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CONCEPTUALIZING CREDIBILITY-BUILDING STRATEGIES WITH SPECIALIZATION FOR TEACHING ADVERTISING WRITING

CONCEPTUALIZANDO ESTRATEGIAS DE CONSTRUCCIÓN DE CREDIBILIDAD CON LA ESPECIALIZACIÓN EN ENSEÑANZA DE LA ESCRITURA PUBLICITARIA

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INTRODUCTION

One of the challenges posed to English-for-Specific-Purposes (ESP) teachers is how they balance the teaching of subject knowledge and linguistic knowledge (ZHANG, 2016). The ESP teachers may be subject specialists who use English as the medium of instruction and the language of assessments (AIREY, 2016), or they have a language background but may not possess subject expertise. These different ESP roles can impact how ESP teachers engage in students' content and linguistic knowledge. The approach having a dual focus on content and language is that of content-language integrated learning (CLIL) (e.g. DALTON-PUFFER, 2007; MARSH; MARTÍN, 2013), which recognizes the synergy and interaction of subject matter and language learning and "its impact on the construction of new knowledge and promotion of higher-order thinking" (ZHANG, 2016, p. 148). This has implications for teachers' professional development, as the ESP teacher can be a practitioner and a researcher. In the case of a language-background ESP teacher, they may tap into his/her expertise in linguistic analysis for connecting language use characterizing subject knowledge, which enhances understanding of students' needs and informs course and assessment design.

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One less-explored example of ESP/CLIL instruction is that of marketing and public relations (MPR) writing, the focus of the present study. The nature of MPR writing, particularly advertising discourses (copywriting, magazine ads, and so on), is persuasive, as the trust level between the speaker (brand or advertiser) and the hearer (customer) is low. Communication in advertising relies on persuasion so that the customer can find a brand or a product credible (Simpson, 2001; Tanaka, 1994). Persuasive strategies come in many forms from different schools of thought and marketing models, such as the Aristotelian rhetoric of "ethos, pathos, logos", concepts of "reason" (logic and facts) and "tickle" (emotional appeals), advertisements (BERNSTEIN, 1974), the "3C" (Company, Customer, Competition) model (Ohmae & Associates, 2001) and brand credibility (ERDEM; SWAIT, 2004). A straightforward teaching approach would be teasing apart the linguistic and pragmatic features corresponding to the advertising strategies (e.g. FASASI; NJOKU; ONUABUOBI, 2018; SIMPSON, 2001) so that students can directly apply these strategies to their advertising writing tasks.

While the above approach may make explicit the linguistic structure and choice for realizing the persuasive strategies in the text, it does not clarify the underlying principles for appropriating strategies across various products. According to Simpson (2001), "one can only speculate on what guides the linguistic development of a particular ad from its inception to its public release" (p. 605). From a pedagogical perspective, ungrounded speculations or reliance upon advice from experienced advertisers seems to downplay how advertising knowledge is structured. In addition, how the discourse of advertising is constructed may provide insights into the organizing principles of persuasion strategies, specifically those for establishing a brand's credibility. In light of this, the present study aims to shed light upon the basis of achievement of brand credibility by adopting the dimension of Specialization and bringing together an array of credibility-building strategies for informing advertising writing instruction.

Following this introduction, Section 2 of this paper first describes the teaching context of the ESP writing course, informing students of advertising knowledge for producing advertising texts, and problematizes the conceptualization of brand credibility as content knowledge about

persuasion strategies in advertising writing. Section 3 then outlines how such conceptualization is informed by Specialization of Legitimation Code Theory (LCT), which is used for mapping the credibility-building strategies in terms of the Specialization codes. Section 4 reports on the application of the organized concepts of credibility-building strategies in the classroom to reveal how these strategies were recontextualized for teaching and learning activities. The concluding section discusses the significance of the study and future directions for extending the present study.

1 THE PRESENT STUDY

1.1 Teaching context: the Marketing and Public Relations writing course

The present study is situated in a 13-week marketing and public relations (MPR) writing course. It was a compulsory English-for Specific-Purposes (ESP) course for undergraduate students from a language and professional communication programme. The course aimed to equip students with essential marketing and public relations knowledge and fundamental conceptual and analytical skills. These knowledges and skills enabled them to identify the target audience, plan and produce copywriting texts and press releases, the two primary MPR texts taught in the course.

The first seven weeks of the course focused on writing advertising and copywriting texts. The lecturer (the author) expected the students to produce the target texts in considerable length (200 words maximum) to organize and elaborate the texts with strategies for gaining attention, building credibility and value, and calling for customers' actions. The students were taught about the nature and purpose of advertising texts, their structural format and incorporating advertising strategies into each part of the text.

