"SILENCE, BRAND": AFTERMATH OF LANGUAGE STYLE OVERCONVERGENCE IN DIGITAL MARKETING

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This research paper attached hereto, entitled "Silence Brand": Aftermath of Language style Overconvergence in Digital Marketing, prepared and submitted by Derrick Tan Lin Kang in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts (Hons) English Language is hereby accepted.

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on investigating language overconvergence and its effects on the perception of target audiences on the promoted brands and products in the field of digital marketing. The study proposes the communication accommodation theory (CAT) as a framework to analyse the instances of failure involving the inappropriate adaptation of language styles for targeted audiences which caused significant public backlash. The research aims to identify the underlying factors of language overconvergence in digital marketing, and its defining characteristics. The study is significant as it could help marketers avoid overconvergence by identifying the characteristics and factors that contribute to it, and ultimately create better marketing strategies and avoid potential failure and backlash, resulting in the damaged reputation of the marketing organization. The study conducted a quantitative study, surveying Malaysian Gen Z online users by presenting them case studies of overconvergence in digital marketing, and calculating the results through simple formulas to gauge the effects. Findings could help future studies to look into deeper detail to what extent these effects may manifest for different speech communities and languages.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

According to Amici (2019), language serves as a crucial lens for how people see the world. Different linguistics aspects can affect the perception of any given object or concept, especially within a given society. The field of sociolinguistics thus aims to study the relationship between language and social phenomena. With this, a better understanding of social phenomena can be achieved, particularly those involving the act of communication. These aspects of language and how it may affect social communication can bring great benefit when applied in the field of marketing. According to Salem Press (2021), marketing aims to help organizations encourage desired exchanges of products, goods, and other valuables in an economic market. This process requires marketers to communicate with their target audiences to encourage the desired exchanges, and as such has significant overlap with the study of sociolinguistics. However, this overlap is significantly underexplored. This study thus aims to use a sociolinguistic lens to analyse various marketing failures. Specifically, cases of failure involving the inappropriate adaptation of language styles for targeted audiences which caused significant public backlash. The study proposes that the communication accommodation theory (CAT) be used as a framework to analyse these instances, and hence obtain a deeper understanding of the underlying characteristics of this phenomenon, and its potential effect on public perception.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Many digital marketing failures stem from inappropriate use of language style. For example, the U.S Airforce inappropriately used "meme" language by making light of war through a trending meme, causing serious backlash (The Guardian, 2018). Many marketers attempt convergence to better cater to their target audience, and many of these attempts fail due to a lack of knowledge about the targeted speech community. This occurrence is so common

that various "memes" such as "Silence, Brand" have been created in response to cases of overconvergence (Christian, 2023 July 7). The potential risks of language style overconvergence is not clearly understood. The contributing factors and exact characteristics of overconvergence in digital media is also not clearly defined.

Digital marketing is as mentioned above, a form of communication. Thus, an effective marketing campaign requires successful communication of messages, which is typically done through language use. It is therefore evident that there is a significant overlap between the field of marketing and linguistics. This overlap however is not inspected enough in academic research (Subbian & Selvamani, 2021). CAT perfectly applies onto many case studies of failed marketing campaigns, however the theory's relevance to digital marketing also remains underexplored. Additionally, though convergence and the core of CAT is well developed in other fields, overconvergence on the other hand is significantly understudied (Elhami, 2020). The proposed research aims to fill these gaps and use linguistic theories of communication to help marketers create better marketing strategies and avoid potential failure and backlash, resulting in the damaged reputation of the marketing organization.

1.3 Research Objectives

The goal of the research in the long term is to set a basis of understanding for the specific impacts overconvergence has on digital marketing, and its defining characteristics. With that basis set, future studies may look into deeper detail to what extent these effects may manifest for different speech communities and languages. The objective of the current study is thus as follows:

1. To investigate language overconvergence and its effects on the perception of target audiences on the promoted brands and products.

2. To identify underlying factors of language overconvergence in digital marketing.

1.4 Research Questions

With the goals established, the questions that the project aims to answer can be adapted from the above-mentioned research objectives. These questions are defined as such:

1. How does language overconvergence in digital marketing effect the perception of target audiences on the promoted brands and products?
2. What are the underlying factors of language overconvergence in digital marketing?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study is significant as marketers can greatly benefit from a deeper understanding of public reactions and perceptions regarding language style adaptation in digital marketing campaigns. When used correctly, marketers could leverage convergence to appeal to their audience, becoming more relatable, and receiving more approval from their targeted audiences. However, many organizations have made the mistake to attempt convergence with little caution, instead offending their audiences. This study could help marketers avoid overconvergence by identifying the characteristics and factors that contribute to overconvergence. Additionally, the study aims to research the exact significance of overconvergence and its aftermath on audience perception to help better understand its effects and the need to avoid it.

For future research, the study could open a path to build future explorations of the overlap between marketing and linguistics. With its results, the study could open more avenues to where linguistics could be applied to a greater social context. This study could serve as a framework for future studies to explore CAT in a marketing context. For example, the effects of overconvergence could be furthered study in a longitudinal study comparing organizational sales data before and after cases of overconvergence. Convergence itself could also be tested to see whether it is effective for improving organizational performance.

1.6 Definition of Key terms

To better understand the effects language has on a given society, the variables analysed must first be defined. The central linguistic aspect covered in this study is language style, which are the unique linguistic choices made by a specific speech community or individual (Coupland, 2007). From this concept, the communication accommodation theory proposes that language styles are adapted and selected by speakers in accordance with the intended audience and receivers of the message (Popan, 2023). This process is referred to as "convergence". During this process however, the error of overconvergence can occur, which is the instance where a speaker over-adjusts or wrongly adjusts their language use. This typically happens when the speaker is unfamiliar with the language style and the speech community the style is associated with. Finally, digital marketing is defined as any form of marketing carried out through a digital medium. Examples of digital marketing includes online marketing, and social media marketing. With this established, this study hence aims to study how overconvergence could negatively impact the effectiveness of digital marketing, and the audience's perception of the promoted brands and products.

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study

Due to sample availability, the study will only retrieve data from the speech community commonly referred to as "Generation Z", which covers those born from the years 1997 to 2012 (Cooper, 2022). Additionally, as this generation of consumers is growing to soon replace the former generations as buyers in the market, many organizations are targeting this group for language style adaptation, hence the scope has been limited to study this group in particular. This generation was also the first to properly grow up alongside the Internet, which caused their language to develop very differently from the language styles of other generations. Thus, the results achieved by studying this generation can be more clearly observed, due to the significant differences between language styles of the marketers and the target audience. The study aims to take the data from this sample as a basis for application to other speech

communities. The study will also only focus on English as the language of study and be conducted slowly with participants from Malaysia. This selection of scope was made due to availability to researchers, and the study hopes to apply the data from this sample size to other potential samples and groups. The study assumes that the results can be replicated if repeated with other scopes and groups of people, barring external influences.

The research's limitation is that the data can only be collected qualitatively and bias cannot be reasonably removed to avoid any effect on the data collected. Due to the time frame of this research project, a longitudinal design to collect sales data quantitatively is not feasible. On top of that, unique factors of personality and philosophies cannot be properly accounted for. These factors cannot be reasonably removed from the study as a potential source of bias either. Thus, the study would have to assume and generalise these factors as part of overconvergence's effects on the target audience. Individual proficiency and familiarity with the language style may also greatly limit the results of the study; however, these have been accounted for in the proposed methodology.

