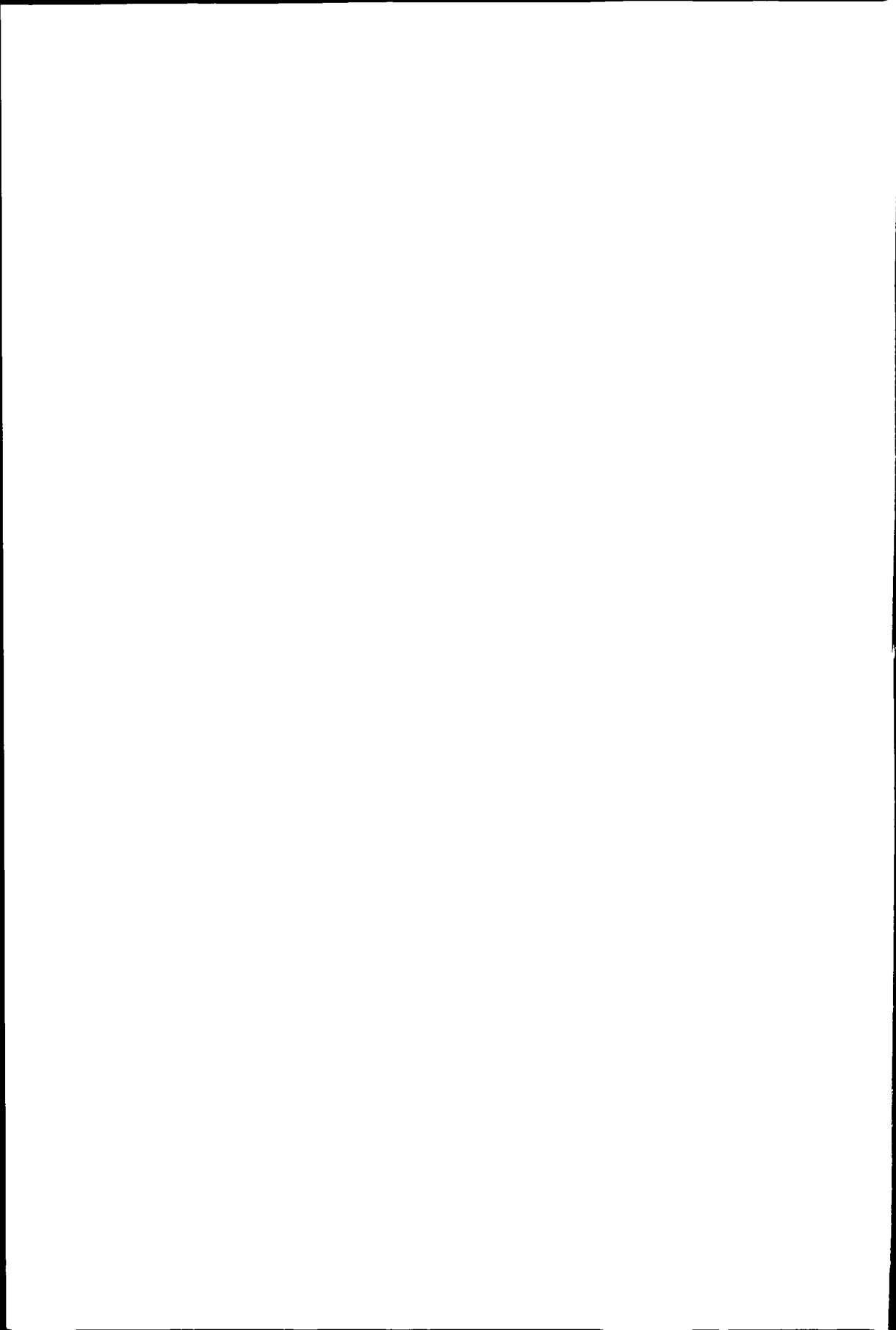


**THE PERSUASIVE EFFECT OF  
TEENAGER SLANG  
IN PRINT-BASED **HIV** MESSAGES**

**ELVIS SAAL**



# **The persuasive effect of teenager slang in print-based HIV messages**

Een wetenschappelijke proeve op het gebied van de  
Letteren

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor  
aan de Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen  
op gezag van de Rector Magnificus prof. mr. S.C.J.J Kortmann,  
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# **The persuasive effect of teenager slang in print-based HIV messages**

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

**Elvis Saal**

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# CHAPTER 1:     Getting the message across: Youth, the print media and HIV/AIDS

## 1.1     Stating the problem

A significant challenge for message-based HIV prevention and intervention campaigns is to determine *what* content should be included and directed to which target audience and *how* to deliver or design this content (Yzer, 2008, p. 53). It is the *how*-question that is the focus of this study, and in particular how best to use language varieties to optimise message effectiveness. In this section the problem is first discussed against the background of (a lack of) a comprehensive message effect theory, and then a specific case scenario (i.e. the loveLife campaign) is discussed where a language variety is employed for greater message effect.

### 1.1.1 *Lack of a message effect theory*

In the literature, the *what*-question has been considerably attended to by various behaviour change theories such as the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), and more recently the Integrative Model of Behavioral Prediction (IM) (Fishbein & Cappella, 2006). Yzer (2008, pp. 56-61) argues that behaviour prediction theories, such as the IM, provide an excellent guideline to determine those salient key beliefs that should be addressed in a message-based campaign, thereby providing an answer to the question of what to target in the message.

Perloff (2003, p. 197) argues that *how* something is said, is as equally important as *what* is said, and that the former could also influence attitudes. Although the IM is an effective conceptual tool to determine what should be said, it does not provide any insight into how messages should be designed to optimise message effectiveness (Cappella, 2006, p. S268; Fishbein & Cappella, 2006, p. S14; Slater, 2006, p. 149). Slater (2006, p. 149) argues that “campaign communicators do not have much theoretical guidance regarding how to construct messages, either individually or as a larger campaign sequence”. Where message content could be effectively determined by using the IM, no such comprehensive theory exists for how best to design effective messages. Fishbein and Cappella (2006, p. S13) argue that message effect theories still

have a long way to go to develop a comprehensive theory of message effectiveness.

### ***1.1.2 The loveLife scenario: use of teenager slang***

This study focuses on the persuasive effects of language varieties in print-based messages. Evident in this regard is the lack of a single comprehensive message effect theory for language variety in research on language attitudes (cf. reviews on speaker evaluation studies in Cargile & Bradac, 2001, pp. 348-352; Giles & Billings, 2004). Hosman (2002, p. 283) argues that most of the research on language and persuasion does not integrate language variables into a coherent persuasion theory. Although no message effect model exists for language variety, language varieties are, however, often employed in message-based campaigns to try and influence the target audience's attitude and acceptance of the message. A case in point is the loveLife campaign in South Africa (launched in 1999), for example:

#### **Getting around**

Why have one guy or gal when you can have many? It's about quantity, right?  
WRONG. The days of the playa are over.

Some of us luvv to score. We mean sleeping with a hot new babe or guy every night, or trying to be a bigger playa than the rest of the crowd. But these games could land us in a pit of problems. You know that it will probably kill you as your chance of catching HIV/Aids skyrockets. Having one love is heaps better than being a playa

loveLife attempts to reach the youth by, amongst others, employing (mostly) an English teenager slang to communicate with its target audiences (teenagers in the age bracket 12 to 17). The focus of loveLife on the South African youth is justified, given the high HIV infection levels among young people (cf. Department of Health, 2003; Harrison & Steinberg, 2002; loveLife, 2004; Shisana, Rehle, Simbayi, Parker, Zuma et al., 2005). The most recent 2005-national population-based survey found a higher HIV prevalence among young people in the age bracket 15 to 24 in comparison with the 2002-household

survey (10.3% vs. 9.3%) (Human Sciences Research Council, 2002; Shisana et al., 2005). Although young people have a good and an accurate knowledge of the key aspects of HIV/AIDS (Fox, Oyosi & Parker, 2002; Kelly, 2000; Kelly & Parker, 2000; Kelly, Parker & Oyosi, 2001; loveLife, 2000a, 2000b; loveLife, 2004, p. 75; Parker, Hajiyanis & Makhubele, 2007; Shisana et al., 2005), it is also evident from the 2005-survey that young people are at an increasing risk of being infected by HIV.