The main academic focus of the subject was on elucidating the MPR strategies to enable students to produce the target MPR texts. The MPR strategies were illustrated with authentic texts found in magazines, company websites, newsletters, etc. These strategies included making MPR texts appealing, emphasizing product features and benefits, and motivating customers to take action. Corresponding language features, including vocabulary and sentence

structure, were taught alongside the MPR strategies. However, according to the subject's teaching plan, grammatical knowledge was not explicitly taught, although one of the tasks was proofreading, which assesses the students' ability to maintain and improve the accuracy of the target MPR texts. This means that linguistic knowledge was supportive and was for effectively expressing the MPR strategies during writing practices.

To teach this course, the lecturer possessed basic MPR knowledge and was aware that credibility, the focus of the present study, comprises components such as trustworthiness and expertise (e.g. ERDEM; SWAIT, 2004), celebrity endorsement (e.g. ERDOGAN, 1999) and expert opinion (e.g. CHOCARRO; CORTIÑAS, 2013). Although it is helpful to convert these factors into variables and measurable scales for empirical research (e.g. AYEH; AU; LAW, 2013; EISEND, 2006), it is less clear how these factors are related to each other and how these factors serve to achieve credibility.

These factors were considerably simplified into specific strategies with examples in the learning materials, in that students could adopt the strategies in their advertising writing. Additionally, following the adage "the more you tell, the more you sell" advocated by advertising authorities such as Ogilvy (1963), the fundamental premise of this course emphasized "specificity": the students were required to be capable of giving as many details of a product as possible as the main credibility-building strategy. For example, strategies for building a brand's credibility were summarised into general suggestions such as "quoting facts and figures", "mentioning awards or other honours" and "providing testimonials" (Centre of Business English, 2019). Consequently, these strategies primarily focused on expressing knowledge (fact, figures, awards, testimonials) but ignored mentioning knowers (experts, celebrities, customers), which the advertisement writer could leverage to establish credibility for a brand or product.

Therefore, strategies for building brand credibility can be organized and considered knowledge/ knower-building practices. It is then necessary to identify what kind of knowledge about the brand construes a credible image, and who has the authority to make a credible judgment about the brand. By bringing together the concepts and practices related to brand credibility using Specialization, the basis of achieving credibility can be elucidated as to

whether the knowledge or the knower is preferred in a particular strategy. This may also help the lecturer to "translate" these practices into linguistic terms, so that the students are given explicit language instructions for expressing the credibility-building strategies.

2 SPECIALIZATION AND ADVERTISING DISCOURSE

The interest of the present study is in the organizing principles of practices for building brand credibility, enacted through advertising discourse, in the field of advertising. As argued previously, the practices discussed in the MPR course were predominantly represented as various knowledges concerning the object of study; knowers relevant to the brand were, however, equally important. In other words, who possesses favourable information about the brand also plays a part in building brand credibility (e.g. SHIN *et al*., 2015; KIM *et al*., 2020). From the perspective of Legitimation Code Theory, this means that both the knowledge and knower structures are present, as the legitimizing basis of achieving brand credibility is considered.

The following first introduces the notion of *Specialization codes* briefly, and explains (i) how *epistemic relations* and *social relations* are realized in terms of the factors for establishing brand credibility, generating the four specialization codes and (ii) how these codes are enacted in the advertising discourse in terms of language and grammatical choices.

2.1 Specialization codes of legitimation

Specialization, as defined by Maton (2014), refers to how "practices and beliefs are about or oriented towards something and by someone" (p. 29). In other words, within an object of study, the "something" (knowledge) and "someone" (knower) are related to varying extents. Such relations between knowledge and knower can be analytically discriminated through *epistemic relations* and *social relations*: Epistemic relations (ER) are those between practices and the object of study, and social relations (SR) are those between practices and who are enacting the practices. These relations can be strengthened or weakened (+/-), and form four specialization codes (ER+/-, SR+/-), as visualized in Figure 1. These four specialization codes are:

- *Knowledge codes* (ER+, SR-): the basis of achievement is determined upon the possession of specific knowledge, principles and procedures; dispositions and attributes of knowers are less emphasized;

- *Knower codes* (ER-, SR+): the basis of achievement is determined by highlighting the dispositions and attributes of knowers, while knowledge is downplayed;

- *Élite codes* (ER+, SR+): legitimacy is based on being the legitimate knower who possesses the specialized knowledge; and

- *Relativist codes* (ER-, SR-): Neither legitimate knowledge nor knower is emphasized for claiming legitimacy.