<center>**2.0 Literature Review**</center>

This chapter will review and discuss existing studies relevant to the current study to analyse the theoretical foundation of the research. Relevant insights will also be discussed alongside the paper's primary theoretical framework.

2.1 Insights to the Related Issues

Societal perception of language use has always been hard to quantify and fully analyse. Far too many factors affect the parameters of language use to fully examine the effects caused by any individual factor on its own. It is unclear whether any given effect is the result of linguistic form and style, or from cultures and ideologies. Regardless, studies in the past have overcome this hurdle through various methodologies of data collection and analysis. Key frameworks such as linguistic relativity also exist in attempts to explain the relationship between language and perception. To complete the study's theoretical framework, the following subsection will cover a review of the articles, concepts, and theories which has informed the proposed research project. The selected articles covers elements from both academic fields of marketing and linguistics. These articles will be reviewed and referenced as a guide for the current research and its design.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study utilises an integrative theoretical framework in which multiple approaches to sociolinguistic perception were adapted and integrative cohesively. These theories are the communication accommodation theory and linguistic relativity.

First, and most critical for this research's framework, is as previously mentioned, "Communication accommodation theory". (Popan, 2023). The theory first came to exist as a part of the communication field; however, it has since been adopted by sociolinguists due to the theory being strongly applicable within sociolinguistics. According to the theory, humans have an inherent desire to communicate, and thus aim to make communication easier and flow

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better whenever possible. Thus, speakers would do this by accommodating their listeners by adapting the way they speak to cater to their audience. Sociolinguistics expanded on this idea, and specified that language styles, which are the specific ways that vocabulary, structure, and pronunciation are used, is adapted to reflect their target audience who are from a different speech community. This process is referred to as convergence, as previously discussed. The process occurs daily whenever interacting with others and is typically done so that the other party has a positive impression of the speaker. Convergence therefore plays a significant role in the act of communication and language use. Similarly, as mentioned in the previous chapter, "overconvergence" refers to a failed attempt at convergence. Often, these failed attempts serve to offend the listener instead of achieving its desired results. This theory as the primary foundation of the current study.

On top of the initial foundation of CAT, another part of CAT that was reference for this framework is Vatamanescu's (2010) "The Application of the Communication Accommodation Theory to Virtual Communities: A Preliminary Research on the Online Identities". The article provides insight on how CAT applies virtually. The most important insight for this paper however, is when the researcher laid out the foundational factors that may contribute to overconvergence in general. These factors were used as the basis for this paper's methodology, and will be further discussed in that chapter.

The second theory adapted into the current framework is the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, also known as "Linguistic relativity" (Kte'pi, 2021). The theory commonly serves as a foundation for sociolinguistic research. Linguistic relativity refers to the theoretical relationship between human language and thought. Particularly, it is believed the structure and characteristics of language shape human thought and perception. The theory posits that the way a language is used and structured could greatly affect a speaker's perception of reality. Linguistic relativity is applied in the current study. This is because, when studying public perceptions as it is shaped

by language, linguistic relativity directly comes into play and must be assumed as true for the study to be properly conducted. Thus, this theory was adapted to together with CAT, forming a framework that emphasizes the effects of convergence by comparing it to the reaction of third parties.

2.3 Past Studies

In this subsection, 5 research relevant academic articles regarding overconvergence and CAT were selected and reviewed. The articles will be analysed together and comparatively to better inform research decisions within this current paper.

2.3.1 Linguistic Style Matching in User-Firm Interactions

The first paper reviewed is "The influence of firm's feedbacks on user-generated content's linguistic style matching-An explanation based on communication accommodation theory" (Liu et. al., 2022). The article discusses engagement between brands and their communities, and specifically aimed to study how firms could influence user behaviour. Specifically, it studied how a firm's feedback effects and impacts audience convergence in virtual brand communities. The study, using CAT as a basis, found that the more frequently firms provided feedback to their community, the more frequently these users engaged in linguistic style matching, also known as convergence. User sentiments and text length however moderate and alter these effects. The paper as a whole provided insight into CAT and its determining factors for frequency and shows how the theory could be applied to influence public action, encouraging frequent users to adopt the linguistic choices of the brand.

Overall, the paper critically applies the CAT to observe how audience behaviour could be influenced. This parallel's the current paper's research, where audience perception aims to be influenced instead. Thus, the concepts and methods applied in the reviewed study could easily be adapted and applied to the current study. The reviewed study also confirms the current study's assumption that CAT also apply to branded communication, and not just at the

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interpersonal level. Finally, it shows that CAT and its surrounding concepts can be clearly observed in marketing and public relational fields.

2.3.2 Convergence and Accommodation in Bilinguals

Another past study that utilised CAT as its framework is Gasiorek and Vincze's (2015) "Modelling Motives for Bilingual Accommodation by Minority and Majority Language Speakers". The study uses CAT as a foundational theory, and aimed to investigate how bilingualism and language status may affect speaker motivation to converge their language style. The study was conducted in a bilingual country, that being Finland. After surveying participants on their self-reported motives, the findings revealed that members of the majority within the country and more motivated to converge. This result is inversed in those who primarily speak the minority language. The study concluded that the status of speakers and receivers do in fact effect the motivation to converge and consequently the way it is perceived.

The study's results are directly relevant with the current study. As Malaysia is a bilingual country as well, with more than 2 languages being commonly present within the society, the results of the study may be greatly affected by bilingualism. Digital marketing in Malaysia is done by a wide range of companies, for a wide range of audiences. Some of these companies may primarily operate in the dominant language (Malay), but choose to market in Chinese, or converge and introduce language structure that are more approachable for the Chinese. This would greatly affect the results of the study, as confirmed by the reviewed article. As such, the current study aims to neutralize or dampen this effect by selecting a relatively neutral language within the country, that being English. The examples used to test participant acceptance and perception should also be directly targeted to English audiences as to avoid the above-mentioned bilingualism effect from altering the results. The reviewed study provided valuable information regarding CAT and bilingualism and presents its point competently while remaining in close reference to its theoretical framework.

2.3.3 Convergence in Digital Media

The third article reviewed is "Communication accommodation in text messages: Exploring liking, power, and sex as predictors of textisms" by Adams et al. (2018). The study's goal was to explore how various elements such as "liking", "power", and "sex" can determine the likelihood of an individual using "Textisms". The study defined the term as "digital, nonverbal cues that convey meaning and emotion through text communication". By putting the participants in hypothetical texting scenarios to determine the number of times the participants would gravitate towards applying textisms in their communication efforts. The results of the study showed that communicators who liked their chat partner used textisms far more frequently. Meanwhile, power had no significant effect on the usage rate of textism, while depending on the gender of both sender and receiver, convergence rate would be effect. Additionally, the study also found that there is a clear relationship between power / social standing and rate of convergence, and that convergence occurs more significantly if the communicators in question are fond of each other.

The study, much like the previously reviewed articles, applies CAT to meaningful discover the ways people communicate. In this, the research done on digital communication is greatly beneficial to current study, as it texting is a very close parallel to general online communication, and often shares similar style. The methodology of this study includes 2 separate phases of experiment. The first phase involved participants responding to a single-item 7-points Likert scale when discussing relations with a chat partner, and it was conducted alongside the use of a distributed questionnaire with simulated texting scenarios during the second phase. The current study aims to adapt these instruments for the current study, as they are appropriate for the research objectives that are targeted, particularly the likert-scale questionnaire with a graphic prompt and question.

