical language is the language and vocabulary that is normal to certain people in a trade, profession, or other group”. The goal of this question block was to identify the extent to which the respondent perceived the text to be technical or rich in jargon. Hence, the following statements were formulated:

“Most of the terms in this text are technical”

“This text uses jargon”

“Most of the terms could only be understood by individuals in a certain profession”

“The language in this text is specialized”

3.4.3 - Dramatic storytelling

Regarding the variable of “dramatic storytelling”, the creative process was similar to that of the “jargon” variable. By means of analyzing the way in which the concept was defined in the theoretical framework, - “the use of dramatic or heroic elements, seeking to spark an empathic and emotional response” - three statements were created. These statements aim to measure the extent to which the respondent perceived the text to be emotional or include dramatic or heroic elements.

“In general, the text sounds dramatic”

“This text features a heroic character”

“This text intends to spark an emotional response”

3.4.4 - Corporate Reputation

The reputation scale was taken and slightly adapted from a scale used in a study by Keh and Xie (2009). This scale was chosen since it reflects the degree of success and perception of a company, matching the literature showed in the theoretical framework. Many pre-existing scales alluded to the degree of trust in an organization in their scales, but as those aspects are already embedded in the variable of trust, a reputation scale without that perspective was chosen.

“This organization is a highly-regarded organization”

“This organization is a successful organization”

“This organization is a well-established organization”

3.4.5 - Trust

For the variable of trust, an existing scale from Ennew and Sekhon (2007) was used. In their study, Ennew and Sekhon explore the proposed central role of trust in the scope of financial services organizations. The scale pays attention to adjectives that are associated with trust in the context of organization, from an external point of view, matching the purpose and angle of the current research.

“I trust this organization”

“This organization shows high integrity”

“This organization is reliable”

“This organization is honest”

“This organization does what it says it will do”

“This organization acts in the best interests of its customers”

3.4.6 - Customer-company identification

The statements for the variable of customer-company identification were based on the definition as proposed in the theoretical framework. The variable of customer-company identification

focuses on the common ground between an individual and an organization. For that reason, the questions aim to highlight this interaction.

“By reading the text I feel connected to this company”

“I identify with the values of this company”

“I feel that my values and their values are one”

3.4.7 - Manipulation check measures

To check whether the respondents interpreted the manipulations in the conditions correctly, an independent t-test was conducted for jargon and dramatic storytelling. Based on the independent samples test and the group statistics, which displays the mean scores of the respondents. Ideally, the manipulation gets a significant result on the independent samples test and has a remarkable difference between the mean with a manipulation and without a manipulation. Moreover, the mean of the manipulation should score over 4,00 - out of 5,00 - as that would allude to the assumption that every respondent correctly identified jargon.

Result-wise, the jargon manipulation proved to be interpreted correctly by the respondents as there is statistically significant evidence that the associated populations means are different ($F = 4,422, p < .05$). On the contrary, the dramatic storytelling manipulation was not interpreted correctly as a whole, therefore it was chosen to use the two statements separately in order to check the manipulation. As separate statements, the two seem to work better. Question 2 in the dramatic storytelling component proved to be interpreted incorrectly by the respondents as there is no statistically significant evidence that the associated populations means are different ($F = ,503, p > .05$). Question 3 in the dramatic storytelling component proved to be interpreted correctly by the respondents as there is statistically significant evidence that the associated populations means are different ($F = 3,997, p < .05$). The full results of the independent samples test can be found in Table 3.4.7.

Table 3.4.7 - Independent Samples Test

Independent Samples Test

	F	Sig.
JARGON	4,422	,037
DRAMAQ2	,503	,479
DRAMAQ3	3,997	,047

As mentioned before, the group statistics table measures the mean effect of the manipulations, since it displays the mean difference in response when exposed to the manipulations. The results of this analysis can be found in Table 3.4.8.

The jargon manipulation had a mean score of 2,86, which is ,49 higher than the manipulations without jargon. This is a reasonable difference, although a larger dissimilarity in means would have meant that the manipulation would have been comprehended to a greater extent. It has to be noted that the score of 2,86 is still lower than the mean of 3,00, so although that indicates that there was a proportionate difference caused by the manipulation, the elements of jargon failed to be widely recognized by all respondents. If the manipulation had a mean score upwards of 4,00, it could have been assumed that the manipulation was perceived correctly by the respondents.

Manipulation question 2 in the dramatic storytelling component had a mean score of 3,31, which is ,96 higher than the manipulations without dramatic storytelling elements. This is a decent difference, based on which it can be assumed that the manipulation was interpreted correctly by the respondents.

Table 3.4.8 - Group Statistics

Group Statistics

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
JARGON	0,00	82	2,37	,62017
	1,00	89	2,86	,76496
DRAMAQ2	0,00	85	2,35	1,008
	1,00	86	3,31	,924
DRAMAQ3	0,00	85	3,12	1,062
	1,00	86	3,41	,899

3.5 - Measurement reliability and validity

The following paragraphs will elaborate on the validity and reliability of the scales measuring the dependent variables. For these measurements, a factor analysis and a reliability analysis will be performed.

3.5.1 - Validity of the scales

In order to check the validity of the scales, a factor analysis will be performed including the six variables from our model. Using the rotated component matrix, it can be analyzed which items

are validly measuring the right thing. If a variable, in this case a question, applies to multiple components, it will be deleted from the dataset since it applies to multiple constructs and thus fails to be a valid measuring instrument. In order to measure the validity, a factor analysis was conducted in SPSS. The results of the factor analysis can be found in Table 3.5.1.

During the factor analysis it was found that two questions related to multiple constructs and thus had to be deleted from the dataset as they did not properly measure their intended construct. These two questions were “Ik voel me verbonden met de organisatie” - related to the Customer-Company Identification variable and “Deze organisatie handelt in het belang van haar klanten” - related to the Trust variable. These questions were not added in Table 3.5.1.