Figure 1. Specialisation plane (MATON, 2014, p. 30)
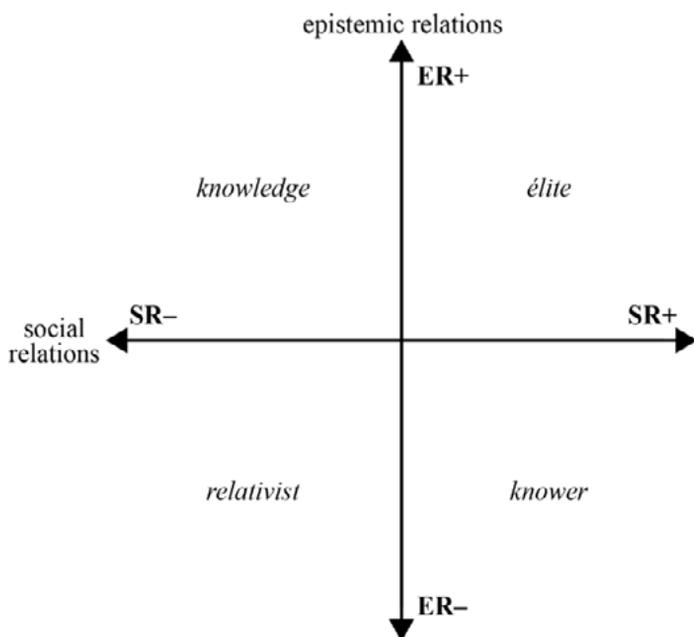
For brand credibility, epistemic relations emphasize "what" is considered the legitimate knowledge about a brand for rendering its goods or services credible, e.g. features, benefits or brand history; social relations highlight "who" is the legitimate knower in support of the brand's credibility, e.g.

experts, celebrities or customers. These concepts, represented through the advertising discourse, can realize the epistemic relations and social relations; the emphasis or downplaying of these concepts in the advertising discourse can elucidate the strengthening and weakening of those relations. Based on Maton and Chen (2017), Table 1 shows: (i) epistemic relations are realized as a degree of emphasis on product specifications (features), purposes and benefits of the product or the features (benefits) and expertise and artisanship (brand history); (ii) social relations are realized as a degree of emphasis on experts' knowledge about the product (features), celebrities' and customers' positive experience and attitudes (benefits) and recognition by the society (brand history).

Table 1. Realization of epistemic relations and social relations (based on Chen (2010))

Concept	Focus	Degree of Emphasis on
Epistemic relations (ER)	Features	Specifications of the product
		Mechanisms of particular features
	Benefits	Purposes and underlying benefits of the features or the product as a whole
	Brand history	Expertise and artisanship developed with the brand history
Social relations (SR)	Features	Experts endorsing the product or service
	Benefits	Celebrity endorsement
		Customers positive experience
	Brand history	Awards and accolades recognized by society

With Table 1 as a basic "translation device" (MATON; CHEN, 2016, 2017), credibility-building strategies are described as strengthening and weakening of epistemic relations and social relations, and principled as the corresponding Specialization codes.

Therefore, this translation device enables the lecturer to recognize those strategies by examining advertising texts' language choices. The lecturer can

also develop a shared "metalanguage" – "the choices authors have made in writing those texts" (MOORE; SCHLEPPEGRELL, 2014, p. 93) – for discussing with students how particular strategies increase customers' confidence in the brand. These aims may raise students' awareness of the relationship between language structure and strategy (SIMPSON, 2001) and improve their competency in achieving the persuasive purposes of the advertising texts.

2.2 Enacting Specialization codes in conceptualizing "brand credibility"

As described in Section 2, persuasion strategies such as building credibility were the core of the MPR writing course. There is thus a need for organizing these strategies in "the form of a coherent, explicit and systematically principled structure" (MATON, 2014), so that they are not loosely defined as delimited suggestions or "tips" in the teaching and learning materials. In the following, the credibility-building strategies are principled through Specialization codes, in that their basis of legitimation can be highlighted in terms of the knowledge-knower structure. In addition, as language models knowledge through meaning-making (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 1999, p. x), the discursive features for representing the strategies and enacting the codes are also described.