2.3.4 Audience Perception Research in Digital Marketing

The next article reviewed for this paper is "Audience Perception and Response towards Digital Marketing Elements" by Subbian and Selvamani (2021). This research was particularly concerned with finding out the effectiveness of digital marketing, specifically the attitudes, awareness levels, and perception of the customers regarding it. By distributing a questionnaire, the study gathered data from respondents to discover the extent to which typical customers would positively react to digital marketing. Through its thorough survey and analysis, it was concluded that digital marketing as a whole was a strongly impactful form of advertising, which was very effective in reaching and influencing audiences. Customers involved in the study reported that they perceive digital marketing activities very positively, proving the digital marketing as a medium is effective in influencing audience perceptions.

The article provides a basis for the assumption that digital marketing as a platform is beneficial for cultivating consumer perceptions. The study not only proves its ability to reach a wide range of consumers, it also proves that digital marketing can affect perception to begin with. The reviewed article serves as evidence and academic reasoning for the current project's study. Overconvergence in digital marketing may significantly influence the ways this proven effect on perception presents itself within targeted audiences. Considering the previous evidence discussed regarding convergence and how it presents itself within consumers, the importance of closing the research gap regarding overconvergence and digital marketing becomes apparent.

2.3.5 Language and Influencer Marketing

Finally, the last article to be discussed is "Using linguistics to inform influencer marketing in service" (Burton et al., 2021). The article aimed to investigate the best language and communication styles for increasing influencer marketing outreach for the purpose of improving the branding of higher education recruitment. According to Burton et al., (2021), influencer marketing is defined as a form of marketing in which utilises popular social-media influencers to help promoted the related brand or products. The study did so through usage the LIWC (Linguistic Inquiry Word Count) and content analysis and examined over 20,000 online posts. To achieve the desired goal, the researchers compared the linguistic differences between influencers and prospective students. The study thus identified and concluded that linguistically, usage of "Clout language", authenticity, emotional tone, timing, and affiliation between public and private contexts greatly enhance the communication effectiveness of influencer marketing by enhancing the perceived authenticity of the digital posts.

The article is one of few that explores the overlap between marketing and linguistics, applying linguistic analysis techniques to better understand how marketing could be enhanced. The factors as discovered by its research is backed by strong evidence from data collection and data analysis and should be referenced in future research. In relation to the current study, these factors that contribute to effective marketing in a digital environment could also inform language convergence, and language could be adapted to increase authenticity. However, the current study has also recognized a need to differentiate between "inauthentic language" and "language overconvergence" within its methodology. As authentic and effective language use can affect public perception and reception, it is important to distinguish within the collected data whether the positive / negative responses are from convergence attempts or simple linguistic choices in creating marketing material.

3.0 Methodology

In this chapter, the methodology of the study will be clearly defined and discussed to explain the logical reasoning behind the design of the research.

3.1 Research Design

This study on overconvergence will be collecting quantitative data for its analysis. According to Smith (2023), quantitative data is defined as a measure of values expressed numerically. This offers a more objective analysis of data as the analysis is defined by strict numerical values. This data was selected as it allows for a more statistical angle when considering overconvergence and its factors. It is also far more efficient and feasible, as quantitative data collection can be efficiently done through surveys. The objective reality of overconvergence in digital marketing could be better uncovered.

The research's design is cross-sectional, which is the study of a particular group and how a particular trait may present itself in specific point in time (Ungvarsky, 2023). This design, which is often also known as survey design, is limited to a particular time, and may not be replicated when investigated in longer term data. However, it is beneficial as it is not only effective in providing information about groups and their perceptions and is far more cost-effective in terms of resources used. Both of these factors are relevant to the current study and was thus selected.

3.2 Research Sample

The selected sample population is members of the Malaysian Gen Z online speech community. As more and more members from Gen Z grow into the workforce, they will gradually replace the current market in buying power. Thus, many marketers target this demographic, especially those online, in order to generate better results. Online speech is particularly important, as many members of Gen Z often interact with internet language norms,

meaning if traditional marketers attempt digital marketing, they must consider these norms that they are not familiar with, which may directly contribute to cases of language overconvergence. Both of these points culminate in the fact that the most common example of language overconvergence in digital marketing is when marketers attempt to use internet lingo. There is therefore more than enough case studies of these failed marketing attempts to conduct appropriate research. The sample was also specifically selected due to ready availability to researcher, making sampling feasible.

Moreover, the sampling method selected is purposive sampling. According to Bullard (2023), purposive sampling, also known as judgemental or selective sampling, describes sampling that involves deliberately choosing participants and inviting them to the study because the participants possess the specific trait or criteria that needs to be studied. This method was selected as the research requires members of the specific speech community to be studied for the results to be accurate. Other methods that are random may be used to ensure the results are less affected by potential bias, however, there would be no way to guarantee that the specific trait is present in the participants of the study. Despite the Gen Z population often interact with online mediums, not all members of the population actively use or are familiar with the language norms and styles present online.

3.3 Research Instruments

The instrument to be used is a Google Form questionnaire to be distributed to the selected sample. The instrument was adapted from Adams et al. (2018), which was previously mentioned in the literature review. Instead of 7 points, a 5 points Likert scale will be used instead. The questionnaire will be split into 2 main sections, the demographic section, and the perception of overconvergence selection, totalling to 18 questions. The first section consists of 3 simple diagnostic questions and will be used to gather the demographic information of the participant and will be used to determine whether the participant meets the required criteria. If

participants surveyed do not engage actively or at least familiar with online language styles, they are thus not part of the selected speech community, and their response will be disregarded to ensure academic accuracy.

The second section of the questionnaire totals to the rest of the 15 questions. Here, for each question, participants will be shown an image containing a real case study of overconvergence in digital marketing. Posts will be selectively decided based on the desired trait and will be pulled from various social media platforms. Participants must then decide how positively they perceive the post and the organization involved based on the above-mentioned Likert-scale, with 1 being very negative, 2 being negative, 3 being neutral, 4 being positive, and 5 being very positive. This section is further broken down into 5 categories, which will not be disclosed to the participants to ensure further accuracy of data. The 5 categories will include 3 questions each. The first category will serve as the "control" and will show participants posts that do not include overconvergence. If results in the control are not significantly different from the rest of the results, it will be concluded that overconvergence does not play a major factor in digital marketing perception. The next 4 categories will showcase one factor based on Vatamanescu's (2010) paper, as mentioned in the theoretical framework of this study. Firstly, is the factor that was adapted to be included in this study, that being indifference. This where the speaker does not care about the listener, and merely converges due to perceived obligation or personal benefit. Second, is intergroup, where the speaker makes false assumptions about members of other cultures or community, which is in essence stereotyping. It is the assumption of how a group acts and speaks without properly understanding them. Next, is sensory, where overconvergence occurs when the speaker deems the listener as inferior in ability, such as an abled-bodied person using baby talk when speaking to the elderly. Sensory is also generally the cause if the speaker is insensitive. Finally, is dependency, which occurs when the speaker commits overconvergence due to a difference in social status, such as an affluent person

"dumbing down" their speech when talking to those from a low-income household. Each category will showcase to the participants 3 case studies which feature the specific factor in CAT, and the results will be used to determine whether the factors apply to digital marketing. Both Malaysian and foreign case studies will be included.