Airhihenbuwa (1995, p. 41) claims that the use of slang may be an effective way to communicate with certain target audiences about delicate matters such as sexual behaviour:

Language, both verbal and nonverbal, is a critical tool of persuasive communication. This must be understood by those attempting to select appropriate interventions for particular racial or ethnic groups. The reinforcement or changing of cultural beliefs should be attempted within the context of the culture's lexicon. A form of communication among many African Americans is African American English (AAE). (...) A variation of AAE is African American Vernacular English (AAVE), more commonly called Black Vernacular English or Ebonics, which is associated with the speech of low-income African Americans, particularly young people. The cultural rationale for understanding AAVE is that its use among teens appears to function as an important symbol of peer group solidarity and as a demonstration of pride in African heritage. Vernacular language expression is a window to underlying messages about teen peer identity issues, behavior norms and reactions to environmental conditions. Efforts to tap into this expression may create a relatively positive and nonthreatening context for communicating with teens, and HIV/AIDS prevention messages must be developed and communicated in a manner that ensures their reception by the members of the groups at greatest risk.

The loveLife brand positions itself as a part of popular youth culture (Harrison & Steinberg, 2002, p. 28). In the print media this youth culture is reflected amongst others by a particular type of language that is used. Most of loveLife's printed publications reflect a youthful lifestyle and speak "in a language that young people relate to and understand" (loveLife, 2003, p. 3). The underlying assumption by loveLife is that they specifically speak the language of their teenager target audience.

loveLife uses mainly an English teenager language in their print media. This selection of English should be understood in the context of the 11 official languages in South Africa. English is generally viewed as the lingua franca in South Africa. loveLife does not make much provision for teenagers from speech communities other than English. The Human Sciences Research Council (2002, p. 18) argues that young people with other home languages than English are therefore marginalised by English-only approaches in HIV/AIDS print media. Given the fact that only 0.8% of the Africans have English as their home language, it becomes evident that the comprehensibility of these messages could be compromised when directed at young people with home languages other than English. The Human Sciences Research Council (2002, p. 18) further argues that “those with an African home language found print media less useful for HIV/AIDS information”. For young people with other home languages than English, understanding HIV/AIDS information in print media written in Standard English could therefore be problematic. This could be even more true when the type of English is presented in a certain teenager variety.

There are different views on whether the use of (English) slang would help or hinder the effectiveness of the communication campaigns. Unfortunately, as is the case for many South African health communication campaigns, and certainly for loveLife, there are no rigorous evaluations of the use of the effectiveness of language varieties, particularly in the print media or even the print media and their design features in general. Kelly et al. (2001, p. 38, 65) argue that loveLife’s “theoretical framework” is based on “a range of implicit assumptions regarding the nature and contexts of youth communication”, and that there is a lack of (documented) research on the effectiveness of these campaigns/programmes (cf. also Coulson, 2002, p. 8; Swanepoel, 2003, p. 34). Given that large amounts of the budget are spent on the mass media component (Coulson, 2002, pp. 2-3), the lack of (documented) evaluation research on the effectiveness of the print media is even more alarming. Evian, Ijsselmuiden, Padayachee and Hurwitz (1990, p. 517) argue that, although many booklets, leaflets and posters have been produced and distributed in an attempt to create awareness of AIDS, and despite the often massive expenditure on developing AIDS education materials, there have not been many published studies evaluating these print media. Coulson (2002, p. 13) also argues that there seems to be a lack of or an inadequate pre-testing of

the messages used in HIV/AIDS campaigns. A literature search on the evaluation of HIV/AIDS printed materials in South Africa (and in particular of the language used in these materials) identified only a few published studies. Evian et al. (1990) evaluated the content (including the comprehensibility of the language used) of an AIDS health education poster; Delate (2001) focused on a semiotic analysis of interpretations of the loveLife His&Hers billboard campaign (cf. also Janssen, 2008); Saal (2003) and Saal and Fredericks (2005) examined the effectiveness of loveLife slang and Tsotsitaal respectively within the context of HIV prevention messages (for similar language style studies, see Laanstra, 2005; Ligthart, 2005; and Wannet, 2003).

Evaluations conducted by loveLife itself did not focus on the effect of the teenager slang as employed in their print media. Their evaluations focused mainly on brand recognition, namely on how effective its brand awareness programmes are, and whether the campaign is effective in changing sexual attitudes amongst their target group (cf. loveLife, 2001a; for a critical discussion of loveLife's monocausal claims about its positive impact on HIV prevalence rates, see Parker, 2003, 2005a). With regard to evaluating the print media, loveLife (2001a) admits that no evaluations were done on the booklet *loveFacts*. The only booklet that was evaluated was *Tell me more*. It was found that the participants found the booklet useful, as it deals with issues young people grapple with and that the format and language (English) were acceptable (cf. loveLife, 2001a). The teenager variety used in the newspaper supplements *S'camtoPrint* and *thethaNathi* (now renamed *UNCUT*) was (seemingly) also not subjected to any form of evaluation.

Furthermore, there is little evidence that rigorous theoretical frameworks have been used in the development of the loveLife campaign. More specifically, loveLife provides no theoretical underpinning for the selection of the type of teenager slang that they use in their print media. Kelly et al. (2001, p. 37) argue that:

Mass media communications campaigns have been strategy-based, with strategies incorporating a series of basic assumptions related to communication approaches and media to be utilised to bring about specific changes. Whilst strategy-based approaches allow for viable communications campaigns, without theoretical development and model building, overall impacts will be limited. The value of theory is that it allows for explicit interrogation of the ways that target audiences receive and respond to

information, and is specifically useful in understanding how particular impacts might be achieved (...) Achieving a more rigorous approach requires some development of theoretical frameworks that would enrich the impacts and cost-benefits of communication approaches.

A similar sentiment was again echoed four years later by Parker (2005b) when he pointed out that research should be used to inform the design of communication campaigns (cf. also Parker, 2006) – an indication that research is very much underplayed in most communication campaigns.

## **1.2 Objectives of this study**

loveLife uses a “universal” (English) teenager slang that should “speak” to the linguistically heterogeneous teenager groups in South Africa. Kelly et al. (2001, p. 74) argue for a culture-specific approach, which recognises the heterogeneity of young people and which develops programmes that could be extended to include differentiation in the use of language.

The premise of this study is that teenagers should be addressed as members belonging to different language communities, and not as members of one uniform language community. For slang to be effective, it should be perceived as authentic, and as belonging to a particular language group.

Is it possible for slang, particularly authentic slang, to have the effects as envisaged by Airhihenbuwa (1995, p. 41)? If the slang used by loveLife is unsuccessful, does that mean that slang should not be used in health communication? To determine the effectiveness of authentic slang one should first fully grasp the characteristics of such slang, and then develop a message using this kind of slang to see whether it works. Given the many languages spoken in South Africa, each having its own slang, it is therefore possible to assess the effectiveness of authentic slang for several languages – thereby providing a more stringent test of the hypothesis that the use of authentic slang could be an appropriate means to communicate with teenagers about the delicate issues of sex and HIV/AIDS. The untested use of teenager slang in campaign materials such as loveLife, makes it possible to examine the effect of teenager slang varieties in print-based HIV messages within various language groups. This paves the way for the first research question:



RQ1: What effect do different varieties of teenager slang have on acceptance of the message's claim?

The inclusion of various language groups in this study makes it possible to compare how various language groups will perceive these teenager slang varieties. This gives rise to the second research question:

RQ2: Do different language groups differ with respect to their perception of the use of teenager slang in the print media, the source perceptions that are evoked and acceptance of the message's claim?

In order to understand the (probable) effect of teenager slang on acceptance of the message's claim, one would need to determine which factors/determinants influence the effect of teenager slang on acceptance of the message's claim. As will be discussed in Chapter 2, most studies on the effect of non-standard varieties have been conducted in an audio context. This study intends to develop a theory-based message effect model for the use of teenager slang in print-based HIV messages, and to test the validity of the model by way of an experimental study. This paves the way for the last research question:

RQ3: Along which route can teenager slang influence acceptance of the message's claim?

On the basis of the findings of the effect of teenager slang on acceptance of the message's claim in the various language groups, and the theoretically-driven message effect model for language varieties, this study will derive a number of heuristics for using language varieties in print-based HIV messages directed at particular language groups in South Africa.