2.2.1 Product features and benefits: knowledge code

In the research literature on marketing and advertising, credibility-building strategies and principles are mainly established through empirical research (e.g., BAEK; KIM; YU, 2010; ERDEM; SWAIT, 2004; SMITH, 2007; VIDYANATA; SUNARYO; HADIWIDJOJO, 2018). Brand credibility directly influences consumers' consideration and choice of the brand, and such credibility is based on trustworthiness and expertise (ERDEM; SWAIT; LOUVIERE, 2002; ERDEM; SWAIT, 2004). Trustworthiness and expertise refer to the willingness and capability of the brand to deliver its products or services (NEWELL; GOLDSMITH, 2001, p. 238). The brand may explain the product's features in detail to increase credibility by deconstructing its features, functions, purposes, and advantages. This means that the knowledge about the product is privileged as the basis of credibility. These credibility-building strategies are classified as the *knowledge code* (ER+, SR-).

The knowledge code is commonly expressed by breaking down a product into its specific features in linguistic terms. For example, a computer photo-editing application is described by its new features laid out, as illustrated in Example (1):

1) [SOFTWARE] introduces a totally redesigned Layers sidebar (ER+), color adjustments (ER+) and effects layers (ER+), over 200 beautiful new vector shapes (ER+), support for M1 Ultra (ER+), and more.

The description emphasizes the essential knowledge about the product, strengthening the epistemic relations (ER+), instead of highlighting the feelings or authority of its users, thus weakening the social relations (SR-). The stacking of features, some of which are positively commented with wording such as "redesigned", "beautiful" and "new", suggests that the company has a clear understanding of its product, in turn increasing the product's credibility.

Another strategy involves the combination of features with their corresponding functions, purposes or benefits. Common linguistic strategies are to-infinitives and "for + gerund" to signal functions and purposes, or the prepositional phrase "with + *feature*" to introduce the product feature. For example:

2) Capture detail in every meeting with audio recording and notes (ER+). (Website copy text of a tablet's recording and note-taking features)

3) Convert Handwritten Notes into Text | Easily and accurately translate handwritten notes into text to share meeting minutes conveniently (ER+). (Website copy text of a tablet's handwriting conversion function)

4) Extra motorized nozzle optimized for cleaning upholstery and hard-to-reach (ER+) spots. (Website copy text of a vacuum cleaner's feature and cleaning function)

These examples spell out explicitly what benefits the users can get from the product features and their purposes. These benefits ("capturing details", "sharing meeting minutes conveniently, "cleaning hard-to-reach spots") are specific instead of vague promises or "fluff" that the brand self-boasts; therefore, similar to the detailed breakdown of product features in Example (1), the language highlighting the knowledge about the product and enacting the *knowledge code* may raise the brand's credibility.

2.2.2 Celebrities, customers and experts: knower and elite code

Recent research has extended the notion of credibility from brands to individuals, such as social influencers (e.g., CHEKIMA; CHEKIMA; ADIS, 2020; WIEDMANN; VON METTENHEIM, 2020), celebrity endorsers (e.g., KUMAR; RAMANA, 2019; WANG; SCHEINBAUM, 2018), experts (e.g., KIM; MELTON; MIN, 2020; WANG, 2005) and consumer reviews (e.g., FILIERI *et al.*, 2018; SHAN, 2016). Expert opinions in product-focused content are considered more reliable as the information is more trustworthy (HO *et al.*, 2015; MARTENSEN *et al.*, 2018). Social influencers and celebrity endorsers appeal to consumers' attention with their popularity (HANI; MARWAN; ANDRE, 2018). Meanwhile, consumers' recommendations have "a greater effect on brand attitude than experts or celebrity recommendations do" (KIM *et al.*, 2020). This suggests that credibility can also be based on knowers, who are within (staff and experts) and outside of the brand (consumers and influencers), representing a strengthened social relation (SR+).

Depending on how the knowledge about the product is expressed or "projected" by the knowers, highlighting these actors in the copywriting text may generate different Specialization codes with varying strengths of epistemic relations. Brand credibility can be established by mentioning celebrities or consumers, who may reflect on their user experience and emotions rather than focusing on the particular product features. Two examples below illustrate a smartphone brand leveraging its partnership with BTS on their website, and a consumer review excerpt of a keyboard product on an e-commerce website:

5) Exciting news! We're delighted to share that Samsung is further strengthening its partnership with BTS (SR+) in 2021 to provide unique mobile experiences set to make your everyday epic. (Internet media ad of the mobile device brand Samsung)

6) So far this product has been absolutely amazing (SR+). I have way more desk space available. and I like the compactness (SR+) of it. (Customer review on a computer keyboard on an online shopping platform)

In the case of celebrity endorsers, who are personal brands *per se*, their fame increases consumers' confidence by endowing their credibility to the brand; details about the brand may not hold much significance in proving

the brand quality. Similarly, positive consumer reviews may emphasize user experience and emotions ("absolutely amazing", "like the compactness of it") more than explaining each product feature. Therefore, both celebrities and consumers strengthen the social relation (SR+) and weaken the epistemic relation (ER-), resulting in a *knower code* (ER-, SR+).