Additionally, to minimize potential bias, questions of the same category will not be placed together. Each subsequent question will be from a different category to avoid participants from immediately recognizing any patterns within the questionnaire, and thus altering their answers. The 1st question of the questionnaire is from the control category, the second will be from indifference, the third from intergroup, the fourth from sensory, and the fifth from dependency. Then, the pattern of question repeats in order until all 15 questions are completed. A copy of the entire questionnaire has been attached as an appendix, appendix A.

3.4 Data Collection

To collect the required data, the Google Forms link will be sent out to participants through the platform or medium of their choice. Participants would then access this link and will be instructed to complete the survey honestly and truthfully. The results will be automatically compiled into a spreadsheet by the Google Forms software and will be used for analysis.

To adhere to ethical standards that are required in research of human participants, the participants must consent to partaking in the study, and must indicate so in the Google Forms link itself, or verbally. Only consenting participants will be invited and considered in the study, and participants must be invited through ethical means without coercion or unethical incentives. Participants will also remain completely anonymous during the study, analysis of the results, and report of the findings. The questionnaire is also designed in accordance to ethical

guidelines for research, and will not include questions that cause any form of emotional distress or invasion of privacy.

3.5 Data Analysis

Due to further research and testing, this section of the chapter has been rewritten with a different data analysis formula than what was included in the initial version of this project. Only the second paragraph is affected,

For the quantitative data obtained, the audience reception analysis method will be utilised to interpret the data. The audience reception model, as proposed by Holub (2003), explores how audiences actively engage with received messages. In the model, audience reception is broken down into 3 paths. First, is dominant, where the audience perceives the message the exact way it was intended by the speaker or encoder. Second, is negotiated, where the original message and intent is interpreted by the audience to be applied for themselves. Finally, oppositional describes when audience reception is opposite to the initial intent of the message. Adapting this model to the current study, dominant reflects in positive perception of the presented posts, oppositional reflects in negative perception, while negotiated would be indicated if there are no consistent results within the obtained data.

To determine how the posts were generally perceived by the participants, the data analysis method is further adapted specifically for the purpose of the study. A simple mean calculation formula was decided to achieve this goal.

Appendix B

Simple Mean Formula

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Sum score of respondent answers / number of respondents.

To calculate the positive perception received by each case study, each answer was assigned a numerical value according to the Likert-scale: an answer of 1 increases the score by 1, an answer of 2 increases the score by 2, and so on. The scores for each question were then summed up, and then divided by 21, which is the total number of accepted respondents. This value would then represent the mean score of that question.

The mean score for each question in each category would then be added up, and put through the formula again, achieving a number between 1 to 5. 3 decimal places were to be used to ensure the best balance of accuracy and detail. The final value obtained would then be the final mean score of the category, represent a number of X/5. This number is finally compared to the audience reception model, where a value of under 3 is a negative result (oppositional), a number around 3 is a neutral result (negotiated), and a number greater than 3 is a positive result (dominant).

To further represent the data, the mean score would the be divided by 5, and then *100 to obtain a positive perception percentage, better conveying the final results.

To calculate the effects of each section, the positive perception percentage would be compared with the control group's positive perception percentage, while will provide an x% increase or decrease. A decrease of more than 10% will prove that overconvergence has an

observable effect on positive perception. A decrease of more than 20% will be prove that there is a significant effect of overconvergence on positive perception.

To calculate the overall effect of overconvergence, the mean score of each category, except control, will be summed and then divided by the total number of categories. This would provide an overall mean score, of which it will be used to generate a positive perception percentage, which then goes through the same process described in the paragraph above.

Chapter 4: Findings and Data Analysis

4.0 Introduction

This chapter will present the data collected from the questionnaire. The resulting data would then be calculated to answer the stated RQ1 and RQ2. The following section will cover the results as analysed according to the framework set by the audience reception theory.

4.1 General Overview of Results

This section will be presenting the general findings of the entire survey and will serve as an overview of overconvergence and its effects, in attempt to answer research question 1.

Table 1

Overall Results

Control	3.540	
Category	Mean Score	% dif from Control
Indifference	2.968	-11.4
Intergroup	2.905	-12.7
Sensory	2.492	-20.96
Dependency	2.730	-16.2
Overall Mean	2.774	-15.315

As indicated in table 1, the final mean score calculated for the control is 3.54. Hence, the control is accepted and the study is valid. The score is within the forecasted control range. Using this score, the effect of different characteristics of overconvergence were calculated using the method as discussed in the previous chapter. The final result showed that the overall mean score of digital marketing with overconvergence is -15% of digital marketing without overconvergence. It can thus be seen that overconvergence does in fact have a negative effect on target audience perception. However, as it is not more than a -20% effect, the effect is present and noticeable, but not extremely significant.

4.2 Effects of Overconvergence by Category

This section will be presenting the individual findings of each category and discussing each of their general implications. This is in accordance with answering research question 2.

4.2.1 Control Group

Table 2

Results of Control Group

Participant	Control 1	Control 2	Control 3
A	3	2	3
B	3	4	4
C	3	3	4
D	4	3	5
E	4	3	4
F	5	4	5
G	3	3	5
H	1	2	1
I	5	4	5
J	3	4	5
K	4	4	4
L	5	5	4
M	4	4	4
N	2	2	5
O	2	3	4
P	4	4	4
Q	1	1	2
R	2	3	5
S	3	3	5
T	3	4	5
U	4	3	4
Avg	3.238	3.238	4.143
Cat. Avg	3.540	Perception%:	70.8
Control is accepted.			

Table 2 shows that out of the 3 control questions asked, none of them scored below a negotiated (neutral) score, indicating that the control questions used were appropriate and served the fulfilled their function. The final mean score, as mentioned previously, was calculated at 3.54. Using this figure, the overall positive perception of the control group was calculated, and then rated at a final value of 70.8%, which is a slightly above average score. It

is also important to note one outlier that scored the highest out of any question within the survey. This outlier was intentionally inserted within the survey to better reflect real-world conditions of typical digital marketing posts that do not feature language overconvergence, achieving a more realistic result. This outlier will be further discussed later in this chapter.

4.2.2 Indifference Factor

Table 3

Results of the Indifference category of overconvergence

Participant	Indifference 1	Indifference 2	Indifference 3
A	2	1	2
B	2	3	1
C	3	2	5
D	4	3	5
E	4	3	4
F	4	3	3
G	3	4	4
H	1	1	1
I	3	1	3
J	3	4	5
K	5	5	5
L	3	4	4
M	4	3	4
N	2	3	5
O	4	3	2
P	4	2	3
Q	1	1	1
R	3	3	5
S	2	1	2
T	3	2	3
U	4	1	3
Avg.	3.048	2.524	3.333
Cat. Avg.	2.968	% Difference :	-11.400
Indifference minorly affects perception			

Table 3 indicates that Indifference as a factor of overconvergence only minorly affects perception. Out of all the questions that featured indifference overconvergence, 2 of the questions scored a low-average mean score, while 1 scored below average. The final mean score for the entire category was calculated at 2.968. This figure was then used to calculate the

overall positive perception of the category, scoring 11.4% less than the control group (final total of 59.4%). The data hence shows that indifference only has a minor affect, making it a negligible characteristic of overconvergence in digital marketing.