### **1.3 Research design**

The study population is grade 11 learners with Afrikaans, English or Sepedi as home language attending high schools in the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. Grade 11 learners (with a mean age of 16 to 17) were selected because loveLife's target group of teenagers falls in the age bracket 12 to 17. Given the fact that an original loveLife text is used in the study, it makes sense to measure the effects of this text on the same age group that loveLife targets.

Besides easier accessibility, the selection of the Tshwane municipality region as the research area was based upon the fact that it is in the Gauteng province which is rated by studies as the province with the second highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate (Department of Health, 2003; Human Sciences Research Council, 2002). The language groups Afrikaans and Sepedi (Northern Sotho) are selected on the basis that they are the dominant home languages in Tshwane (Statistics South Africa, 2003). English is not one of the four dominant languages in the Tshwane municipality, but is selected on the basis that English is the second language for by far most of the high school learners.

An original loveLife text (cf. the “Getting around” text in 1.1.2) was selected and used as primary stimulus material. This text was then translated into Standard Afrikaans, Standard Sepedi and Standard English. Each of these standard variety versions was then rewritten by the teenager target groups into an authentic slang version (cf. discussion in 3.2).

Experimental research was conducted to examine the relation among the loveLife slang variety, the authentic slang variety, and the standard variety regarding the perception of the language use, the source and the acceptance of the message’s claim. The independent variables are *language variety* with levels the loveLife variety, authentic teenager slang and standard variety, and *language group* with levels Coloured Afrikaans, White Afrikaans, English and Sepedi. The various authentic slang versions include: White Afrikaans slang, Coloured Afrikaans slang, Sepedi slang and English slang. The White Afrikaans, Coloured Afrikaans, English and Sepedi authentic slang versions were created by the teenager target groups themselves and were perceived as the “actual” slang of that particular language group. For each of the slang versions a standard language version was created, which only differed in respect of certain lexical items/expressions (cf. discussion in 3.2). All four language groups (White Afrikaans, Coloured Afrikaans, English and Sepedi) were exposed to the loveLife variety, but the authentic slang versions (with their corresponding standard language versions) were only examined by the relevant language group, e.g. the White Afrikaans authentic slang version was only evaluated in the White Afrikaans language group. To illustrate this point:

Table 1.1: Distribution of teenager slang and standard variety texts among the different language groups

	<b>Mother tongue: English</b>	<b>Mother tongue: Afrikaans (White Afrikaans group)</b>	<b>Mother tongue: Afrikaans (Coloured Afrikaans group)</b>	<b>Mother tongue: Sepedi</b>
<b>loveLife slang</b>	loveLife slang	loveLife slang	loveLife slang	loveLife slang
<b>Authentic slang</b>	Authentic English slang	Authentic White Afrikaans slang	Authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang	Authentic Sepedi slang
<b>Standard variety</b>	Standard English	Standard Afrikaans	Standard Afrikaans	Standard Sepedi

The dependent variables – related to the hypotheses of this study – pertain to language perception, perceived source-receiver similarities, affective factors, persuasion-related source characteristics (such as the source’s social attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise), and the perceived acceptance of the message’s claim.

(Cf. Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of the research design.)

## 1.4 Chapter overview

In Chapter 2, various concepts such as *teenager slang*, *source similarity*, *social attractiveness* and *source credibility* are operationalised and the relations between them are discussed in detail in the context of persuasion. The dimensions of source credibility and social attractiveness are identified and operationalised for this study. Thereafter a discussion follows on how language varieties can serve as a cue to positively affect the acceptance of the message’s claim. The various factors that could influence the effect of non-standard varieties on source perceptions are then highlighted, followed by a discussion on the influence of persuasion-related source factors such as the source’s competence and social

attractiveness on acceptance of the message's claim. The chapter concludes with a message effect model for language variety.

Chapter 3 focuses on the experimental design and the theory that informed the design. The results of and problems encountered with the preliminary experiments are reported in this chapter. The pre-testing of the questionnaire is also discussed, as well as aspects of reliability and validity of the measuring instrument.

In Chapter 4, the results of the experimental studies are reported. Furthermore, the relations in the message effect model are explored by way of correlation analyses.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings and interpretation of the experimental data. The message effect model proposed in Chapter 2 is also examined in terms of the findings of the study. Lastly, the limitations of the study are highlighted, and some heuristics for the use of language varieties in print-based HIV messages are provided.

## CHAPTER 2: Theoretical framework

### Introduction

The introduction of a specific language variety in document-mediated communication plays an important role in evoking a specific image of the source. Speaker evaluation studies have found that language varieties could enhance the source's social attractiveness and/or expertise (cf. Giles & Billings, 2004). Similarly, language varieties can serve as markers of in-group identity (Chambers, 2003, pp. 187-194). There is thus enough support in literature for the premise that differences in language varieties can evoke different images of the source.

In persuasion literature, a large amount of attention has been paid to how source factors (such as the source's credibility, social attractiveness and the similarity between the source and the receiver) influence persuasive outcomes (cf. reviews in O'Keefe, 2002, pp. 181-213; Perloff, 2003, pp. 149-175).

The focus of this study is on how language varieties can evoke different perceptions of the source and how these perceived source characteristics (in particular the source's credibility, source-receiver similarities and the source's social attractiveness) influence persuasive outcomes.

In this chapter, the concepts *teenager slang*, *source-receiver-similarities*, *source credibility* and the *source's social attractiveness* are operationalised, and the relations among them are discussed. Thereafter a theoretical framework is provided to explain how language varieties could positively affect message acceptance (via language or source perceptions), followed by a discussion of a number of empirical studies pertaining to language varieties and source perceptions. This chapter concludes with a message effect model for language varieties and the hypotheses that can be derived from this model.

### 2.1 Teenager slang

The term *slang* dates back to the mid-eighteenth century where it was used to refer to the restricted or special vocabulary of criminals or the low classes of society (in literature also referred to as *cant*). Slang was associated with a kind of street language. During the nineteenth century, the meaning of *slang* broadened and was applied more generally to include any "language of a highly colloquial type" and it was seen as speech below the standard language and "consisting of either new words or current words employed in some new special sense" (Ayto

& Simpson, 1992, p. iii). This definition of *slang* in the nineteenth century still holds for the twentieth century, where *slang* is seen as language “below” the standard language and not appropriate in a formal register or in written contexts.

Allen (2001, p. 266) argues that slang is an urban phenomenon which originated in the socially diverse urban subcultures. Most of the slang words come from these subgroups/-cultures in society and diffuse through word-of-mouth to other groups, and even sometimes infiltrate the standard language. This process of diffusion can result in slang words changing their meaning and in new meanings being added to existing words. This process of diffusion can therefore result in subculture-based slang words losing their subcultural associations and being taken up in society as part of the general culture and slang (Allen, 2001, pp. 268-269).

### **2.1.1 Definitions of “slang”**

The term *slang* is one of a small group of terms that produce a wide variety of distinct and diverse definitions. For centuries now, the term *slang* has evoked different viewpoints and definitions. What is slang for one person is not slang for another. Even dictionaries on slang seem to differ on which words must be regarded as slang. Dumas and Lighter (1978, p. 5) argue convincingly that the term *slang* has “rarely been defined in a way that is useful to linguists. Everyone has its own opinion of what constitutes slang, but no clear linguistic effort or model has come forth in producing criteria for which words should be regarded as slang and which are not”. Dumas and Lighter (1978) try to provide such criteria, but these have their own inherent problems and difficulties (cf. discussion in 2.1.2). There is also no clear linguistic distinction among terms such *slang*, *jargon* and *colloquialisms* (Eble, 1996, p. 289). As Dumas and Lighter (1978, p. 11) point out, “while we all share an assumption that there is a lexical category of slang, we differ widely in our assumptions about what items belong in that category”.

The number of “vague” definitions of the term *slang* highlights this confusion of what slang “really” is. Some of these include the following:

*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1987):

Very informal language that includes new and sometimes not polite words and meanings, is often used among particular groups of people, and is usually not used in serious speech and writing.

Allen (1990, p. 1140):

Words, phrases, and uses that are regarded as very informal and are often restricted to special contexts or are peculiar to a specified profession, class, etc.

Eble (1996, p. 289):

Slang is the distinctive vocabulary either of groups or of people who wish by their vocabulary to identify with a popular or avant-garde style.