Table 3.5.1 - Rotated Component Matrix

Rotated Component Matrix

		Component		
		1	2	3
Reputation $\alpha = ,815$	"Deze organisatie is een hoog aangeschreven organisatie"		,808	
	"Deze organisatie is een succesvolle organisatie"		,809	
	"Deze organisatie is een gerenommeerde organisatie"		,807	
Trust $\alpha = ,871$	"Ik vertrouw deze organisatie"	,821		
	"Deze organisatie toont een hoge integriteit"	,649		
	"Deze organisatie is betrouwbaar"	,824		
	"Deze organisatie is eerlijk"	,810		

	"Deze organisatie doet wat zij zegt dat zij zal doen"	,753
Customer-Company Identification $\alpha = ,791$	"Ik identificeer me met de waarden van deze organisatie"	,868
	"Ik voel dat mijn waarden en de waarden van de organisatie één zijn"	,822

3.5.2 - Reliability of the constructs

In order to control the reliability of the scales, the Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for each construct. Cronbach's Alpha is a value between 0 and 1, the latter being the highest value, that seeks to measure the internal consistency of a test or a scale (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Most studies use the acceptability criterion of 0.700 as a rule of thumb, indicating that a scale can be considered reliable if the Alpha is over 0.700 (Taber, 2017). This rule of thumb can be expanded to the following: “ $> .9$ – Excellent, $> .8$ – Good, $> .7$ – Acceptable, $> .6$ – Questionable, $> .5$ – Poor, and $< .5$ – Unacceptable” (George & Mallery, as cited in Gliem & Gliem, 2003). However, this value is only a rule of thumb and can be influenced by factors such as the amount of items in the construct, as a low amount of items can give a low alpha and a high amount of questions can inflate the alpha (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

After combining the questions to form constructs, the Cronbach's Alpha was generated by means of a Reliability Analysis in SPSS. The results from this analysis are also displayed in Table 3.5.1.

Based on these results and the rule of thumb that a scale is sufficiently reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha is over 0.700; we can conclude that the scales used for Trust, Reputation and Customer-Company Identification are sufficiently reliable.

3.5.3 - Experimental respondents

In total, the study garnered 171 respondents, spread out over 8 different conditions. The amount of respondents per condition differed, although this was attempted to be avoided by means of a function in Qualtrics that systematically equally assigned the conditions to participants. However, due to respondents that did see the manipulation but did not end up finishing the survey for unknown reasons, a desired equal division could not be achieved.

In order to get an idea of the demographics of the respondents in the sample, 4 questions were asked in the survey:

“What is your age?”

“What is your occupation?”

“What is your highest level of education?”

“What is your gender?”

A full overview of the demographics across the whole study can be found in Table 3.5.3.

Table 3.5.3 - Study Demographics

Study Demographics

		Frequency (N = 171)
Age ($\mu = 22,070$)	18	5 (2,9%)
	19	7 (4,0%)
	20	20 (11,6%)
	21	33 (19,1%)
	22	35 (20,2%)
	23	35 (20,2%)
	24	21 (12,1%)
	25	11 (6,4%)
	26	4 (2,3%)
Gender	Male	78 (45,6%)
	Female	92 (53,8%)
	Prefer not to say	1 (0,6%)
Education	High school	38 (22,2%)
	MBO	3 (1,8%)
	HBO	19 (11,1%)
	University	109 (63,7%)

	Other	2 (1,2%)
Occupation	Student	162 (94,7%)
	Working	9 (5,3%)

Regarding age, the majority of the sample was between 21 and 23 years old (N=103, 59,5%). As the majority of the respondents were university students, this age makes sense. The average age of all respondents was 22,070 years. Due to the fact that some respondents were older than the maximum age of 27, their data had to be deleted and removed from the sample.

The majority of the respondents in the sample completed or is in the process of completing a study at a university level (N = 109, 63,7%). A minority in the sample has completed or is in the process of completing a high school degree (N = 38, 22,2%). The question alluding to this variable could have been ambiguous, as it generated a decent amount of high school graduates whilst the ages do not necessarily reflect that. A high school graduate in the Dutch school system is usually 18 years or younger. When observing the average age of the respondents (22,070), it can be doubted that this question was interpreted properly. The question “Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding?” could allude to the highest level of education one has completed but could also refer to the highest level of education someone has done, thus including current studies.

Regarding the occupations of the participants, the large majority of the sample consisted of students (N = 162, 94,7%), whilst the rest described their situation as “working” (N = 9, 5,3%). The research targeted students, but since respondents were also acquired from the aforementioned online groups for surveys, it is possible that those respondents already had a full-time job.

As stated before, the 171 respondents were divided over 8 different conditions. The texts are numbered based on their order illustrated in Figure 3.3.1. An overview of how the demographics were distributed over the different conditions can be found in Table 3.5.4.

Table 3.5.4 - Condition Demographics
Condition Demographics

		Text 1 N = 21	Text 2 N = 25	Text 3 N = 20	Text 4 N = 23	Text 5 N = 18	Text 6 N = 21	Text 7 N = 23	Text 8 N = 20
Gender	Male	13	7	8	11	9	8	12	10
	Female	8	18	12	12	9	13	10	10

	Prefer not to say	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Mean Age		22,0	21,8	22,6	22,4	22,2	21,9	22,2	21,6
Education	High school	3	5	5	6	4	3	6	6
	MBO	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
	HBO	1	4	-	2	2	3	4	3
	University	16	15	15	15	12	13	13	10
	Other	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Occupation	Student	20	23	20	20	18	20	22	19
	Working	1	2	-	3	-	1	1	1

On the whole, the demographics are reasonably divided over the conditions. As stated before, the number of respondents per assigned condition is not equal. For instance, Text 5 has 18 participants whereas Text 2 has 25 respondents. Furthermore, there is a slight imbalance between when it comes to Gender in Text 2. As can be seen in Table 3.5.4, there are 18 female respondents and only 7 male respondents, this is a large difference that could possibly play a role in the results. Another contrast is the high amount of university students for Text 1 (N=16, 76,2%) and a percentually lower amount for Text 8 (N = 10, 50,0%). Again, this difference could cause a different interpretation for Text 1, as university students could be taught to think in a different way.

4. RESULTS

This section of the report will report the results from the analysis that was performed in this study. Firstly, an overview of the research model will be given. Consequently, the results from the tests pertaining the main effects and moderating effects will be reported. Lastly, conclusions will be made regarding the outcome of the hypotheses in relation to the research. To get a general idea of how each separate condition was perceived by the respondents, descriptive statistics illustrating the average response on the manipulations can be found in Appendix C.

As previously mentioned, to explore whether the hypotheses can be supported or not, a multivariate analysis of variance will be conducted, of which the following paragraphs will focus on the multivariate test and the test of between-subject effects. Using the multivariate test, it will be established whether or not there are main effects or interaction effects in the research. The results from this test can be found in Table 4.1.1. The test of between-subject effects will examine if there are effects between the different variables - the results can be found in Table 4.1.2. Lastly, the overview of hypotheses will be re-introduced and it will be clarified whether they can be supported or not.

Table 4.1.1 - Multivariate Test

Multivariate Test

Effect	Λ	F	Sig.
JARGON	,969	1,711	,167
DRAMA	,974	1,426	,237
ORGANIZATION * JARGON	,981	1,037	,378
ORGANIZATION * DRAMA	,979	1,143	,333
ORGANIZATION * DRAMA * JARGON	,982	1,005	,392

4.1.1 - Jargon

As can be seen in Table 4.1.1, there was no difference in perception based on the manipulation material of Jargon, $F = 1,711$, $p > .05$; Wilk's $\Lambda = ,969$.