4.2.3 Intergroup Factor

Table 4

Results of the Intergroup category of overconvergence

Participant	Intergroup 1	Intergroup 2	Intergroup 3
A	3	1	2
B	3	2	2
C	3	2	2
D	4	3	4
E	3	4	3
F	3	5	5
G	3	5	5
H	3	1	1
I	2	2	2
J	4	1	4
K	3	4	4
L	3	4	5
M	3	4	4
N	2	3	3
O	4	3	4
P	2	2	4
Q	1	1	1
R	2	4	5
S	3	1	3
T	3	1	2
U	3	2	3
Avg.	2.857	2.619	3.238
Cat. Avg.	2.905	% Difference:	-12.700
Intergroup minorly affects perception			

Table 4 indicates that Intergroup as a factor of overconvergence only minorly affects perception. Out of all the questions that featured intergroup overconvergence, 1 of the questions scored a low-average mean score, while 2 scored below average. The final mean score for the entire category was calculated at 2.905. This figure was then used to calculate the overall positive perception of the category, scoring 12.7% less than the control group (final

total of 58.1%). The data hence shows that intergroup only has a minor affect, making it also a negligible characteristic of overconvergence in digital marketing, similar to Indifference.

4.2.4 Sensory Factor

Table 5

Results of the Sensory category of overconvergence

Participant	Sensory 1	Sensory 2	Sensory 3
A	2	2	1
B	1	3	2
C	2	3	2
D	2	3	2
E	5	4	3
F	3	1	3
G	3	4	3
H	1	1	1
I	1	1	1
J	3	2	1
K	5	4	5
L	3	3	3
M	4	4	3
N	5	1	1
O	4	2	3
P	4	3	4
Q	1	1	1
R	2	5	4
S	1	3	1
T	1	3	1
U	2	3	1
Avg.	2.619	2.667	2.190
Cat. Avg.	2.492	% Difference:	-20.960
Sensory noticeably affects perception.			

Table 5 indicates that Sensory as a factor of overconvergence noticeably affects perception. All 3 of the questions that featured sensory overconvergence scored below average. The final mean score for the entire category was calculated at 2.492. This figure was then used to calculate the overall positive perception of the category, scoring 20.96% less than the control group (final total of 49.84%). The data hence shows that sensory has a significant effect, making it a key characteristic of overconvergence in digital marketing. Additionally, this factor

score the most different from the control out of every other factor, making sensory overconvergence a defining feature of language overconvergence in digital marketing.

4.2.5 Dependency Factor

Table 6

Results of the Dependency category of overconvergence

Participant	Dependency 1	Dependency 2	Dependency 3
A	2	2	1
B	1	3	1
C	2	4	4
D	2	4	2
E	4	3	3
F	4	3	5
G	5	3	4
H	1	1	1
I	2	3	3
J	2	4	1
K	3	3	4
L	4	3	4
M	4	4	4
N	4	2	4
O	2	2	2
P	3	3	3
Q	1	1	1
R	5	3	5
S	2	3	2
T	2	2	2
U	1	2	2
Avg.	2.667	2.762	2.762
Cat. Avg.	2.730	% Difference:	-16.200
Dependency noticeably affects perception.			

Table 6 indicates that Dependency as a factor of overconvergence noticeably affects perception. All 3 of the questions that featured sensory overconvergence scored below average. The final mean score for the entire category was calculated at 2.73. This figure was then used to calculate the overall positive perception of the category, scoring 16.20% less than the control group (final total of 54.6%). The data hence shows that dependency has a significant effect,

making it a second key characteristic of overconvergence in digital marketing. It was the second most different category from the control.

4.3 Outlier Results

**Table 7**

Highlighted results from Control group.

Participant	Control 1	Control 2	Control 3
A	3	2	3
B	3	4	4
C	3	3	4
D	4	3	5
E	4	3	4
F	5	4	5
G	3	3	5
H	1	2	1
I	5	4	5
J	3	4	5
K	4	4	4
L	5	5	4
M	4	4	4
N	2	2	5
O	2	3	4
P	4	4	4
Q	1	1	2
R	2	3	5
S	3	3	5
T	3	4	5
U	4	3	4
Avg	3.238	3.238	4.143
Cat. Avg	3.540	Perception%:	70.8
Control is accepted.			

Within the control results, control question 3 had a significantly higher mean score. As mentioned previously, the 3 control questions were varied in content to emulate real situations of digital marketing. 2 of the control questions can be considered "standard digital marketing", which only aims to promote a product by introducing. Control question 3, however, is a digital marketing post that does not include language convergence but does include cultural references.

Appendix C

Control question 3
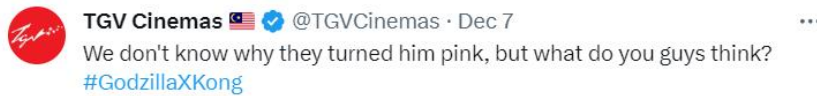
The post used for control question 3 uses only standard Malaysian English, without alterations. Instead, visual semiotics were used to inject culture into the movie promotion. Thus, it can be concluded that using cultural elements to make posts more relatable and potentially humorous can be greatly beneficial, and it can be done without needing to commit to language convergence, and thus risking the negative effects of overconvergence.

4.4 Conclusion

Language overconvergence has a noticeable effect on the perception and success of digital marketing, but it is not drastically significant. However, the significance of these effects vary depending on the type of overconvergence committed. In Malaysian Gen Z online language communities, Sensory and Dependency factors were significant characteristics in overconvergence, while Indifference and Intergroup played minor roles. It was also shown in the control group results that infusing cultural elements without the use of language convergence showed the best results by far.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the resulting data by discussing and answering the research questions established previously. The following sections will cover each research question, before making one final conclusion for the entire research paper. The research questions are:

3. How does language overconvergence in digital marketing effect the perception of target audiences on the promoted brands and products?

4. What are the underlying factors of language overconvergence in digital marketing?

Data analysis was conducted in accordance with audience reception theory (Holub, 2003). The results of oppositional, negotiated, and dominant will be substituted and reinterpreted as negative perception, neutral perception, and positive perception respectively.

5.1 Overconvergence Decreases Positive Perception

As indicated by the overall result, overconvergence does have an observable effect. Without proper knowledge, patience, and understanding, when one changes their language style to fit a group they do not belong in, more often than not, they represent themselves with a language style that is offensive and inaccurate. The results show that in practice, specifically in digital marketing towards Gen Z youths, this statement remains true. However, the data suggest that the extent of this effect is not drastic, only decreasing from a 3.5 out of 5 neutral perception, to a 2.7 out of 5 negative perception. Its effect is practical and observable but may not be significant enough to need complete avoidance. That is to say, marketers do face risks and issues when they choose to commit to language convergence, however the risks are not irreversible or catastrophically detrimental. Rather, the results suggest that instead, there is only a slight decrease. It is still recommended for marketers to be careful when adjusting their language use for marketing material, but marketers do not have to act with extreme caution or

fear, as it is presented by various articles and medias, as its effects are not as extreme as many may think or perceive. Realistically, it may only cause a slight dip in revenue that can be easily covered by strategic planning. Future research could further explore these results by discovering the exact effects overconvergence may have on financial success through a longitudinal study of sales reports published by companies with marketing campaigns that failed due to overconvergence.