Including experts in MPR texts may increase brand credibility with their expert knowledge and experience about the brand. This strategy is commonly deployed by combining product descriptions or statistical data and mentioning names of renowned experts or authoritative research bodies. To exemplify this strategy, the excerpt from an advertisement on immunotherapy is illustrated below:

> 7) Named for our Nobel laureate and world-renowned researcher Dr Jim Allison *(mentioning the expert)*, the institute will advance exceptional discovery, translational and clinical research *(introducing scope of the Institute)* to integrate immunobiology across disciplines and bring the benefits of this novel therapy to more cancer patients *(highlighting benefits)*. (Print media ad of James P. Allison Institute)

The text introduces the significant knower in the field and his achievements ("Nobel laureate", "world-renowned researcher"), strengthening the social relations between the knower and the field of immunobiology (SR+). The research institute is then associated with its relevant research as the institute's scope and the highlighted purposes and benefits brought to cancer patients, strengthening the epistemic relations (ER+). In this case, the text mentioning both the knower and the knowledge of the field generates an *elite code* (ER+, SR+), suggesting the legitimacy is reliant upon possessing the expert knowledge and legitimate status in the field.

2.2.3 "Anything goes": relativist code

To increase purchase consideration and intention, it is equally crucial for a brand to present its product through *signals*, viz. "an action that a seller can take to convey information credibly about unobservable product quality to the buyer" (RAO; QU; RUEKERT, 1999, p. 259). This is especially so when a brand, which can be a signal *per se*, seeks to "reduce consumer efforts

to acquire the necessary information for making purchase decisions" (BAEK; KIM; YU, 2010, p. 667). The brand as a signal can mean that the company does not need to place much cost on celebrities or experts for endorsing the brand, or even selectively avoid mentioning the brand's features to facilitate consumers' understanding of the brand. For example, luxurious brands may focus on the prestige of ownership or worth; technological brands may highlight the convenience and ease of use of their products:

> 8) A Moment of <u>Eternity</u> | … Each new masterpiece questions our deepest nature and fuels our highest aspirations. It's a testament to what truly moves us, an invitation to always aim higher, and a legacy <u>perpetually</u> reinvented. It's cinema. <u>#Perpetual</u> (Print ad of Rolex's watch "Perpetual")

> 9) Organize files <u>however you want</u>. Get to them on <u>any device you want</u>. iCloud Drive lets you organize your files with folders, rename them, and tag them with colours... You can even have everything in your Mac Desktop and Documents folders <u>automatically available</u> in iCloud Drive. (Website copy text of Apple's "iCloud")

In Example 8, the luxury watch ("Perpetual") is associated with the concept of "eternity". This implies to the potential customers that the value of the watch can be comparable to ageless classic theatrical scenes, as visually expressed in the advertisement. Neither the watch's specifications nor endorsers are represented in the text, resulting in a *relativist code* (ER-, SR-). Alternatively, the text about iCloud Drive in (9) emphasizes flexibility and convenience by not mentioning any features but highlighting that no specific technical knowledge or expert knower is needed for operating the application ("however you want", "any device you want", "automatically available"). In both cases, the text does not have foci of epistemic or social relations, thus enacting a *relativist code* (ER-, SR-). The products have already been qualified positively by the brands *per se*: product knowledge or endorsers are not considered necessary for promoting the brand's credibility – the quality is perceived as default to consumers.
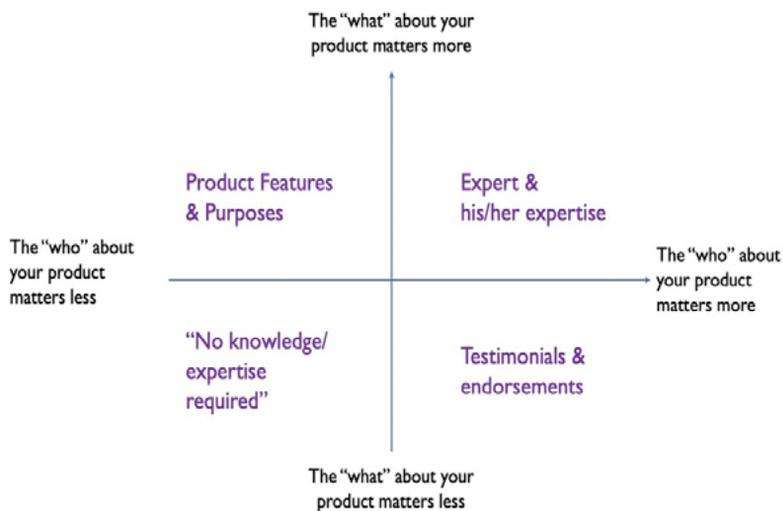
3 PEDAGOGICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE SPECIALIZATION CODES MPR WRITING INSTRUCTION