As seen in Table 4.1.2, it can be observed that Jargon does not have a significant effect on Reputation ($F = ,042$; $p > .05$), does not have a significant effect on Trust ($F = 2,712$; $p > .05$) and does not have a significant effect on Customer-Company Identification ($F = ,041$; $p > .05$).

There is no effect of jargon on corporate reputation, dramatic storytelling or customer-company identification in a corporate story. For that reason, H1, H2 and H3 cannot be supported. An overview of all hypotheses can be found in Table 4.2.4.

4.1.2 - Drama

As can be seen in Table 4.1.1, there is no statistically significant difference in perception based on the manipulation material of Drama, $F = 1,426$, $p > .05$; Wilk's $\Lambda = ,974$.

As seen in Table 4.1.2, it can be observed that Drama does not have a significant effect on Reputation ($F = 1,010$; $p > .05$), does not have a significant effect on Trust ($F = ,079$; $p > .05$) and does not have a significant effect on Customer-Company Identification ($F(1, 163) = 2,971$; $p > .05$).

There is no effect of dramatic storytelling on corporate reputation, dramatic storytelling or customer-company identification in a corporate story. For that reason, H4, H5 and H6 cannot be supported. An overview of all hypotheses can be found in Table 4.2.4.

Table 4.1.2 - Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	F	Sig.
DRAMA	REPUTATION	1,010	,316
	TRUST	,079	,779
	CUSTOMERCOMPANY	2,971	,087
JARGON	REPUTATION	,042	,837
	TRUST	2,712	,101
	CUSTOMERCOMPANY	,041	,839
ORGANIZATION * DRAMA	REPUTATION	1,805	,181
	TRUST	,192	,661
	CUSTOMERCOMPANY	1,001	,318

ORGANIZATION	REPUTATION	2,502	,116
* JARGON			
	TRUST	1,497	,223
	CUSTOMERCOMPA NY	1,114	,293
ORGANIZATION	REPUTATION	,581	,447
* DRAMA *			
JARGON			
	TRUST	2,781	,097
	CUSTOMERCOMPA NY	1,363	,245

4.2.1 - Drama x Type of Organization

As can be seen in Table 4.1.1, there was no difference in perception based on the manipulation material of Drama in combination with Type of Organization, $F = 1,143$, $p > .05$; Wilk's $\Lambda = ,979$. Moreover, as seen in Table 4.1.2, it can be observed that Drama and Type of Organization have no significant effect on Reputation ($F(1, 163) = 1,805$; $p > .05$), no significant effect on Trust ($F(1, 163) = ,192$; $p > .05$) and no significant effect on Customer-Company Identification ($F(1, 163) = 1,001$; $p > .05$).

4.2.2 - Jargon x Type of Organization

As can be seen in Table 4.1.1, there was no difference in perception based on the manipulation material of Jargon in combination with Type of Organization, $F = 1,037$, $p > .05$; Wilk's $\Lambda = ,981$. Moreover, as seen in Table 4.1.2, it can be observed that Jargon and Type of Organization have no significant effect on Reputation ($F(1, 163) = 2,502$; $p > .05$), no significant effect on Trust ($F(1, 163) = 1,497$; $p > .05$) and no significant effect on Customer-Company Identification ($F(1, 163) = 1,114$; $p > .05$).

4.2.3 - Three-way interaction

As can be seen in Table 4.1.1, there was no difference in perception based on the manipulation material of Jargon in combination with Drama and Type of Organization, $F = 1,005$, $p > .05$; Wilk's $\Lambda = ,982$. Moreover, as seen in Table 4.1.2, it can be observed that Jargon, Drama and Type of Organization do not have a significant effect on Reputation ($F = ,447$; $p > .05$), no

significant effect on Trust ($F = 2,781$; $p > .05$) and no significant effect on Customer-Company Identification ($F = 1,363$; $p > .05$).

As there is no moderating effect of the type of organization on the effects of jargon and dramatic storytelling on reputation, trust and customer-company identification in a corporate story, H7 cannot be supported. An overview of all hypotheses can be found in Table 4.2.4.

Table 4.2.4 - Overview of supported hypotheses

Overview of Supported Hypotheses

#	Hypothesis	Supported?
1	There is a negative effect of the use of jargon in a corporate story on corporate reputation.	Not supported
2	There is a negative effect of the use of jargon in a corporate story on customer-company identification.	Not supported
3	There is a negative effect of the use of jargon in a corporate story on perceived trust.	Not supported
4	There is a positive effect of the use of dramatic storytelling in a corporate story on corporate reputation.	Not supported
5	There is a positive effect of the use of dramatic storytelling in a corporate story on customer-company identification.	Not supported
6	There is a positive effect of the use of dramatic storytelling in a corporate story on perceived trust.	Not supported
7	There is a moderating effect of the type of organization on the effects of dramatic storytelling and jargon in a corporate story on reputation, trust and customer-company identification.	Not supported

5. DISCUSSION

The following section will reflect on the findings found in the results section with regard to the research question and hypotheses. Firstly, observations regarding the results will be discussed with regard to the greater picture of corporate storytelling. Consequently, the results will be elaborated upon in the context of the research hypotheses and the research question. Finally, some practical implications will be listed, along with future research directions.

Overall, the results go against a multitude of sources on corporate storytelling, as the study shows that there are little to no significant effects of corporate storytelling. Whilst several sources in the theoretical framework alluded to benefits of dramatic storytelling, there is no significant proof that the use of drama in the form of heroic elements works. In particular, Ruy, Lehto, Gordon and Fu (2018) vouched for the pros of including a brand persona, as it would have improved the bond with the readers. However, Scheerder, Karreman and De Jong (2017) found similar results in their study, as their study did not find any significant effect of characters in corporate stories. It could be that people do not necessarily affiliate themselves with heroes in the context of corporate storytelling. For instance, it would make more sense for someone to relate to the protagonist in a book, as such a story is usually more compelling and intricate than a mission and vision statement. Perhaps the corporate element is something that withholds the reader from completely immersing themselves within a story, as a corporate story tends to imply a follow-up action, whilst a fictional book character does not necessarily spark an action. So although it is possible that a persona can promote the credibility or reliability of a story, that does not necessarily carry over to a better reputation, enhanced trust or improved customer-company identification. Explicitly using dramatic or storytelling elements does not seem to guarantee as many benefits as literature states.