To put into words that answer the research question specifically, generally, language overconvergence in digital marketing effects the perception of target audiences on the promoted brands and products by decreasing the positive perception that people have on the marketing material, potentially harming the image of the promoted brands and products. The effect is calculated at a noticeable, but not dire, -15.315% decrease of positive perception.

5.1.1 Types of Overconvergence and Their Effects on Perception

To further explore the concluded results, the individual effects each factor has on perception will now be discussed.

Indifference

For the first factor, indifference, results indicated that it was perceived barely below neutral. The likely explanation for this is that indifference, though negative, is not as offensive as other forms of overconvergence. As indifference is simply the lack of care and attention to conducting convergence, this form of overconvergence would theoretically only cause target audiences to also feel indifferent themselves or feel only minimally offended. Marketers who make this mistake are not being overtly derogatory, but rather they simply are lacking in their prior research. Thus, the negative effects caused by this form of overconvergence is negligible, but not non-existent. Marketers who make this mistake will not face significant consequence, but rather their marketing material would bluntly just be rendered pointless, achieving no goals

set out by the marketing organization. Marketers need to understand their audience through in-depth research before any given campaign, as the failure to do so risks their campaigns becoming either functionally useless, or actively harmful (Roque, 2020).

Intergroup

In communication and language, intergroup overconvergence is the act of incorrectly using a speech community's language style due to biases and stereotyping. As stereotyping is a majorly harmful act, one might expect the results to indicate negativity as such. However, within this study, the data proves otherwise. In digital marketing, intergroup overconvergence did not show significant negative effects, with multiple participants even giving the questions a rating of 5. However, there is one caveat to these results, as they may only apply to digital marketing targeted at Gen Z youths. According to Kurniadi & Alvin (2023), the humour of Gen Z members consists of irony, and occasionally dark humour. As such, it is very likely that the positive results skewing this set of data comes from the fact that the Gen Z participants found ironic joy from the stereotyping of their speech community. Because of this, these results may not be replicable for other speech communities who do not tolerate stereotyping and biases about their community. Further research is needed to confirm this hypothesis. As for this paper, the conclusion that intergroup convergence only plays a minor role in digital marketing will be carried forward and assumed as an accurate portrayal of reality.

Sensory

Next, overconvergence as caused by sensory factors showed the greatest negative effect on target audience perception, with an over 20% decrease from the control. Assuming the control group's result is the average data for typical digital marketing posts, this would mean that sensory overconvergence is significantly less effective than an average digital marketing posts that can be found online. When a marketer commits sensory overconvergence, they are

declaring to the target demographic that they deem them as lesser in ability. Sensory overconvergence is therefore the act of being condescending or generally insensitive. The results are thusly consistent with the expectation that people are greatly offended by insensitive content and causes the reception of Gen Z youths to be oppositional to the intent of the marketers (Campbell & Brauer, 2022). Marketers should avoid committing sensory overconvergence at all costs, both for functional and ethical reasons.

Dependency

Dependency also showed significant negative effects on audience perception, with a 16.2% decrease from the control group. Similar to sensory factors, dependency is also the act of disrespecting a particular group, particularly by exploiting authoritative and executive influence. Here, the targeted speech community is not just assumed as being lesser than average, but they are considered as overall inferior. Convergence under these factors then becomes a way to belittle the audience rather than empowering them. Regardless of who you are, people do not like to be told that they are lesser, or that they are inferior and non-significant. Similar to sensory overconvergence, marketers must be aware of this issue and act appropriately. Marketers should avoid seeing their target audiences as lesser than them and commit to converging their language appropriately.

5.2 Characteristics of Overconvergence in Digital Marketing

With the effects of overconvergence discussed, the general characteristics of overconvergence can now also be thoroughly analysed. Firstly, the results and analysis clearly indicate that, while all 4 factors make up the characteristics of overconvergence, indifference and intergroup characteristics are not as prominent or crucial, and only minimally represents overconvergence. Meanwhile, sensory and dependency are instead the primary characteristics observed. A lack of research and empathy may not be the core of language overconvergence,

but rather, a general attitude of negative contempt towards the targeted speech community instead is the likely source of overconvergence. If marketers deem their target audience to be lacking in ability, or inferior to themselves, overconvergence is more likely to occur and cause significant damage to the affected audience, and the revenue / public image of marketing organizations.

Another key identifier of language overconvergence in digital marketing is arbitrariness and the option of avoidance. Throughout each question of the survey, a consistent theme present is that language overconvergence was a deliberate and choice, and I completely optional. Marketers deliberately chose to change their language style and risk overconvergence, despite there being other options of cultural marketing without needing to use the language part of culture. Hence, this phenomenon is completely avoidable, as long as marketers make the right, well-informed strategical choices. It also is relatively arbitrary, as mentioned previously, convergence does not need to occur in marketer-audience communication and can be substituted with superior strategies with less risk (Bauer, 2002). Overall, overconvergence often does not "occur on accident", but rather exists as a mistake of a deliberately decided action. Marketers can identify whether a piece of their marketing contains overconvergence by checking whether there was deliberate effort to change the way language was being used to communicate. Future research could explore this characteristic of overconvergence and develop further strategies regarding it.

5.3 Discussion of Outlier's Relevance

Following the previous conclusion that overconvergence can be decidedly avoided entirely, this section will further that notion by discussing the outlier present in the data. As previously mentioned, one question achieved the best results by far, with a 4.143 mean score, and a 83% positive perception rate. The results thus are strongly positive and lands itself in the dominant categorisation of audience reception theory: the intended effect by the message

senders was achieved. This outlier present in the control group represented marketing content that utilised cultural elements without attempting language convergence, completely negating the risks of overconvergence. Here, the post was clearly able to resonate with survey participants, exploiting pop cultural elements without any risk of becoming offensive. The outlier is relevant as it presents a great potential opportunity for marketers: they do not need to change the way they present their language at all, but can still become relatable without it, simply by injecting basic current cultural knowledge into the material (Schuster, 2020). In summary, though convergence represents a potential to be utilised to improve marketing content, there are ways to gain the advantage of convergence without the risk of overconvergence, as proven by the outlier, control group question 3.

5.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, with analysis of the results from the survey of Malaysian Gen Z online users, the effects of overconvergence is observably present. When overconvergence occurs, positive perceptions drops by around 15%. This effect is not exceedingly detrimental; however, its presence can cause digital marketing content to fail to reach its intended goals. Overconvergence in digital marketing is primarily characterized by sensory and dependency-based effects, where marketers treat their target audience with little respect due to a perceived difference in capabilities and authority, thought this conclusion may only apply to Gen Z online users and not other speech communities. Further research is therefore needed to confirm these results. Overconvergence in digital marketing is also characterised by an underlying sense of arbitrariness and optional avoidance. The phenomenon occurs as a consequence of poor execution, rather than existing as a potential accident. Overconvergence is also deemed arbitrary as the issue could easily be avoided simply by having marketers select strategies that implement culture without altering language style or structure. As also proven by the study, marketing content in which features cultural elements but only uses standard English still

achieved the best result by a significant margin. Marketers should take these alternative options instead of convergence. Even though overconvergence does not present too great a detrimental risk, its existing effects and simplicity in finding alternatives makes it so that the logical conclusion that should be drawn is that marketers should be very careful when attempting language convergence, or simply avoid convergence in general.