Allen (2001, p. 266):

Slang is a class of language used, among other for social and psychological uses, to deny allegiance to genteel, elite, and proper society and to its standard linguistic forms. Slang is thus used to assert social opposition ( )

Spolsky (1998, p. 35):

Slang is a kind of jargon marked by its rejection of formal rules, its comparative freshness and its common ephemerality, and its marked use to claim solidarity.

Galperin (1971, p. 96):

Slang seems to mean everything that is below the standard usage of present-day English.

From the definitions above it is apparent that *slang* is viewed from different fields of study: for some, *slang* is mainly a sociological construct (cf. Allen, 2001; Spolsky, 1998), while others see *slang* as a purely linguistic notion (cf. Galperin, 1971; *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, 1987). Both these notions of *slang* can be accommodated in sociolinguistics, which is the study of language in relation to society. In this study, *slang* is viewed as a sociolinguistic phenomenon which entails the study of a distinctive vocabulary that indicates social identity (cf. Allen, 1990; Eble, 1996).

There seem to be the following general commonalities when using the term *slang*:

- *Slang as vocabulary construct*: It is agreed by scholars that the distinctiveness of slang is in its vocabulary (and not so much phonological or syntactical) – words that are “below” the level of standard language. Slang differs from dialects (such as geolects) in the sense that it usually does not affect the phonological and syntactic rules governing a language (cf. Chambers, 2003, p. 187; De Klerk, 1995, p. 269; Eble, 1996, p. 289). Slang creates a lexicon of its own by creating new words or using old or existing words with new or distinctive meanings.
- *Slang as marker of in-group identity*: Several scholars have highlighted that slang is undoubtedly a marker of group membership (cf. Allen, 2001, p. 266; Carstens, 2003, p. 361; Chambers, 2003, p. 187; De Klerk, 1995, pp. 267-268; De Klerk & Antrobus, 2004, p. 266; Eble, 1996, p. 289; Mlangeni, 2003; Taylor, 2001, p. 299). College and university students and teenagers mark a distinct social group, usually with its own lexicon. A number of studies (and dictionaries) on slang focus mainly on the slang of college and university students, and to a lesser extent on that of teenagers (cf. De Klerk, 1995; De Klerk & Antrobus, 2004; Eble, 1996; Marais & Coetzee, 2005; Munro, 1989; Munro, 1997). Slang has also been seen as the product of young people’s word creativity. Allen (2001, p. 269) views slang as “the province of the young – of socially engaged young men and women”. Seen historically, slang was usually the vocabulary of “youthful male subculture” (Allen, 2001, p. 269). Up to 1970, reports indicated that women use less slang than men. Most of the historical slang comes from the male social reality, e.g. the worlds of the military, sports, etc. (Allen, 2001, p. 269). However, De Klerk (1995, pp. 267-268) argues that slang is not only created and used by (English-speaking) males in South Africa, but also by females, concluding that “theories about ‘nice’, non-slang-using females are now overdue for reconsideration”. Partridge (1970, p. 17) also showed that many slang words come from pleasurable activities (e.g. sport, games, etc.) and from the joy of life. It is therefore not surprising that slang is



sometimes referred to as “language on a picnic” (Partridge, 1970, p. 17).

- *Slang as fashion phenomenon:* There is agreement among scholars that slang is a fashion phenomenon and short-lived. Today’s slang is tomorrow’s history. Slang words change meaning all the time and acquire different meanings for different groups (Mlangeni, 2003). Slang words can, however, occasionally enter into standard usage, but the majority of the slang words have a short life span and is rapidly replaced by new ones. There are a few slang words that have been around for some time, such as the word “cool”. Slang is usually described by words like “innovative”, “playful”, “fresh”, “vivid metaphors”, “unconventional”, “colloquial”, “ephemeral”, “witty” and “humorous” (cf. Allen, 2001, p. 266; Carstens, 2003, p. 361; Chambers, 2003, pp. 187, 189; De Klerk, 1995, p. 270; Eble, 1996, p. 289; Mlangeni, 2003; Stenström, Andersen & Hasund, 2002, p. 67).

All of the above definitions do not provide the linguist with a straightforward tool to identify slang words clearly. It is unclear what to understand by and how to operationalise phrases such as “highly colloquial”, “very informal”, “a kind of jargon”, etc. These definitions add more confusion than they provide clarity in identifying slang words.

Given the confusion in formulating a definition for the term *slang*, the focus in this study is not on defining the term *slang*, but rather on identifying features/characteristics of slang that could be applied in this study.

### **2.1.2 Characteristics of slang**

Dumas and Lighter (1978, p. 12) emphasise the importance of speaker intentions in identifying a word or expression as slang. The use of slang is in defiance of the existing language order and is used to consciously break the existing social and linguistic rules in order to establish a certain relationship with the receiver. Slang is not so much informational, as social in nature (Eble, 1996, p. 290). The question is therefore not so much: WHAT is slang, but rather WHO uses slang? It has been argued above that slang is a youthful construct. If a professor or minister uses a slang word, it would therefore most probably seem strange, but the same will probably not be true if it is used by a

young person. It is not surprising that people who use slang are depicted as young/youthful.

Dumas and Lighter (1978, pp. 14-15) provide the following 4 criteria for an expression to be regarded as slang. An expression must meet at least two of the criteria before it can be viewed as slang:

- (a) The presence of the expression will markedly lower the dignity of the formal discourse (whether in speech or in writing), meaning that as a receiver you will not expect to find such an expression in a formal discourse. For example, expressions such as “getting around”, “screwing around”, “pikking around” as opposed to the more formal expression “sleeping around” will in all probability lower the formal nature of the discourse.
- (b) The use of the expression implies the sender’s familiarity with that group of people who have such special familiarity and are using the term. “Special familiarity” refers to “in” terms as opposed to the more conventionally accepted terms. For example, use of expressions and lexical items such as “hot new chick”, “chick”, “dig screwing around”, “nah” could indicate that the sender is familiar with the in-group terms of the target audience.
- (c) The expression is a taboo term in ordinary discourse among persons of higher social status or responsibility. For example, the use of the expression “fucking around” will be such a taboo term.
- (d) The expression is used in place of the conventional synonym in order to (a) protect the sender from the discomfort caused by the conventional item, or (b) to protect the sender from the discomfort of further elaboration. Lexical items and expressions borrowed from other languages fit into this category. For example, the use of the word “stukkie” (referring to a girl that a boy has regular casual sexual intercourse with) could be used by a sender to avoid the explicit detail contained in the more conventional expression.

All the expressions/words identified as slang in this study meet at least two of the above criteria (especially criteria (a) and (b)). Criterion (b) is problematic in the sense that it is very difficult to determine groups’ special familiarity with and usage of certain terms, especially when there are no sources to validate the

familiarity. Marais and Coetzee (2005, p. 246) point out that very little research on teenager language has been conducted in South Africa. Within a large group such as teenagers, there are also differences with regard to familiarity with certain expressions. When a sender uses a certain expression directed at a particular target group, the assumption is then that the sender knows that the particular group is familiar with and uses the expression. For criterion (b) this assumption is used, especially since it is impossible to validate the receiver's special familiarity with and usage of the expression.

Slang, as a vocabulary construct, operates mainly on the lexical level, specifically on the level of lexical morphology and lexical semantics (as opposed to phonology and syntax). Morphology refers to word-building processes, specifically by means of the derivational processes of suffixation, prefixation and compounding. New slang words are formed by means of these derivational processes. On the level of semantics, slang words tend to change or extend meanings and are used as figurative language, such as metaphors (cf. Eble, 1996, p. 290; Munro, 1989, p. 5).

Slang words have particular characteristics. However, these characteristics are not exclusive to slang. Features of slang words/expressions include, amongst others, the following:

- Existing standard language words are used with new meanings, e.g. *tonsil* ("stupid person"), *dog* ("ugly girl").
- The creation or coining of new words (neologisms) that have not been received into the standard language, e.g. *chubbles* ("hemp"), *bowgaydgous* ("nice").
- The use of figurative language, such as metaphors and metonyms, e.g. *cancer stick* ("cigarettes"), *tsunami* ("HIV/AIDS").
- The use of abbreviations and acronyms (not recognised in standard dictionaries), e.g. *the big A*, referring to AIDS.
- The shortening of standard words, referred to as clipping, e.g. *aggro* ("aggressive").
- The blending of two words, e.g. *sloozzy* (from *slut* and *floozy*).
- The ironic use of a word to indicate the opposite meaning, e.g. *yeah right* meaning *I don't believe you*.