Similarly, the use of jargon in a corporate story does not seem to have a significant effect. Although this could be attributed to the quality of the stimulus materials, there could be different factors that contribute to this finding. First of all, the perception of jargon is dependent on the background knowledge of the target group. As stated before, jargon is technical language that can usually only be understood by people in a similar profession (Ong, Dani & Johari, 2013). If the target group is specific and the product or service in question only caters to their needs, it can be justified to use jargon. For example, an example is the aforementioned case of an asset manager, which targets experienced investors. However, based on the results of the study it can be questioned whether jargon contributes to a corporate story at all. Although it did not show any negative effects, in spite of the fact that it was hypothesized otherwise, it did not seem to affect the perceptions of the respondents that much, as can be seen in Appendix C.

A question that can be asked based on the results is whether or not the target group of the study - Dutch students between the ages of 18 and 27 - is actually sensitive to corporate stories in general. Perhaps this target group does not enable corporate stories to sway their opinions and is therefore difficult to influence through a mission statement. In the digital age, beliefs or

testimonials about organizations can be found anywhere on the internet, meaning that a mission statement is only a small component of the overall judgement of the organization. A mission statement could be well-written and transparent, but overshadowed by a negative newspaper article or a bad review on the organization. Furthermore, it can be philosophized that a mission statement is not the right way to communicate such a corporate message. There are various variations to corporate stories, it is not necessarily a concise corporate message. Visual or graphic storytelling approaches offer a more modern alternative that could perhaps be more efficient than plain written text. When taking the target group into account, it could be valuable to think about incorporating a mission statement into a well-produced visual corporate story, as the narration to a sequence of videos or photos, for instance (Hsu, Chen, Chen, Lin, Huang, & Ku, 2019). Elements of drama and possibly jargon could be of added value in a corporate story, but perhaps not in the form of text.

It can also be questioned whether trust, reputation and customer-company identification are the right variables to measure the effect of jargon and dramatic storytelling. There is a chance that there is an effect of jargon and dramatic storytelling on other variables that are related to an organization, such as purchase intention. This variable would indicate the degree to which somebody would be inclined to purchase a product or a service, which is relevant for most for-profit organizations (Spears & Singh, 2004). In their research, Lundqvist, Liljander, Gummerus and Van Riel (2013) found that people were willing to spend more money after reading a corporate story. In the context of non-profit organizations this could be phrased as the intent of donation.

On the whole, the current study did not provide the expected results. There were no significant effects and the hypotheses could not be supported, as summarized in Appendix D. Regarding the exploratory component of organization, no real conclusions can be made. When looking at Appendix C, there is little to no difference in the way the type of organization influences the perception of trust, reputation and customer-company identification. This is interesting, considering the fact that the theoretical framework shed light on the poor reputation that financial institutions have (Järvinen, 2014; Scheerder, Karreman & De Jong, 2017). It is possible that the respondents did not generalize the organization only because it was a bank or had positive prejudices. From another angle, it could be that the reading material did not enable the respondent to get a visual image or proper idea of the organization. For future research, visuals such as a corporate website or a logo could help the respondent to get an idea of the organization. In addition, the length of the story could have played a part in the unexpected results, as the respondents did not get enough time to reflect on it and absorb the information. With a longer text or even with a sequence of texts or other forms of information, the type of organization could have played a bigger role.

A generally positive remark can be made based on Appendix C, being that the manipulations were perceived to be rather positive, as the means of nearly every text surpassed 3,00 - the halfway mark - for customer-company identification, reputation and trust. From these

tables we also draw the conclusion that the jargon-only texts scored lower means. Although there are no significant results that show the negative effect of jargon on reputation, trust or customer-company identification, this finding could be input for further research on jargon in corporate stories. Yet, it must be noted that slightly surpassing the mean score of 3,00 is not a convincing indication that there could be a possible effect. In contradiction to the expectations in the hypotheses, it can also be observed that elements of dramatic storytelling generally score better than elements of jargon, but not by as much as was expected.

As explained before, the hypotheses in this study could not be supported. A possible cause of this could be the relatively low amount of respondents (N=171). Perhaps a larger amount of respondents could have made a significant difference. Moreover, the lack of pre-existing scales for jargon or dramatic storytelling could be a cause of insignificant results. As already concluded in the theoretical framework, there is a general lack of empirical research regarding the use of jargon and dramatic elements in corporate stories. Consequently, there are little to no reliable pre-existing scales that apply to those concepts. For corporate reputation and trust, two widely discussed topics in literature, pre-existing scales that were proven to be reliable could be found and used. As elaborated upon in the method section, the current scales were created based on the definitions from the theoretical framework. Although this is not necessarily a bad thing, it could have been better for the outcome of the study if there were pre-existing scales available. This limited the survey and perhaps caused poor and insignificant results. Similarly, the dramatic storytelling manipulation was measured by two separate statements, these two questions were sufficient, but did not generate the expected results. This creates the assumption that it is difficult to identify elements of drama and that drama is an ambiguous concept. Working towards a competent scale to measure elements of drama in corporate stories is essential for the academic progress of dramatic elements in corporate storytelling.

In relation to the previous point, customer company identification used a small measuring device. Originally, the variable of customer-company identification was measured with three items - which is already on the low side. As a result of the factor analysis, one question had to be deleted from this scale, leaving two items. Similarly, dramatic storytelling was reduced to two questions as well. Two questions is not enough to measure a concept that depends on many different things like customer-company identification and trust. This could have been prevented by creating a larger research device with 5 or more questions.

5.1 - Practical Implications

For an organization that employs corporate storytelling strategies, it could be valuable to evaluate the current mission and vision statement. The outcome of this study could suggest that it could perhaps be valuable to strip the corporate narratives of any superfluous material and instead opt for a concise and straightforward mission statement. Since there seem to be no significant effects for using Moreover, new ways of presenting a corporate story - or mission

statement - could be considered. For instance, a more visual approach to the concept could be a different way to bring the organization's point across.

5.2 - Future Research Directions

The following paragraphs will give suggestions on future research based on the outcomes of this current study.

Regarding the stimulus material itself, a case can be made that these manipulations did not display enough elements of jargon and dramatic storytelling. Although there are hints that could allude to the correct interpretation of the texts, such as Appendix C, the texts could have been made more 'extreme'. In the way the experiment worked it was difficult to create texts that were heavily charged with jargon and dramatic or heroic elements, because the content of the text would change. So instead of, for instance, liking something because it uses jargon, it could be that someone appreciates a more detailed financial plan. Similarly, a dramatic corporate story often contains a lot more words than a plain corporate story, creating the risk that the length of the text would play a role.