3.1 Recontextualising the knowledge-knower structures of credibility-building strategies

The Specialization codes derived in the present study help conceptualize the credibility-building strategies and deconstruct the underlying structure of knowledges and knowers about a brand or product. Conceptualizing these strategies has also facilitated the instruction of MPR writing, in that the lecturer was not a subject specialist and seeking a balance between teaching subject content and language content (ZHANG, 2016). This is particularly useful when the subject knowledge and its language choice in disciplinary texts are inseparable: ESP lecturers may have to either avoid overly technical disciplinary knowledge or use alternative discursive strategies to get around (WU; BADGER, 2009). Such conceptualization, therefore, has aimed to reconcile the challenges that language-background ESP lecturers face, in that they are enabled to recognize the organizing principles of the subject content, which is considered "a strange and uncharted land" (WU; BADGER, 2009, p. 19).

The Specialization codes were not directly used in the MPR writing classroom. Instead, they were recontextualized as the knowledge synthesized in the process was selected, rearranged and transformed for teaching and learning (MATON, 2014). The Specialization plane was drawn in the class with examples extracted from various media (Appendix 1) before being simplified into Figure 2.

Figure 2. Recontextualised Specialisation plane and Specialization codes
with layperson and subject-related terms

The "what" about your
product matters more

Product Features
& Purposes

Expert &
his/her expertise

The "who" about
your product
matters less

The "who" about
your product
matters more

"No knowledge/
expertise
required"

Testimonials &
endorsements

The "what" about your
product matters less

The simplified diagram comprises two axes (ER and SR) were renamed as "the 'what' about your product matters more" and "the 'who' about your product matters more" respectively. Based on the analysis in Section 3, the four quadrants representing the corresponding Specialization codes were labelled as "product features and purposes" (knowledge code), "testimonials and endorsements" (knower code), "expert and his/her expertise" (élite code) and "no knowledge/expertise required" (relativist code). The aim of illustrating the strategies in the recontextualized Specialization plane was not to achieve absolute accuracy or definitive explanations of these concepts as rules. The diagram was further explicated in the class with examples and explanations of the language choice for each strategy. Instead, the rationale for bringing these concepts together on the plane was to highlight two key factors driving the choice of credibility-building strategies: knowledge (what is known about the brand) and knower (who has the knowledge). This diagram then served as a guide for the students to select suitable strategies across different products, and analyze authentic examples to identify the strategies.

3.2 Guiding students' identification and selection of the learnt strategies across contexts

The organized knowledge about credibility-building was then used in teaching and learning activities in authentic classroom settings. One main activity presented here required the students to identify the main strategies for "legitimizing" the benefits of a range of products. This activity was conducted online using an audience response system, Poll Everywhere, where the students were asked to choose their preferred strategy on the recontextualized Specialization plane, with prompts of different products: a designer's lamp, professional photo-editing software, a vaccine and a luxurious bag (Figure 3):

Figure 3. Students' choices of credibility-building strategies for four different products
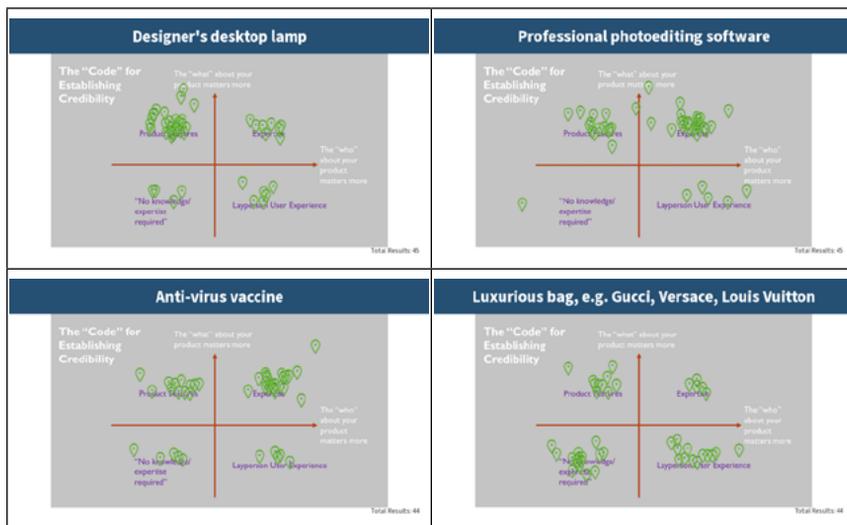
Students' responses in Figure 3 show the differences in the preferred strategies for the four products. The students would mainly choose experts' explanations (élite code) or detailing product features (knowledge code) to increase the credibility of the products involving technical knowledge (photo-editing software and the anti-virus vaccine). They preferred going over product features of the desktop lamp but emphasized layperson experience (knower