- Borrowings from foreign languages (and even from geographical and social varieties), e.g. *mampara* (“a fool”), *stukekie* (“sexist term for a woman”).
- The use and creation of new intensifiers and the “overuse” of these intensifiers, e.g. *fantabulous*, *splendibulous*.
- Manipulations of the phonemic structure of the word to make it look different (e.g. *gal* for *girl*) or to produce a rhyming effect.
- The use of onomatopoeia (to simulate the sound in reality by articulatory realisations), e.g. *queef* (a sound during sexual intercourse).
- The use of proper names as generic nouns (and vice versa), e.g. *Checkers* referring to plastic bag.
- Derivations from popular culture (such as television, radio, advertisements, movies, music, etc.), e.g. *Anaconda* (BMW 850i).
- Taboo words, e.g. *fuck-up*.
- Use of tags, e.g. (you know him), *right?*

(Cf. Carstens, 2003, p. 362; De Klerk, 1995, pp. 271-274; Eble, 1996, pp. 294-295; Galperin, 1971, pp. 97-98; Marais & Coetzee, 2005, pp. 252-255; Munro, 1989, pp. 5-6; Munro, 1997, pp. 9-15; Partridge, 1970; Sornig, 1981, pp. 4-34.)

### ***2.1.3 Guidelines for identifying teenager slang***

The slang that is the focus of this study, is the slang used by teenagers. The term *teenager slang* is used to refer to this teenager language variety. The speech code of adolescents is generally referred to as “pubilect” or dialect of puberty. However, the term *pubilect* refers to more than just slang vocabulary (Eble, 1996, p. 291; Taylor, 2001, p. 299). The focus of this study is restricted to vocabulary, and therefore the term *teenager slang*, which is a vocabulary construct, is employed. The focus is on the distinctive vocabulary of teenagers.

The term *teenager slang* is viewed in a broad sense. *Slang* is used to include colloquialisms/informal vocabulary. There is a general confusion between what is regarded as *slang* and what is viewed as *colloquialisms/informal* vocabulary. To illustrate this point: the word *cool* (meaning “excellent, marvellous”) is labelled in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* of Allen (1990) as *slang*, but in the *South African Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2002) as *informal*. Similarly, the word *guy* (“man”) is labelled *informal/colloquial* in the *South African Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2002)

and the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* of Allen (1990), but viewed as *slang* in various slang dictionaries (cf. *The new Partridge dictionary of slang and unconventional English* of Dalzell and Victor (2006), *Shorter slang dictionary* of Ferguson (1994), *The thesaurus of slang* of Lewin and Lewin (1988)). It seems that the boundaries between *slang* and *colloquialisms/informal* vocabulary are very blurry and shift all the time. To avoid researcher bias in making judgements on what is regarded as *slang* and what as *colloquialisms*, all entries labelled *colloquialism/informal* in dictionaries are viewed as “slangy” language. Dalzell and Victor (2006, p. ix) also included in their dictionary of slang terms that “might be slang, slangy jargon, a colloquialism, an acronym, an initialism, a vulgarism or a catchphrase”.

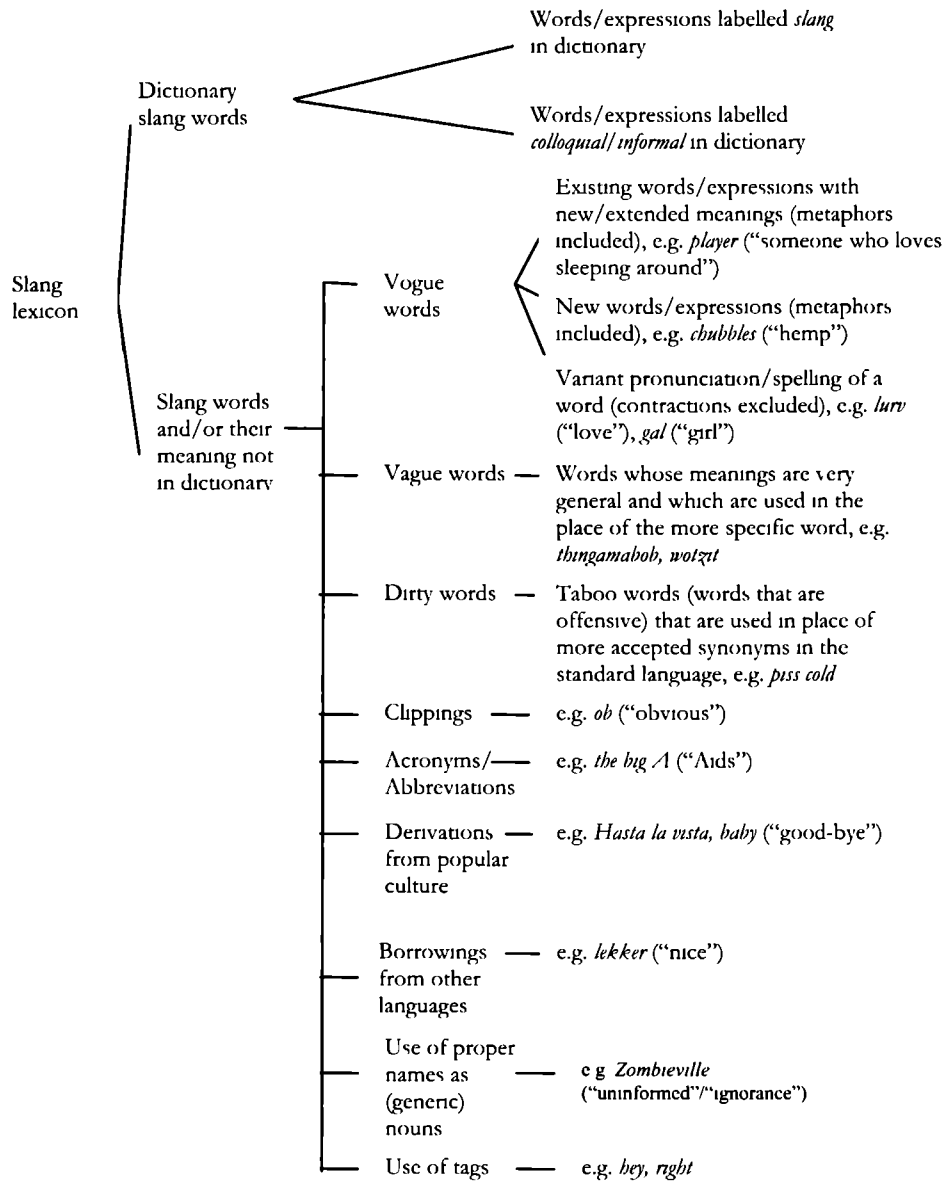
The entries labelled *informal* or *colloquialism* and *slang* in dictionaries seem to meet Dumas and Lighter’s criteria (a) and (c) for slang as discussed earlier. (The terms *colloquial* and *informal* are used as synonyms here – dictionaries use either one of the two terms in labelling their entries. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* of Allen (1990), for example, uses the term *colloquial*, while the *South African Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2002) uses the term *informal* to label entries.)

The term *slang* also refers to vague words like *thingamabob*, *dinges en whatchamacallit*, but only if such words have the status of being informal words/expressions. The word *stuff* (meaning “activities of an unspecified or indeterminate kind”) can be seen as a vague word, but the word *stuff* is not labelled *informal* in the *South African Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2002) and is therefore not included into “slangy” vocabulary. When the word *stuff* is used to refer to “money”, “nonsense”, “damaged/broken” or “sexual intercourse”, only then is it labelled *informal* in the dictionary, and it is only then that it is viewed as slang (cf. *South African Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2002)). Tags like *yeab* and *okay* are also regarded as part of slang language. Such tags are defined as “interactional devices that are appended to a statement and that serve to engage the hearer or invite his response in the form of a confirmation, verification or corroboration of a claim” (Stenström et al., 2002, p. 167). Stenström et al. (2002, p. 64) use the term *slanguage* in order to “cover all kinds of slangy language”. The term *slang*, as employed in this study, will also include these various kinds of “slangy language”.

The term *slang* is seen as a gradient: at the one end of the continuum are “proper” slang words which are group specific, and at the other end of the continuum are more general, informal words which are not group specific, i.e.

the more widely the slang word is used, the less it is regarded as “proper” slang (Stenström et al., 2002, p. 65).