This study clearly illustrates the existence of overconvergence as an issue in digital marketing and explores its characteristics. However, future research can be done to further explore the issue. For example, longitudinal studies about overconvergence's long term effects on perception and business success could be done to confirm this research's findings: if the sales reports of companies who suffered from overconvergence revealed financial losses, it is clear that overconvergence does in fact exist as a problem within the field. Further research from a linguistic or psycholinguistic angle can also be done, analysing the specific issues in language style adaptation as present in digital marketing, and the cognitive processes that are involved in determining the positive perception of the post based on linguistic elements. Marketers should consider conducting this research before continuing to attempt language convergence, lest their image be harmed, and that they must remain silent as a brand.

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Appendix A

Research Instrument

Section 1 of 4

Survey: How does language overconvergence in digital marketing affect the perceptions of Malaysian Gen Z online users?

The following is a quick survey to determine the perceptions that Malaysian Gen Z online users have on social media ads where brands attempt to imitate how people speak online. Please answer the questions below truthfully and honestly.

Please be informed that in accordance with Personal Data Protection Act 2010 ("PDPA") which came into force on 15 November 2013, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman ("UTAR") is hereby bound to make notice and require

Acknowledgement of Notice *

○ I have been notified and that I hereby understood, consented and agreed per UTAR above notice.

○ I disagree, my personal data will not be processed.

After section 1   Continue to next section

Section 2 of 4

Demographic Information

Please answer truthfully on your personal information. Answers will remain anonymous in the final report.

Were you born within 1997 to 2012 (Gen Z Range)? *

○ Yes

○ No

How familiar are you with Internet culture? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all	○	○	○	○	○	Very familiar

How often do you use or interact with current "Internet Slang" online? *
(Examples: Rizz, Yeet, Gyatt, No Cap)

	1	2	3	4	5	
Never	○	○	○	○	○	Almost Always

Perception of Digital Marketing

Below are 15 examples of social media marketing. Please provide an answer based on how positively or negatively you perceive the post.

1= Very negative. I hate it or feel offended.
2= Negative. I generally dislike the post.
3= Neutral. I do not particularly feel positively or negatively, or I do not understand the post.
4= Positive. I generally like the post.
5= Very Positive. I love it. I find it funny, enjoyable, and/or charming.

Image 1

Toyota Malaysia Official ✓
@Toyota_Malaysia

Ignition on. Attitude up.

It's time to drive your new attitude with the New Corolla GR Sport!

Book yours today: tyt.my/corollagrs

#NewCorollaGRSport #ToyotaMY #ToyotaMalaysia #Toyota

0:03 / 0:35
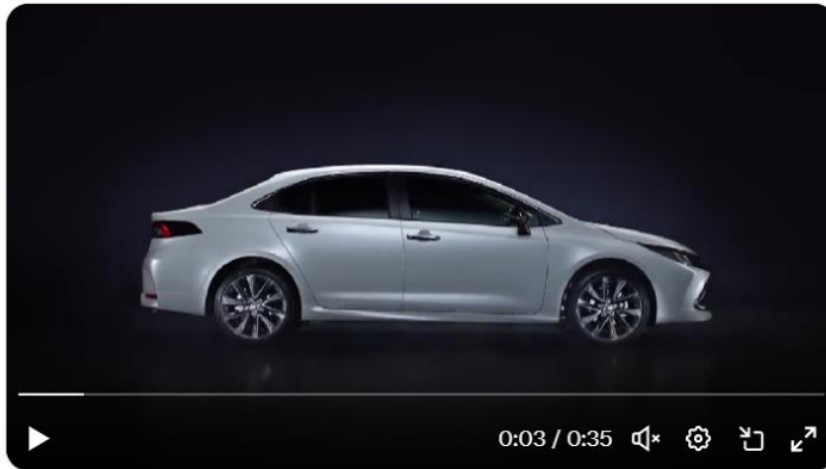
8:00 PM · Aug 28, 2023 · **1,950** Views

(Image 1) How do you perceive this post?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very Negative	○	○	○	○	○	Very Positive

40
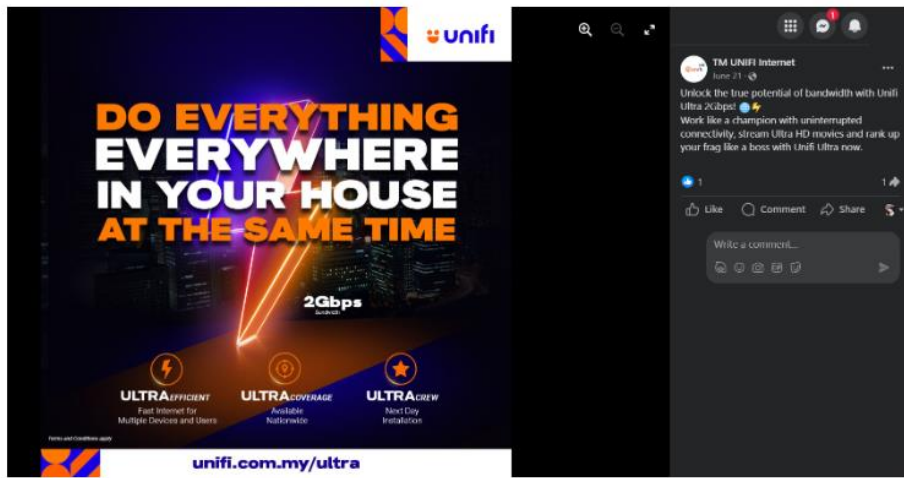
Image 2

(Image 2) How do you perceive this post? *

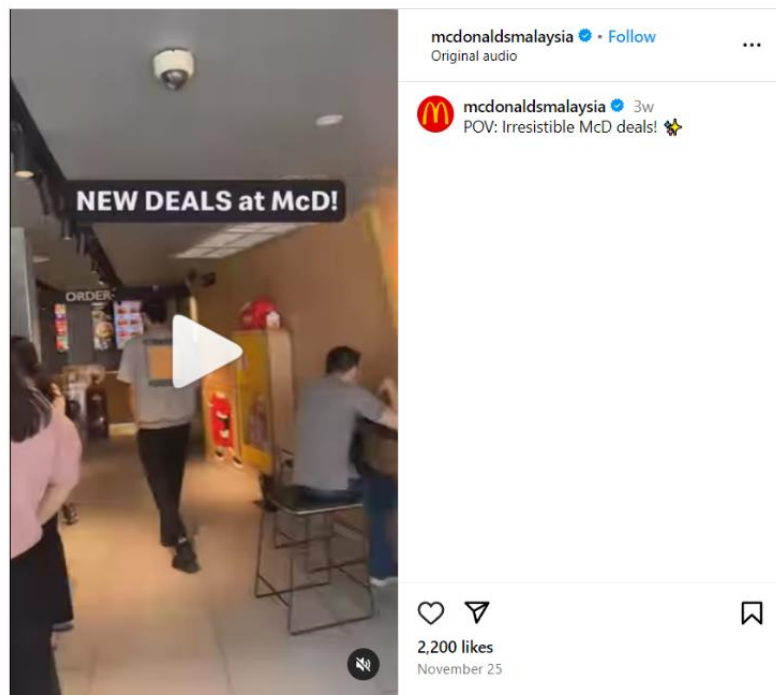|	1	2	3	4	5	
Very Negative	○	○	○	○	○	Very Positive

Image 3

Image 4

Going on new trend
activities during retirement

Expectation:
I don't need coverage
for Death or Total and
Permanent Disability

Reality:
I should have gotten
coverage for Death or Total
and Permanent Disability

allianzmalaysia • Follow

allianzmalaysia Change that reality with Allianz EverLink Plus
through high coverage & flexible terms to secure you and your
family's future. Start planning now to #AlwaysBeCovered

12 likes
October 15

Add a comment...   Post

Image 5

U.S. Army Recruiting Center

Oct 27 at 7:02pm ·

Come see us! Or HMU

I can make your student loans disappear

Me: @WATCHTHEYARD

42

Image 6

rhbgroup ● Follow ···

rhbgroup ● Good news for you eco warriors!