code) or "no knowledge/ expertise required" (relativist code) for luxurious goods.

While there was no model answer for this activity, why a particular strategy might be more suitable for a particular product would be explained. For example, when one student chose "no knowledge/ expertise required" for the photo-editing software, the lecturer asked the students to note the adjective "professional" in the prompt, suggesting that the user might expect a learning curve in mastering the software. The strategy of "expert opinion" could be a preferable choice in this case, as the expertise might be able to explain the features and benefits of the software features.

In summary, this activity showed that the students would generally choose to detail the product features and benefits (strengthening the ER), either expressed directly in the text (knowledge code) or "borrowing" the expert's opinion (élite code). This reflected the MPR course's direction for "specificity" was transferred to the students, as a "template" for logically building credibility through "reason" is necessary before appealing to emotions (Simpson, 2001). Opting for specificity decreases the audience's cognitive effort for interpreting the message in the advertising text by adopting an emotive approach (e.g. reporting on customers' positive attitudes, or using the "anything goes" tactic). Therefore, the MPR course emphasized the *knowledge code* in general, and developed students' pragmatic and linguistic awareness of features and functions for describing brands and products and increasing their credibility.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The present study has organized concepts from the field of advertising, specifically the strategies for building brand credibility, to teach MPR writing. The analysis has adopted Specialization of LCT for conceptualizing the credibility-building strategies through analyzing how the language choice expresses the strengthening and weakening of epistemic relations and social relations, and enacts the Specialization codes. This paper has also described how the MPR lecturer created a new understanding of the credibility-building strategies, recontextualized and applied them in teaching and learning activities. The present study does not aim to theorize the advertising concepts,

but to demonstrate how ESP teachers with a language background can proactively find ways to understand subject knowledge for teaching language use in non-language disciplines (ZHANG, 2016).

However, this study has yet to investigate how the concepts of brand credibility, the corresponding strategies and their language forms were transferred in the writing assessment. The activity presented in Section 4.2 only showed the students' cognitive efforts in identifying the preferred credibility-building strategies. However, the writing task of the course only provided one particular product, with the writing prompts mainly focusing on the product features. This assessment setting may favour the knowledge code, and other strategies may not be adopted in the students' written output. In addition, future studies may also examine how the taught concepts and strategies are transferred to contexts beyond this course. One of the MPR students made a post-hoc comment on how she was able to apply the taught strategies to a relevant discussion in another business communication course. She wrote in her assignment, excerpted as follows:

> "This advertisement uses the rational appeal to convince the target consumers… with [the product's] specific features and what benefits they will [expect]… this advertisement uses images [with] proven facts, positive outcomes and company history to build up credibility."

In the above excerpt, the underlined phrases are those that the MPR course mentioned and organized concerning how an advertisement "builds up credibility". Although this is only a specific case, which cannot make a generalized observation of the knowledge transfer, this example suggests that LCT provides the ESP lecturer with a helpful toolkit to make sense of subject knowledge, and to connect language structure and rhetorical strategy for enhancing writing instruction.

To conclude, Specialization is just one of the LCT tools for analyzing how content knowledge can be conceptualized, organized and transferred in the ESP classroom. Two future directions are recommended to extend the present study on advertising writing instruction. Firstly, how the knowledge of brand credibility is transferred to different learning processes can be observed through the dimension of Semantics (e.g., MATON *et al.*, 2013; MONBEC, 2020). For example, the abstract concepts of brand credibility can be deconstructed with

examples and language features before asking students to adopt credibility-building strategies in their writing practices. Secondly, as the knowledge and knower structure of credibility-building strategies have been identified in the present study, follow-up research can adopt the concepts of *gazes* and *insights* (e.g. WOLFF; HOFFMAN, 2014; MARTIN, 2016) to examine further how credibility is established through different knowers (experts, celebrities and customers) in the field.