To identify teenager slang, the following taxonomy is used:



**Figure 2.1:** Identification of teenager slang

(Model adapted from Stenström et al., 2002, p. 65.)

The distinction “dictionary slang words” implies that the slang word in question is labelled *slang/colloquial/informal/exclamation/interjection* in the dictionary with a similar meaning to that given in the dictionary. The distinction “slang words not in dictionary” implies on the one hand that a particular slang word in question is not listed at all in the dictionary, or on the other hand, that the slang word in question is listed in the dictionary (with no labelling as *slang* or *informal/colloquial*), but with a different meaning.

Dictionary slang words reflect the same slang features as discussed in the category “slang words not in dictionary”. The distinction is helpful in the sense that it gives direction on how to identify those slang words that are not listed in dictionaries as *slang* or *colloquial/informal*

#### **2.1.4 Examples of slang in document-mediated communication**

Slang is largely a spoken variant of language and is used in informal contexts (Carstens, 2003, p. 361; De Klerk, 1995, p. 265; De Klerk & Antrobus, 2004, p. 264). Recently, a surge of slang has appeared in the print media. It is quite common to find slang in the print media, i.e. in contexts that are usually associated with a more formal style. Slang is also used in a number of literary works. Marais and Coetzee (2005, p. 247) indicate that teenager slang in Afrikaans is used in teenager books by Leon de Villiers (1997), Barrie Hough (1998), Bloemhof (2000) and Jackie Nagtegaal (2002). To illustrate Afrikaans teenager slang in these teenager books, compare the following extract from *Daar's vis in die punch* by Nagtegaal (2002, pp. 31-32) – the slang word/expressions are in italics:

Die *commercial clubs* is maar *boring* Tydskrifmense wat na die *hits* op die radio luister Ek vertel jou nie eens daarvan nie, netnou dink jy ek ken die *scene* daar Laastens, die *R&B* en *jazzy* plekke is *moerse slick* Maar as jy wit is, kan jy nie sommer soontoe gaan nie, *unless* jy *contacts* het *Anyway*, by die Jam se bar koop ek tien tequilas en vat dit terug na die *porno* sofa toe Ek sak diep in langs Joshua Die musiek bring 'n *moerse* lamheid oor my en sleep sleep verdeel ek die tequilas tussen ons twee

“Ons drink op vyf *great* dinge wat ons al saam gedoen het,” sê ek en lig die eerste tequila vir die *cheers* Ek begin “Op ons *tattoos*,” en sluk dit af Ek probeer 'n *straight face* hou, maar dis *bleddie* moeilik, die goed is sterk

In the print media, teenager slang is also used frequently: an Afrikaans teenager slang is found in *Jip*, supplement to *Beeld*; an English teenager variety is found in magazines such as *Ymag* and *Girl Talk* and in a number of loveLife booklets (e.g. *Tell me more*, *Lovefacts*) and newspaper supplements (such as *S'camtoPrint* and *thethaNathi*, now renamed *UNCUT*).

Examples of frequent slang words and expressions found in loveLife's printed materials include the following:

Table 2.1: Frequently used slang words in loveLife's printed materials

<i>ag</i> ("expressing sympathy"/ "impatience")	<i>going all the way</i> ("sexual intercourse")
<i>baby/babe</i> ("girl"/ "sweetheart")	<i>guys</i> ("men")
<i>buddies</i> ("close friends")	<i>hot</i> ("sexual desire"/ "sexually aroused"/ "sexually attractive"/ "good-looking"/ "passionate")
<i>cool</i> ("fashionable"/ "stylish"/ "attractive")	<i>jol</i> ("sexual affair with different partners"/ "having a good time")
<i>crush</i> ("intense infatuation")	<i>lekker</i> ("good"/ "pleasant")
<i>dig</i> ("like"/ "understand")	<i>playa</i> ("promiscuous person")
<i>dis</i> ("be disrespectful"/ "mean"/ "ignore")	<i>sister</i> (variant pronunciation "sistah" – "form of address to a woman")
<i>doffies/dofkop</i> ("stupid")	<i>sweetie</i> ("term of endearment")
<i>dress up in condoms</i> (wear condoms)	<i>teen</i> ("teenager")
<i>eish</i> (exclamation of unbelief/astonishment)	<i>the big A</i> ("AIDS")
<i>gal</i> ("girl")	<i>vibes</i> ("the atmosphere"/ "aura"/ "general mood or feeling")
<i>getting around</i> ("sleeping around")	<i>yeah</i> ("yes")
<i>get down</i> ("sexual intercourse")	
<i>gets heavy</i> ("sexually aroused"/ "sexual intercourse")	

Interestingly, in the loveLife booklets directed at the teenagers (e.g. *Lovefacts* and *Tell me more*), the slang word "guy" is used frequently, but in the booklets directed at the parents (e.g. *Talking and listening* and *Love them enough to talk about sex*) the word "guy" is replaced by the more neutral and standard lexical item "boy". In the booklets directed at the parents, there is a conscious and deliberate effort to produce the standard variety.



The slang used in the townships, called township lingo, and tsotsitaal are also recorded in a number of dictionaries (cf. Molamu, 2003; Motshegoa, 2005). Some examples of the township lingo, taken from Motshegoa (2005) – which correspond with the teenager slang items elicited from the Sepedi teenager participants in this study – include the following: *authi* (“guy”), *baie* (“plenty”), *cherry* (“girlfriend”), *frostun* (“to understand”), *gidla* (“to sleep”), *regte* (“steady girlfriend”), *sat* (“problem”), *topo* (“atop”) and *Z3* (“HIV/AIDS”).

Recently the gospel of Matthews was translated into Tsotsi-Afrikaans by Van Rensburg (2006). The use of slang is also prevalent online at the teenager site [www.sateen.co.za](http://www.sateen.co.za).

### **2.1.5 The functions of slang**

Slang can be used for a variety of reasons, amongst others, for the fun of it, to oppose and defy the existing social and language norms, to attract attention, to be different, to express group solidarity, to produce innovation, to be secretive, etc. (cf. Carstens, 2003, p. 361; Partridge, 1970). The most important reason why teenagers use slang is to express their in-group identity, i.e. to indicate their group membership (De Klerk, 1995, p. 267; De Klerk & Antrobus, 2004, p. 266).

Slang is used in written texts to elicit a specific source perception, namely to evoke a similar peer. Schriver (1997, p. 183) argues that the visible language of a document urges the reader to guess who the speaker is. She further argues that the perception of the source that is created by a document plays an instrumental role in readers’ acceptance of the message, therefore source perceptions are a key component of persuasive documents (Schriver, 1997, pp. 180, 182).

Evoking a similar peer/source in the print media can be done either visually (by using photographs) or verbally (by qualifying the source or by the language variety being used). In this study, the focus is on how the similarity of the source can be evoked verbally, but not by qualifying the source explicitly in the text. The use of language may resemble the style of the target group, thereby creating the feeling that the source is “one of us”, is on the same “wavelength”, is a member of our peer group (Orme & Starkey, 1999, p. 8). Orme and Starkey (1999, p. 8) found in their evaluation of a youth service education project, that young people relate more to other young people who speak the same language and are on the same “wavelength” as them. Similarly,

Svenkerud and Singhal (1998, pp. 208-209) found that effective HIV/AIDS programmes utilise amongst others homophily (i.e. the extent “to which two or more individuals who interact are similar in certain attributes”) in order for the outreach workers to be perceived as insiders, as members of the target community. In so doing, these outreach workers can reach and positively influence target populations (in this case, commercial sex workers). Svenkerud and Singhal (1998, pp. 208-209) found that homophily between the outreach workers and the commercial sex workers (i.e. to be perceived as insiders, as members of the community) is crucial in earning their trust and respect. Language homophily can play an important role in this regard. As one of the outreach workers put it: “We change our language from an official one to a more easily understood language” (Svenkerud & Singhal, 1998, p. 208).