Another thing that can be concluded from this study is that it is difficult to isolate variables in a text, without being influenced by other variables that were not supposed to be involved. For instance, when considering the stimulus materials used in this study, it is likely that some respondents got influenced or biased by something they read in the text, without that being the goal of the manipulation. Hence, it is recommended that for future research, more attention should be paid to such elements when writing such manipulation materials.

Moreover, as previously written in the report, this study researched possible influences from jargon and dramatic storytelling in corporate stories. In order to maximize the outcome of future research, it is recommended to fully focus on one of the two variables in the context of corporate storytelling as a whole. As indicated in the introduction, this research was specifically focusing on the component of mission statements, but that does not do justice to the field of corporate stories, as there are many different forms of corporate narratives - visual corporate stories, for instance. Future research should focus on one specific variable, such as jargon, and build a research around it.

Furthermore, this research zoomed in on the external part of corporate storytelling, focusing on potential customers and consumers. Corporate storytelling is a tool that can be used for internal communication within an organization as well. Future research could expand on the influence of either jargon or elements of dramatic storytelling as a component of internal communication.

Although it has not been elaborated upon in the theoretical framework, the length of a corporate story could be interesting and relevant for future research. If a text is longer, more information can be communicated, but there can also be more emphasis on telling a story, which is difficult in short texts. On the other side of the coin, a long text can also be detrimental to the readability of a corporate story. As could be seen in the results, although insignificant, the texts

that were created to be dry, dull and, as a consequence, short, were perceived positively by the respondents. For that reason, it would be recommended to look into the importance of textual length in the context of corporate stories.

Lastly, future research could look into the effect of jargon and dramatic elements on different variables that are related to an organization, such as purchase intention. Acquiring significant results on purchase intention would give organizations a direct incentive to re-evaluate their current corporate story strategies.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, although this research did not boast any statistically significant results, it contributes to the growing body of literature on corporate stories - mission and vision statements in particular. More specifically, it explores the presence and effects of jargon in corporate stories, something that has not been touched upon in the literature that often. Furthermore, this study approaches corporate stories from an empirical standpoint, something that was suggested by the literature.

When looking at the overall research question, we can conclude that there is no overall significant influence of jargon and dramatic storytelling elements in a corporate story on corporate reputation, customer-company identification and trust in the context of a financial or non-profit organization. Plus, there is no moderating effect of the type of organization. These unexpected results leave a foundation for potential future research on jargon, dramatic storytelling or textual length in corporate storytelling.

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7. APPENDIX

APPENDIX A - Stimulus Materials

APPENDIX A1 - Bank Mission & Vision Story: No Jargon + No Dramatic Elements

Sinds diens oprichting door Wim Janssen in 1956 focust de Nederlandsche Wim Janssen Bank (NWJB) zich op drie kernwaardes: het bieden van hoogwaardige bankdiensten, het aanpakken van globale problemen en het blij maken van onze klanten.

Bankieren van hoge kwaliteit

NWJB streeft ernaar bankieren zo gemakkelijk mogelijk te maken voor de komende generaties. Met onze ervaring op dit gebied weten we wat er nodig is om bankdiensten van hoge kwaliteit te kunnen bieden aan onze klanten.

Globale problemen aanpakken

NWJB streeft naar meer duurzaamheid en innovatie. Wij ondersteunen bedrijven en organisaties die duurzaamheid en innovatie als een hoofdprioriteit hebben en helpen andere bedrijven om hun beleid en activiteiten duurzamer te maken.

Onze klanten gelukkig maken

NWJB heeft als doel om mensen te verbinden om zo het lokale bedrijfsklimaat te verbeteren. Sinds onze oprichting zijn we actief in lokale gemeenschappen en leveren we actief diensten en kennis. We gebruiken data en diverse strategieën om een goede klantervaring te kunnen bieden.

APPENDIX A2: Bank Mission & Vision Story: No Jargon + Dramatic Elements

Op een regenachtige dag in 1956 gaf Wim Janssen zijn baan als accountant op en richtte hij NWJB op. Al snel liet onze oprichter de concurrentie achter en maakte hij van NWJB een gevestigde naam in het financiële landschap. Tegenwoordig richt NWJB zich op drie kernwaarden: bankieren van hoge kwaliteit, wereldwijde problemen aanpakken en klanten blij maken.

Bankieren van hoge kwaliteit

In de jaren vijftig werden banken als onbetrouwbaar gezien en hechtten ze niet genoeg waarde aan de kwaliteit van hun werk. NWJB is opgericht om dat te veranderen en streeft naar kwalitatief hoogwaardig bankieren, zowel nu als in de toekomst.

Globale problemen aanpakken

NWJB is een bank die geeft om de toekomst van de planeet. Al tientallen jaren ondersteunen we bedrijven en organisaties die duurzaamheid en innovatie hoog in het vaandel hebben. Bovendien helpen we andere bedrijven hun beleid en activiteiten op hoge niveaus van duurzaamheid te duwen.

Onze klanten gelukkig maken

In de woorden van Janssen: "Een glimlach op het gezicht van een klant is een lach op mijn gezicht". Om die reden helpen we het lokale bedrijfsklimaat zo veel mogelijk te verbeteren. Wat ons groot heeft gemaakt is onze aandacht voor lokale gemeenschappen, en daarom zullen we hen altijd ondersteunen met diensten en onze kennis. Onze handelsmerk-klantervaring wordt mogelijk gemaakt door de precisie van onze gegevensanalyses en de unieke strategieën die we daarbij toepassen.

APPENDIX A3: Bank Mission & Vision Story: Jargon + No Dramatic Elements

NWJB werd opgericht door Wim Janssen in 1956 en is een Nederlandse multinationale holding voor bank- en financiële diensten. We richten ons op drie kernwaarden: bankieren van hoge kwaliteit, wereldwijde problemen aanpakken en onze klanten gelukkig maken.

Bankieren van hoge kwaliteit

NWJB streeft ernaar bankieren zo gemakkelijk mogelijk te maken voor de komende generaties. Onze ervaring in het financiële landschap maakt ons ervaren in meerdere facetten van het bankwezen, waaronder private banking, commodity trading en handelen in equities.

Globale problemen aanpakken

NWJB streeft naar duurzaamheid en innovatie. Wij ondersteunen bedrijven en organisaties die duurzaamheid en innovatie hoog in het vaandel hebben en helpen andere organisaties om hun beleid en activiteiten duurzamer te maken.

Onze klanten gelukkig maken

NWJB wil mensen verbinden om het lokale bedrijfsklimaat te verbeteren. We zijn actief in lokale gemeenschappen, ondersteunen mensen om rendement op hun investeringen te behalen, onderschrijven crowdfunding en verspreiden actief onze kennis. We gebruiken R&D strategies om een geweldige en unieke klantervaring te creëren.