CONCEPTUALIZING CREDIBILITY-BUILDING STRATEGIES WITH SPECIALIZATION FOR TEACHING ADVERTISING WRITING

Abstract: Advertising discourse instruction challenges English-for-Specific-Purposes (ESP) teachers with no advertising specialist background. Teaching persuasive language structure and choice may develop students' linguistic repertoires for realizing advertising strategies in copywriting assignments; however, the rationale for deploying particular strategies and the underlying principles forming the strategies may remain invisible to both the ESP teacher and students. Considering this, the present study adopts the concepts of Specialization for revealing the knowledge-knower structure of *brand credibility* and conceptualizing credibility-building strategies as Specialization codes. This paper also describes how the knowledge about brand credibility and credibility-building strategies were applied and taught in a marketing and public relations (MPR) writing course. The conceptualization, recontextualization and transfer of such knowledge shed light on how ESP teachers can integrate their knowledge about language into subject knowledge for more effective design and planning of the ESP courses.

Keywords: Specialization, Advertising Discourse, Credibility-Building Strategies, English for Specific Purposes, Content-Language Integrated Learning.

CONCEPTUALIZANDO ESTRATEGIAS DE CONSTRUCCIÓN DE CREDIBILIDAD CON LA ESPECIALIZACIÓN EN ENSEÑANZA DE LA ESCRITURA PUBLICITARIA

Resumen: La enseñanza del discurso publicitario desafía a los profesores de inglés para fines específicos (ESP) sin experiencia en publicidad. La enseñanza de la estructura y la elección del lenguaje persuasivo pueden desarrollar los repertorios lingüísticos de los estudiantes para realizar estrategias publicitarias en tareas de redacción publicitaria; sin embargo, la justificación para implementar estrategias particulares y los principios subyacentes que forman las estrategias pueden permanecer invisibles tanto para el profesor de ESP como para los estudiantes. A la luz de esto, el presente estudio adopta los conceptos de Especialización para revelar la estructura de conocimiento-conocedor de la credibilidad de la marca y conceptualizar las estrategias de construcción de credibilidad como códigos de Especialización. Este documento también describe cómo se aplicaron y enseñaron los conocimientos sobre la credibilidad de la marca y las estrategias de creación de credibilidad en un curso de redacción de marketing y relaciones públicas (MPR). La conceptualización, la recontextualización y la transferencia de dicho conocimiento arrojan luz sobre cómo los profesores de ESP pueden integrar su conocimiento sobre el idioma en el conocimiento de la materia para un diseño y planificación más efectivos de los cursos de ESP.

Palabras clave: Especialización, Discurso Publicitario, Estrategias de Creación de Credibilidad, Inglés para Fines Específicos, Aprendizaje Integrado al Contenido-Lenguaje.

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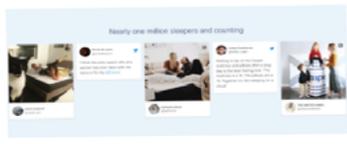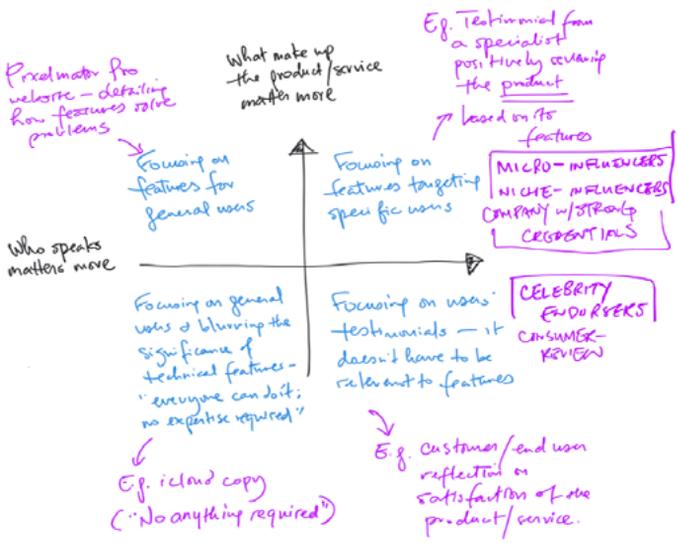
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Appendix 1. Original diagram for illustrating the credibility-building strategies for "making your copy 'legitimate'"