To enhance the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS messages, peers could be introduced as sources of the message. The effectiveness of HIV/AIDS messages directed at youth may improve if the arguments are put forward by a similar source/peer. Peer group pressure plays an important role in young people’s decision to have sex. loveLife (2000b) found in their national survey on South African youth that 22% of sexually experienced youth indicated that they have sex with their boyfriend or girlfriend, because they are afraid of what their friends will say if they don’t. It is apparent that for the kind of behaviour which HIV/AIDS messages aim to modify, peer group pressure can play an important role. Friends (peers) play an important role in providing other peers with advice on HIV/AIDS and sexual matters (cf. loveLife, 2000b, p. 22, 2001b, p. 12). Peers (especially peer educators) are used in a wide variety of HIV/AIDS prevention and intervention programmes – with mixed levels of success. Peer education is also more widely used in health education programmes (ranging from tuberculosis and drug prevention to HIV/AIDS) (cf. Harrison, Smit & Myer, 2000; McCue & Afifi, 1996; Orme & Starkey, 1999; UNAIDS, 1999a, 1999b; Wolf, Tawfik & Bond, 2000). Numerous studies have shown that young people are likely to turn to peers for information and advice (Mathews, Kuhn, Metcalf, Joubert & Cameron, 1990; Robinson, 1991; Wolf et al., 2000).

Reasons given in studies why people turn to peers to talk about HIV/AIDS-related issues include, amongst others:

- Peers have inside knowledge of the intended audience and use appropriate language/terminology to allow their peers to feel comfortable when talking about issues of sexuality and HIV/AIDS.
- Peers can mutually identify with each other as members of a specific socio-cultural reality.
- Peers understand how other peers think and are easier to talk to.
- Peers can communicate health education messages that coincide with the value systems and cultural norms of the concerned peer group.

(Cf. McCue & Afifi, 1996, pp. 4-5; Orme & Starkey, 1999, pp. 10-11; UNAIDS, 1999b, p. 15.)

The role of peers has mainly been studied in interpersonal communications. In this study, the role of peers is extended to document-mediated communication. It is investigated whether the perception of the source as a peer can be evoked in a printed text by using a specific language variety, and how language and source perceptions can influence acceptance of the message's claim.

## **2.2 Message acceptance through positive violation of language expectations**

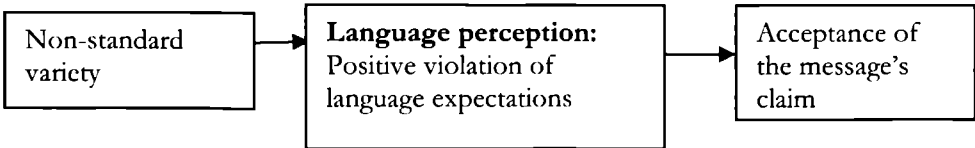
Within language variety, a distinction should be made between standard and non-standard varieties. Non-standard varieties are marked linguistic forms in speech communities, i.e. varieties that differ linguistically from the normative (standard) variety. The standard variety, on the other hand, is usually an unmarked linguistic form; i.e. the normative variety.

The non-standard variety (in this case, teenager slang) could influence receivers' acceptance of the message's claim via two different routes: on the one hand, non-standard varieties could be perceived as a violation of language expectations, and on the other hand (as mentioned above), the non-standard variety could operate via source characteristics.

Language is a rule-governed system in which people develop certain expectations and norms about what constitutes appropriate language behaviour in certain contexts (cf. Burgoon, Denning & Roberts, 2002, pp. 120-121; Burgoon & Siegel, 2004, p. 149). The Language Expectancy Theory (LET)

holds that if a source positively violates these expectations about appropriate communication behaviour, attitude change towards the advocated position increases; a negative violation of these expectations, however, can inhibit persuasive effectiveness (Bradac & Giles, 2005, p. 216; Burgoon, 1990, pp. 53-55; Burgoon et al., 2002, p. 122; Burgoon & Siegel, 2004, p. 155). A violation is considered positive when the behaviour is better or more preferred than the expected behaviour in the situation (Burgoon et al., 2002, p. 121; Burgoon & Siegel, 2004, p. 151).

In formal contexts (such as the print media), using the standard variety would be the expected language behaviour (cf. Côté & Clément, 1994, pp. 238-239; Giles & Billings, 2004, p. 192; Giles, Hewstone, Ryan & Johnson, 1987, pp. 585, 589). The use of a non-standard variety (such as teenager slang) in the formal context would therefore constitute a violation of language expectations. For example, the use of expressions such as “dig screwing around”, “a hot new chick or guy” or “to have more sex buddies than the rest of the gang” in the print media where the more conventional (standard) expressions are expected, could be perceived as a violation of receivers’ language expectations. Bradac and Giles (2005, p. 216) argue that it is much easier to predict whether an expectation is violated than to predict whether this violation will be perceived as positive or negative (cf. also Burgoon et al., 2002, p. 127), and this poses operational problems for researchers. In this study, receivers’ liking of the non-standard variety (in a perceived formal context) will provide a cue as to how violations will be perceived: receivers who show greater liking for the non-standard variety are regarded as perceiving the non-standard variety as a positive violation of their language expectations. The non-standard variety that is perceived as a positive violation of language expectations could positively influence acceptance of the message’s claim. To illustrate the above discussion graphically:



**Figure 2.2:** Non-standard variety as violation of language expectations

## **2.3 Message acceptance through source characteristics**

Research on persuasion has focused mainly on source characteristics that can influence the persuasiveness of a message. There is overwhelming support in the literature for the premise that the characteristics of the source can have a significant persuasive impact on the receiver of the message (cf. Gass & Seiter, 2007, pp. 78-81; O’Keefe, 2002, pp. 191-201). Especially research in the context of dual-process models (such as the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) of Petty & Cacioppo (1986)) has often manipulated source characteristics to study the persuasion process. To predict under what conditions source characteristics are more likely to influence attitude change, the ELM will be used and discussed in more detail in the next section. Thereafter source characteristics are discussed within the context of persuasion.

### ***2.3.1 A model for the persuasion process: The ELM***

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) entails two different information processing routes: a central and a peripheral route. The central route to persuasion requires high cognitive effort, which implies careful attention to the information in the message and thinking/scrutinising of the issue-relevant arguments in the message. The overall premise is that people following a central route of information processing will be persuaded more by strong arguments, which evoke mainly favourable issue-relevant thoughts, than weak arguments, which evoke mainly unfavourable thoughts. The peripheral route to persuasion requires less cognitive effort and occurs when a person relies mainly on a simple affective cue, such as the source’s attractiveness or expertise. Peripheral cues result from non-issue-relevant information and are situated in the source (e.g. the source’s attractiveness), the message (e.g. the number of arguments rather than their quality), the receiver (e.g. affective state), and the context (e.g. medium) (cf. Perloff, 2003, pp. 149-222; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

Two factors determine which route to persuasion people will take, namely motivation and ability. People with a high motivation and ability to process issue-relevant arguments, are more likely to follow the central route. On the other hand, people with a low motivation and/or ability to scrutinise the issue-relevant arguments, are more likely to resort to the peripheral route of persuasion. The central route of information processing requires that both motivation and ability must be relatively high. If only one of these factors is

low, the attitude change can only be attained along the peripheral route (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, pp. 5-21).

Motivational factors are those “that affect a person’s rather conscious intentions and goals in processing a message” (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, p. 8). Ability factors refer to those factors that “affect the extent or direction of message scrutiny without the necessary intervention of conscious intent” (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, p. 8).

According to the ELM, the central and peripheral routes to persuasion are not mutually exclusive. A combination of central and peripheral routes to persuasion is possible. An attractive source, for instance, can serve multiple roles: as persuasive arguments, or as peripheral cues, or as elaboration moderators (e.g. attractive sources can enhance motivation to process information), or bias thinking or attention to the arguments (Booth-Butterfield & Welbourne, 2002, p. 159; Fleming & Petty, 2000, p. 181; Petty, Cacioppo, Strathman & Priester, 1994, pp. 136-139). Under conditions of high motivation and ability, an attractive source can be used as a persuasive argument, for example, by indicating why consumers should buy a certain beauty product. Under conditions of low motivation and/or ability, an attractive source will just serve as a peripheral cue (Petty et al., 1994, p. 137; Petty, Rucker, Bizer & Cacioppo, 2004, pp. 78-79).

As argued above, attractive sources could also bias thinking about the arguments, in the sense that people who relate to attractive sources will selectively attend to the strong arguments. Under conditions of moderate elaboration, where people are uncertain whether to think about the message or not, an attractive source can put the reader in a good mood and stimulate interest for the message, thereby drawing the reader to the message and motivating him/her to engage in issue-relevant thinking (Booth-Butterfield & Welbourne, 2002, p. 159; Petty et al., 1994, pp. 136-137; Petty et al., 2004, pp. 71-72). Even under conditions of low motivation and ability, peripheral cues such as attractive sources can enhance motivation to think about the message. If the topic in fact has no personal relevance for the receiver (low motivation), an attractive source can serve as an attention-getting strategy that entices the receiver to do more thinking about the message than would otherwise be the case if an unattractive source had been used (Trenholm, 1989, p. 187).