APPENDIX A4: Bank Mission & Vision Story: Jargon + Dramatic Elements

Op een regenachtige dag in 1956 gaf Wim Janssen zijn baan als accountant op en stichtte NWJB, een Nederlandse multinationale bank- en financiële dienstverlenende holding. Al snel liet onze

oprichter de concurrentie achter zich en maakte hij van NWJB een gevestigde naam in het financiële landschap. Vandaag de dag richt NWJB zich op drie kernwaarden: bankieren van hoge kwaliteit, het aanpakken van wereldwijde problemen en het blij maken van klanten.

Bankieren van hoge kwaliteit

In de jaren vijftig werden banken als onbetrouwbaar beschouwd omdat ze niet genoeg aandacht gaven aan de kwaliteit van hun werk. NWJB is opgericht om dat te veranderen en streeft naar kwalitatief hoogstaande dienstverlening op het gebied van private banking, commodity-handel en aandelenhandel.

Globale problemen aanpakken

NWJB is een bank die geeft om de toekomst van de planeet. Al tientallen jaren ondersteunen we bedrijven en organisaties die duurzaamheid en innovatie hoog op de prioriteitenlijst hebben staan. Bovendien helpen we andere bedrijven hun beleid en activiteiten naar een hoger duurzaamheidsniveau te brengen.

Onze klanten gelukkig maken

In de woorden van Wim Janssen: "Een glimlach op het gezicht van een klant is een lach op mijn gezicht". Wat ons groot heeft gemaakt is onze waardering voor lokale gemeenschappen en daarom zullen wij hen altijd actief ondersteunen bij het behalen van rendement op hun investeringen, crowdfunding acties en het leveren van diensten en kennis. Onze onovertroffen klantervaring wordt mogelijk gemaakt door de precisie van onze gegevensanalyses en de unieke strategieën die we toepassen.

APPENDIX A5: Non-Profit Mission & Vision Story: No Jargon + No Dramatic Elements

Sinds 1956 streeft de Polar Bear Foundation ernaar de wereld te verbeteren door te focussen op drie kernwaarden: activisme, duurzaamheid en denken in oplossingen. De Polar Bear Foundation streeft ernaar een onafhankelijke organisatie te zijn die verantwoordelijk is voor haar eigen acties.

Activisme

De Polar Bear Foundation promoot activisme om het klimaat te verbeteren en tegen de opwarming van de aarde in te gaan. We organiseren openbare evenementen om bewustzijn te creëren voor problemen met betrekking tot het klimaat, proberen de politieke agenda te beïnvloeden en pro-klimaatinitiatieven te ondersteunen. De Polar Bear Foundation heeft meer dan 50.000 actieve supporters.

Duurzaamheid

De Polar Bear Foundation streeft ernaar zo duurzaam mogelijk te zijn en brengt het klimaat op de eerste plaats. Bij onze acties houden we rekening met de effecten die ze zouden kunnen hebben voor de natuur en als ze in overeenstemming zijn met de duurzame ontwikkelingsdoelen (SDG's).

Denken in oplossingen

De Polar Bear Foundation streeft naar oplossingen voor terugkerende maatschappelijke problemen in verband met de doelstellingen voor duurzame ontwikkeling. Samen met anderen die bij het project zijn betrokken, proberen we oplossingen te vinden voor het probleem in kwestie.

APPENDIX A6: Non-Profit Mission & Vision Story: Jargon + No Dramatic Elements

De Polar Bear Foundation, opgericht in 1956, is een niet-gouvernementele bedrijfsstichting die streeft naar een betere wereld door zich te concentreren op drie kernwaarden: milieu, duurzaamheid en denken in oplossingen. De Polar Bear Foundation streeft ernaar een onafhankelijke organisatie in de tertiaire sector te zijn en is verantwoordelijk voor haar eigen acties.

Activisme

De Polar Bear Foundation promoot activisme om het klimaat te verbeteren en tegen de opwarming van de aarde in te gaan. We organiseren openbare evenementen om het bewustzijn voor problemen met betrekking tot het klimaat te vergroten, proberen de politieke agenda te beïnvloeden en pro-klimaatinitiatieven te ondersteunen met directe liefdadigheidsuitgaven of bijdragen in natura. De Polar Bear Foundation heeft meer dan 50.000 actieve supporters.

Duurzaamheid

De Polar Bear Foundation streeft ernaar zo duurzaam mogelijk te zijn en brengt het klimaat op de eerste plaats. In onze acties van venture philanthropy houden we rekening met de gevolgen die ze zouden kunnen hebben voor het klimaat en of ze in overeenstemming zijn met de SDG's.

Denken in oplossingen

De Polar Bear Foundation zoekt naar oplossingen voor terugkerende maatschappelijke problemen die gerelateerd zijn aan de SDG's. Samen met donateurs en anderen die bij onze projecten betrokken zijn, proberen we oplossingen te vinden voor het probleem in kwestie.

APPENDIX A7: Non-Profit Mission & Vision Story: No Jargon + Dramatic Elements

In de jaren vijftig waren non-profitorganisaties te druk bezig met elkaar te beconcurreren dan met daadwerkelijk de wereld te veranderen. Om die reden heeft Wim Janssen de Polar Bear Foundation opgericht, om de wereld te verbeteren door te focussen op drie kernwaarden: activisme, duurzaamheid en denken in oplossingen. De Polar Bear Foundation streeft ernaar een onafhankelijke organisatie te zijn die verantwoordelijk is voor haar eigen acties.

Activisme

Een betere wereld begint bij jezelf, daarom promoot de Polar Bear Foundation activisme om het klimaat te verbeteren en tegen de opwarming van de aarde in te gaan. We organiseren openbare evenementen om bewustzijn te creëren voor problemen met betrekking tot het klimaat, proberen de politieke agenda te beïnvloeden en ondersteunen pro-klimaatinitiatieven. De Polar Bear Foundation heeft meer dan 50.000 actieve supporters die elke dag in de voetstappen treden van onze oprichter.

Duurzaamheid

Duurzaamheid inspireerde onze oprichter om in actie te komen. Tot op de dag van vandaag streeft de Polar Bear Foundation ernaar om nog steeds zo duurzaam mogelijk te zijn. Bij onze acties houden we rekening met de effecten die ze kunnen hebben voor de natuur en of ze in overeenstemming zijn met de doelstellingen voor duurzame ontwikkeling.

Denken in oplossingen

Janssen wilde de wereld veranderen. In zijn voetsporen streeft de Polar Bear Foundation naar oplossingen voor terugkerende maatschappelijke problemen in verband met de doelstellingen voor duurzame ontwikkeling. Samen met anderen die bij het project zijn betrokken, proberen we oplossingen te vinden voor het probleem in kwestie.