The National Budget 2024 promises continued incentives for EV users. You'll be set to receive tax reliefs of up to RM2,500 for renting, purchasing, or installing EV charges. This tax relief extends till 2027.

How do you feel about this tax relief?

#TogetherWeProgress #EkonomiMadani
4w

7,790 likes
November 15

Add a comment...

Image 7

McDonald's UK ●
@McDonaldsUK

Him: Meet me at McDonald's?
Barber: Say no more, fam.

11:58 am · 22 Feb 18

Image 8

Burger King ✔
@BurgerKing

Follow ⌄

him: it's only a month
waifu: ....😭

7:10 AM - 1 Nov 2018

7,685 Retweets 19,248 Likes

♡ 574   ⇄ 7.7K   ♡ 19K   ✉

Image 9

Time Out London ✔
17 hrs · 🌐

👍 Like Page ⌄

🔥 London Fire Brigade are still battling the blaze 🔥

A huge fire has broken out at Studio 338 club in Greenwich
It's been burning since lunchtime.
TIMEOUT.COM

Image 10

Amazon Prime Video
2 days ago

What is your favorite thing about the holiday season?

That good quality relative time

gifts!!!

More food...ugh i'm stuffed

Decking the place out with holiday swag

Binging the holiday CLASSICS

19K votes

Image 11

TGV Cinemas 🇲🇾 ✓ @TGVCinemas · Dec 7 ···
We don't know why they turned him pink, but what do you guys think?
#GodzillaXKong

Image 12

🌀 **Twisties Australia** ✓ To be fair, you have to have a very high IQ to understand Twisties content. The humour is extremely subtle, and without a solid grasp of theoretical physics most of the jokes will go over a typical viewer's head. The fans understand this stuff; they have the intellectual capacity to truly appreciate the depths of these jokes, to realise that they're not just funny- they say something deep about LIFE.
Like · Reply · 18 mins

Image 13

SUBWAY® Canada ✓
@SUBWAYCanada

Pick your bread bae.

Italian	0%
9-Grain Honey Oat	0%
Italian Herbs and Cheese	0%
Flatbread	0%

0 votes · Final results

5/9/18, 11:55 AM

Image 14

U.S. Air Force ✓
@usairforce

Follow

The Taliban Forces in Farah city #Afghanistan would much rather have heard #Yanny or #Laurel than the deafening #BRRRT they got courtesy of our #A10. Read more: airforcetimes.com/flashpoints/20 ...

8:44 AM - 17 May 2018

Appendix B

Simple Mean Formula

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Sum score of respondent answers / number of respondents

Appendix C

Control question 3

Table 1

Overall Results

Control	3.540	
Category	**Mean Score**	**% dif from Control**
Indifference	2.968	-11.4
Intergroup	2.905	-12.7
Sensory	2.492	-20.96
Dependency	2.730	-16.2
Overall Mean	2.774	-15.315

Table 2

Results of Control Group

Participant	Control 1	Control 2	Control 3
A	3	2	3
B	3	4	4
C	3	3	4
D	4	3	5
E	4	3	4
F	5	4	5
G	3	3	5
H	1	2	1
I	5	4	5
J	3	4	5
K	4	4	4
L	5	5	4
M	4	4	4
N	2	2	5
O	2	3	4
P	4	4	4
Q	1	1	2
R	2	3	5
S	3	3	5
T	3	4	5
U	4	3	4
Avg	3.238	3.238	4.143
Cat. Avg	3.540	Perception%:	70.8
Control is accepted.			

Table 3

Results of the Indifference category of overconvergence

Participant	Indifference 1	Indifference 2	Indifference 3
A	2	1	2
B	2	3	1
C	3	2	5
D	4	3	5
E	4	3	4
F	4	3	3
G	3	4	4
H	1	1	1
I	3	1	3
J	3	4	5
K	5	5	5
L	3	4	4
M	4	3	4
N	2	3	5
O	4	3	2
P	4	2	3
Q	1	1	1
R	3	3	5
S	2	1	2
T	3	2	3
U	4	1	3
Avg.	3.048	2.524	3.333
Cat. Avg.	2.968	% Difference :	-11.400
Indifference minorly affects perception			

Table 4

Results of the Intergroup category of overconvergence

Participant	Intergroup 1	Intergroup 2	Intergroup 3
A	3	1	2
B	3	2	2
C	3	2	2
D	4	3	4
E	3	4	3
F	3	5	5
G	3	5	5
H	3	1	1
I	2	2	2
J	4	1	4
K	3	4	4
L	3	4	5
M	3	4	4
N	2	3	3
O	4	3	4
P	2	2	4
Q	1	1	1
R	2	4	5
S	3	1	3
T	3	1	2
U	3	2	3
Avg.	2.857	2.619	3.238
Cat. Avg.	2.905	% Difference:	-12.700
Intergroup minorly affects perception			

Table 5

Results of the Sensory category of overconvergence

Participant	Sensory 1	Sensory 2	Sensory 3
A	2	2	1
B	1	3	2
C	2	3	2
D	2	3	2
E	5	4	3
F	3	1	3
G	3	4	3
H	1	1	1
I	1	1	1
J	3	2	1
K	5	4	5
L	3	3	3
M	4	4	3
N	5	1	1
O	4	2	3
P	4	3	4
Q	1	1	1
R	2	5	4
S	1	3	1
T	1	3	1
U	2	3	1
Avg.	2.619	2.667	2.190
Cat. Avg.	2.492	% Difference:	-20.960
Sensory noticeably affects perception.			

Table 6

Results of the Dependency category of overconvergence

Participant	Dependency 1	Dependency 2	Dependency 3
A	2	2	1
B	1	3	1
C	2	4	4
D	2	4	2
E	4	3	3
F	4	3	5
G	5	3	4
H	1	1	1
I	2	3	3
J	2	4	1
K	3	3	4
L	4	3	4
M	4	4	4
N	4	2	4
O	2	2	2
P	3	3	3
Q	1	1	1
R	5	3	5
S	2	3	2
T	2	2	2
U	1	2	2
Avg.	2.667	2.762	2.762
Cat. Avg.	2.730	% Difference:	-16.200
Dependency noticeably affects perception.			

Table 7

Highlighted results from Control group.

Participant	Control 1	Control 2	Control 3
A	3	2	3
B	3	4	4
C	3	3	4
D	4	3	5
E	4	3	4
F	5	4	5
G	3	3	5
H	1	2	1
I	5	4	5
J	3	4	5
K	4	4	4
L	5	5	4
M	4	4	4
N	2	2	5
O	2	3	4
P	4	4	4
Q	1	1	2
R	2	3	5
S	3	3	5
T	3	4	5
U	4	3	4
Avg	3.238	3.238	4.143
Cat. Avg	3.540	Perception%:	70.8
Control is accepted.			