APPENDIX A8: Non-Profit Mission & Vision Story: Jargon + Dramatic Elements

In de jaren vijftig waren non-profitorganisaties drukker bezig met elkaar te beconcurreren dan met daadwerkelijk de wereld te veranderen. Daarom richtte Wim Janssen de Polar Bear Foundation op, een niet-gouvernementele bedrijfsstichting die ernaar streeft om de wereld te verbeteren door zich te focussen op drie kernwaarden: activisme, duurzaamheid en denken in oplossingen. De Polar Bear Foundation streeft ernaar een onafhankelijke organisatie te zijn in de derde sector die verantwoordelijk is voor haar eigen acties.

Activisme

Een betere wereld begint bij jezelf, daarom promoot de Polar Bear Foundation activisme om het klimaat te verbeteren en de opwarming van de aarde tegen te gaan. We organiseren openbare evenementen om het bewustzijn voor problemen met betrekking tot het klimaat te vergroten,

proberen de politieke agenda te beïnvloeden en pro-klimaatinitiatieven te steunen met directe liefdadigheidsuitgaven of bijdragen in natura. De Polar Bear Foundation heeft meer dan 50.000 actieve supporters die in de voetsporen treden van onze stichter.

Duurzaamheid

Duurzaamheid inspireerde onze oprichter om in actie te komen. Tot op de dag van vandaag streeft de Polar Bear Foundation ernaar om zo duurzaam mogelijk te zijn en het klimaat op de eerste plaats te zetten. In onze acties van venture philanthropy houden we rekening met de gevolgen die ze zouden kunnen hebben voor de natuur en of ze in overeenstemming zijn met de SDG's.

Denken in oplossingen

Janssen wilde de wereld veranderen. In zijn voetsporen streeft de Polar Bear Foundation naar oplossingen voor terugkerende maatschappelijke problemen in verband met de doelstellingen voor duurzame ontwikkeling. Samen met donateurs en anderen die bij onze projecten betrokken zijn proberen we oplossingen te vinden voor het probleem in kwestie.

APPENDIX B - List of Questions

Question block 1: Demographics

1. Wat is uw leeftijd?
2. Wat is uw geslacht?
3. Wat is uw huidige beroep?
4. Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding?

Question block 2: Type of organization

1. "De organisatie in deze tekst was een ..."
2. "De organisatie in deze tekst is"
3. "De organisatie in deze tekst is..."

Question block 3: Jargon*

1. "Het merendeel van de termen in deze tekst zijn technisch"
2. "Deze tekst bevat jargon"
3. "Het merendeel van de termen kunnen alleen worden begrepen door personen in een bepaald beroep"
4. "Het woordgebruik in deze tekst is gespecialiseerd"

Question block 4: Dramatic Storytelling*

1. "Over het algemeen klinkt deze tekst dramatisch"

2. "Deze tekst heeft een heroïsch hoofdpersoon"
3. "Deze tekst heeft als doel om een emotionele reactie op te wekken"

Question block 5: Reputation*

1. Deze organisatie is een hoog aangeschreven organisatie.
2. Deze organisatie is een succesvolle organisatie.
3. Deze organisatie is een gerenommeerde organisatie

Question block 6: Trust*

1. "Ik vertrouw deze organisatie"
2. "Deze organisatie toont een hoge integriteit"
3. "Deze organisatie is betrouwbaar"
4. "Deze organisatie is eerlijk"
5. "Deze organisatie doet wat zij zegt dat zij zal doen"
6. "Deze organisatie handelt in het belang van haar klanten"

Question block 7: Customer-Company Identification*

1. "Door de tekst te lezen, voel ik me verbonden met deze organisatie"
2. "Ik identificeer me met de waarden van deze organisatie"
3. "Ik voel dat mijn waarden en waarden van de organisatie één zijn"

* *Questions use a 5-point Likert Scale*

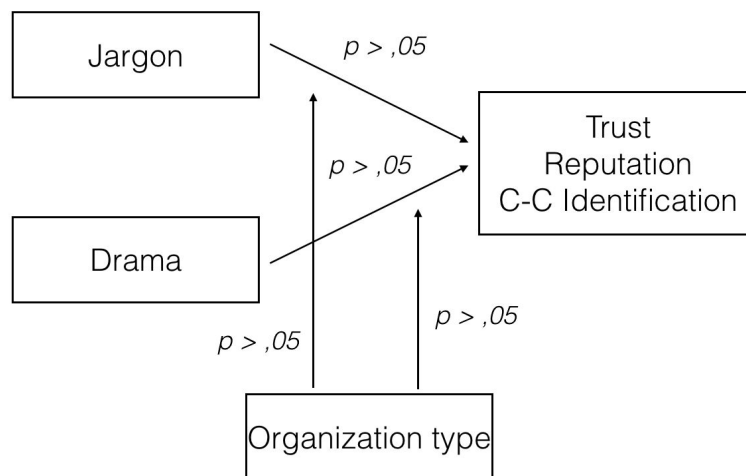
APPENDIX C - Descriptive Statistics

Table C - Descriptive Statistics
Descriptive Statistics

	Organization	Drama	Jargon	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
REPUTATION	,00	,00	,00	3,4444	,42779	18
			1,00	3,3623	,60229	23
			1,00	,00	3,2698	,47864
	1,00	,00	1,00	3,2917	,63952	20
			,00	3,4286	,74642	21
			1,00	3,4500	,66907	20

		1,00	,00	3,4000	,53576	25
			1,00	3,7971	,46860	23
CUSTOMER-COMP	,00	,00	,00	3,0556	,78382	18
ANY						
			1,00	3,3478	,68149	23
		1,00	,00	2,8810	,99881	21
			1,00	3,3000	,80131	20
	1,00	,00	,00	3,0238	,88708	21
			1,00	2,7500	,88109	20
		1,00	,00	2,8200	,87655	25
			1,00	3,2826	,85048	23
TRUST	,00	,00	,00	3,6556	,34166	18
			1,00	3,6087	,60145	23
		1,00	,00	3,3619	,53896	21
			1,00	3,3800	,70158	20
	1,00	,00	,00	3,5905	,55309	21
			1,00	3,3200	,60663	20
		1,00	,00	3,2160	,61892	25
			1,00	3,6174	,66582	23

APPENDIX D - Final Research Model



APPENDIX E - Literature Study Log

Main research question

“To what extent does the use of jargon and dramatic storytelling elements in a corporate story influence the corporate reputation, customer-company identification and perceived trust of a financial or non-profit organization?”

Sub-questions literature study

- What are the effects of jargon on a corporate story?
- What are the effects of dramatic storytelling on a corporate story?
- What are the effects of the use of jargon on reputation in a corporate story?
- What are the effects of the use of jargon on trust in a corporate story?
- What are the effects of the use of jargon on customer-company identification in a corporate story?
- What are the effects of the use of dramatic storytelling elements on reputation in a corporate story?
- What are the effects of the use of dramatic storytelling elements on trust in a corporate story?
- What are the effects of the use of dramatic storytelling elements on customer-company identification in a corporate story?
- What are the effects of textual elements on trust in a corporate story?
- What are the effects of textual elements on reputation in a corporate story?

- What are the effects of textual elements on customer-company identification in a corporate story?
- Does the type of organization have an effect on the perception of a corporate story?

Concepts in research questions

The most important terms from the research questions are: “jargon, dramatic storytelling, corporate story/stories, reputation, trust, customer-company identification”.

Criteria preferred materials

In order to ensure quality and avoid possible translative mistakes, the materials should be written English. Similarly, the articles should be as recent as possible in order to provide a relevant and current overview of the state of the literature. However, an exception for this will be made when writing the theoretical framework, as older sources are also valuable to explain the evolution of the concept’s definition.

Moreover, it is important and valuable that the literature is of high academic standards, so the sources should preferably be an article from a scientific journal or a book from an academic. In the best possible case, the article or book should have a DOI, meaning that it is peer-reviewed and therefore more likely to be valid and reliable.

Selected Databases

For this current study, Scopus will be used as the primary source of scientific articles. Furthermore, Google Scholar will be used to add sources that are not available or accessible on Scopus.

For familiarity, Scopus will be used. Since I have used it throughout my entire academic career and I have found it to be reliable and successful, I will continue to use it for this research. The same goes for Google Scholar, although that will only be used for more global searches and finding articles that could not be accessed through Scopus. I have not looked into using any other databases, but perhaps during the process of research I will seek to use more databases, but for now Scopus and Google Scholar will be sufficient.

Relevant terms

Concepts	Related terms	Smaller terms	Broader terms
Jargon	use of jargon, jargon language, financial jargon, jargon usage	jargon	specialized language, technical language
Dramatic storytelling	textual tone, tone in storytelling, emotional tone, use of textual	textual elements, storytelling elements	tone, storytelling

	tone, use of dramatic storytelling		
Corporate story	corporate storytelling, external storytelling, internal storytelling, corporate messaging	corporate stories, corporate narratives	corporate communication, storytelling
Reputation	reputation management, reputation concepts, reputation concept, corporate reputation, public reputation	financial reputation	general reputation, general perception
Perceived trust	trust perception, perception of trust, trustworthiness, organizational trust	trust	perceiving, trusting, trust in organizations, trust in organisations
Customer-company identification	organizational identification, organizational relations, customer relations	customer identification, company identification	identification, relatability
Type of organization	company, different organization, firm	financial organization, financial organisation, non-profit organization, non-profit organisation, type	organizations

Search actions

	Date	Database	Search Action	Total hits
1	24-03-2019	Scopus	(TITLE-ABS-KEY ("corporate storytelling" OR "corporate story" OR "corporate stories"))	39
2	24-03-2019	Scopus	(TITLE-ABS-KEY ("corporate storytelling" OR "corporate story" OR "corporate stories") AND ALL ("trust" OR "jargon" OR "textual tone" OR "textual elements" OR "reputation" OR "organizational identification"))	19

3	24-03-2019	Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY ("corporate narrative" "corporate stor" "definition")	0
4	02-04-2019	Scopus	(TITLE-ABS-KEY ("trust" OR "trust perception") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("financial organization" OR "non-profit organization"))	364
5	02-04-2019	Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY ("customer-company identification" "organizational identification" "company identification" "customer identification")	2
6	02-04-2019	Scopus	(TITLE-ABS-KEY ("reputation management" OR "corporate reputation" OR "financial reputation") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (definition))	60
7	02-04-2019	Scopus	ALL ("jargon" "corporate stor")	0
8	03-04-2019	Scopus	(ALL ("storytelling" OR "dramatic storytelling") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("corporate storytelling" OR "corporate stories" OR "corporate story"))	25
9	03-04-2019	Scopus	(ALL ("organization" OR "organisation" "moderator") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("corporate storytelling" OR "corporate stories" OR "corporate story"))	2
10	03-04-2019	Scopus	ALL ("jargon" AND "reputation")	127
11	03-04-2019	Scopus	(ALL ("jargon" OR "dramatic storytelling" OR "textual tone") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("corporate reputation" OR "reputation" OR "trust" OR "customer-company identification"))	133
12	03-04-2019	Google Scholar	“dramatic storytelling definition”	1

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Reflection

To see if a source was good or not, I decided to skim the basic properties of the source - reading the title and the magazine it was in. If these appeared like they could contribute to the research, I would read the abstract, check the availability of the source and find what I was looking for. If a subject was completely unrelated to the study but still contained the keywords that I was looking for, I did not look at it.

At the start of the semester I read a lot of sources that pertained corporate stories and the way they were created, one of the search terms I used here was search term #1 or a slight variation of it. Based on the findings from these sources, I expanded my research, setting up the dependent and independent variables. Thus, I embedded the new concepts in the search terms. In

this process, I found that looking for links between two variables works best when trying to find a possible interaction. I also tried to put in all the concepts of the study in a single search file, but this generated a lot of results, of which most were not even relevant to the subject. A common combination I would use was “corporate story” and one of the other variables - “jargon”, for instance. That way, the literature would be applicable to the topic of the research. Due to the degree of specificity of the overall research, it was not necessary to use many different terms in order to find sources. For instance, the term “customer-company identification” is so specific that you cannot rephrase it whilst still retaining the intended meaning. During the searching process I tried to terms such as “organizational identification” but that generated articles that were not in line with what I was looking for. In terms of the databases I used, I concluded that Scopus and Google Scholar gave me sufficient articles to work with, although it was sometimes difficult to exactly find what I was looking for, as the links between the variables in my research were quite specific. For example, I could not find any literature on the link between jargon and corporate stories. This lead me to assume a great amount of things and possible links for that variable, potentially lowering the standard of the theoretical framework. I assessed the quality and relevance of the literature by looking for DOI’s and evaluating the abstracts of the study. This worked well and I think that it was a good way to distinguish if a source was relevant to my study or not.

For following research I would prolong the duration of my personal orientational phase, as I found that it worked well and generated sufficient results. Moreover, I would look more into combining different variables with each other and running more queries, instead of trying to put everything together. Lastly, I would seek to find more online databases from which I could gather articles in order to get a greater collection of literature. Nevertheless, I am content with the articles I collected from Scopus and Google Scholar.