The different routes to persuasion have consequences for the stability of attitude change. Persuasion by means of the central route leads to more

permanent attitude change. People who are persuaded via the central route are more able to resist counter-persuasion and tend to act more on their newly formed attitudes. Attitude change via the peripheral route is rather short-lived, and to sustain the attitude change, regular exposure to the peripheral cue is needed. People persuaded via the peripheral route are more susceptible to counter-persuasion, and over time they are more likely to revert to their original position (Petty et al., 1994, pp. 139-140; Petty et al., 2004, pp. 75-76).

Teenager slang is an issue-irrelevant cue, and can therefore not serve as a persuasive argument, but only as a moderator of elaboration or as a peripheral cue:

- Teenager slang can stimulate interest for the message of the text, and can operate as an elaboration moderator, i.e. by motivating receivers in conditions of low or moderate elaboration to attend to the message.
- Teenager slang can operate as a peripheral cue, i.e. through the peripheral route of information processing. Teenager slang operates as a peripheral cue whereby it influences receivers' perceptions of the speaker. Language, especially in document-mediated communication, urges the reader to guess who the speaker is (cf. Schriver, 1997, p. 183), therefore teenager slang as employed in document-mediated communication, could be an important cue to elicit specific source perceptions.

### ***2.3.2 Identifying the relevant source characteristics in persuasion***

Three source characteristics are generally identified: authority/power, credibility, and social attractiveness (Hass, 1981, p. 142; Perloff, 2003, p. 152; Swartz, 1984, p. 49; Trenholm, 1989, pp. 182-183). In persuasion literature and in speaker evaluation studies, i.e. studies on how receivers form impressions of the speaker (cf. discussion in 2.4 and 2.5 below), two source characteristics dominate the discussion: the source's credibility and social attractiveness (cf. O'Keefe, 2002, pp. 181-213; Rogers, 2007, pp. 229-232). Edwards (1999, p. 102) argues that the source's credibility and social attractiveness are the most salient evaluative dimensions and account for most of the variance in speaker evaluation studies. For the purpose of this study, these two source characteristics (source credibility and social attractiveness) are the primary focus of the discussion.

### 2.3.2.1 *Dimensions of source credibility*

Source credibility has been widely researched, especially in the field of communication and social psychology.

Source credibility is seen as a “multidimensional construct” (Applbaum & Anatol, 1974, p. 66). In literature on source credibility, the following dimensions have been linked, in one way or another, with source credibility:

- *Expertise* refers to a source’s perceived professionalism, qualifications, occupational status, or intelligence with respect to the issue at hand. Source expertise is also referred to in the literature as “competence”, “authoritativeness”, “expertness” and “qualification” (O’Keefe, 2002, p. 183).
- *Trustworthiness* refers to the receiver’s perception of how honest, just, ethical, sincere and unselfish the source is. Trustworthiness is also referred to as “character”, “safety” and “personal integrity” (O’Keefe, 2002, p. 183).
- *Goodwill* refers to perceived caring.
- *Dynamism* refers to a source that is frank, fast, energetic, aggressive, decisive, bold, and extroverted. Dynamism is also referred to as “compliance” (Larson, 1992, p. 228), or “extroversion” (Gass & Seiter, 2007, p. 81).
- *Sociability* refers to sources that are sociable, cheerful, friendly and good-natured.

(Cf. Applbaum & Anatol, 1974, pp. 66-68; Bostrom, 1983, pp. 71-74; Burgoon, Heston & McCroskey, 1974, pp. 40-41; Gass & Seiter, 2007, pp. 78-81; Hoeken, 1998, p. 201; Larson, 1992, pp. 225-228; O’Keefe, 2002, pp. 182-184; Perloff, 2003, pp.160-161; Rhoads & Cialdini, 2002, pp. 522-524; Rogers, 2007, p. 229; Simons, Berkowitz & Moyer, 1970, p. 3; Trenholm, 1989, pp. 183-184.)

Of the five dimensions mentioned above, expertise and trustworthiness are generally viewed as the primary dimensions of source credibility (Applbaum & Anatol, 1974, p. 68; Harmon, 1979, p. 17; O’Keefe, 2002, p. 182; Rhoads & Cialdini, 2002, p. 522; Rogers, 2007, p. 229; Stiff & Mongeau, 2003, p. 106; Trenholm, 1989, p. 183). Trustworthiness and expertise appear to account for a larger proportion of the variances in credibility and have a greater impact on



persuasion than other dimensions, such as attractiveness (Harmon, 1979, p. 17). Perloff (1993, p. 1431) confirms this dominance of the dimensions of expertise and trustworthiness as markers of source credibility:

Although individuals do use different criteria to evaluate speakers in different situations, they also use some criteria more than others. Expertise and trustworthiness are apt to be highly salient criteria for message recipients. Thus, although Hovland et al. (1953) oversimplified things when they declared that expertise and trustworthiness were the fundamental dimensions underlying credibility, they also were on target in identifying these particular factors as components of the credibility construct.

Stiff and Mongeau (2003, p. 106) also argue that most persuasion scholars view credibility as a combination of the source's perceived expertise and trustworthiness. Source credibility is therefore seen as the extent to which the source is perceived by the receiver to be an expert and trustworthy (Harmon, 1979, p. 17; Stiff & Mongeau, 2003, p. 106). The credibility of the source refers then to the perception held by the receiver with regard to the source's expertise on the topic and the trustworthiness of the source in a specific topic-situation (O'Keefe 2002, p. 181-199; Stiff & Mongeau, 2003, p.107). Source expertise is the extent to which the receiver "perceives the source as being well informed on the topic of the communication" (Stiff & Mongeau, 2003, p. 105), while source trustworthiness refers to the extent to which the receiver "perceives the assertions made by a communicator to be ones that the speaker considers valid" (Pornpitakpan, 2004, p. 244).

### *2.3.2.2 Social attractiveness*

Attractiveness refers to the degree of similarity, likeability and physical attractiveness between the source and the receiver (Perloff, 2003, pp. 168-172; Trenholm, 1989, pp. 188-190). The dimensions "likeability/liking" and "attraction/social attractiveness" are sometimes used interchangeably in persuasion literature. O'Keefe (2002, pp. 196-201) uses the term "liking" which corresponds with what others call "social attractiveness" (cf. Perloff, 2003, p.168). O'Keefe (2002, pp. 200-207) discusses only how the dimensions of similarity and physical attractiveness relate to the dimensions of liking/social attractiveness. Stiff and Mongeau (2003, pp. 119-125) also discuss only the

dimensions of perceived similarity and physical attractiveness in relation to social attractiveness and persuasion.

### ***2.3.3 Persuasion-related source characteristics: the source's expertise, trustworthiness and social attractiveness***

O'Keefe (2002, p. 200) argues that the source's social attractiveness and the source's credibility have a direct influence on persuasive outcomes. O'Keefe (1990, p. 149) summarises this as follows:

The source factors with the most immediate effects on persuasive outcomes are credibility and liking. Other source characteristics appear most likely to play a role in persuasion only through influencing credibility and liking. Thus, in considering how any additional source characteristics are likely to influence persuasion, the sensible guiding question to ask is, How is this characteristic likely to be related to liking and credibility?

The effect of the source's credibility on persuasive outcomes has received considerable attention in studies on source factors (cf. O'Keefe, 2002, pp. 192-199; Pornpitakpan, 2004). Pornpitakpan (2004) reviews the persuasiveness of source credibility over the past five decades with regard to the main effects of source credibility and the interaction effects of source credibility on persuasion. A review of these studies on the main effects of source credibility on persuasion seems to indicate that higher source credibility is more likely to induce persuasion (Pornpitakpan, 2004, pp. 244-247). But studies on the interaction between source credibility and other variables (such as receiver variables, message variables and channel variables) produced mixed results: in some instances a low-credibility source was found to be more persuasive, while in other instances the high-credible source seemed to be more persuasive (Pornpitakpan, 2004, pp. 248-266).

O'Keefe (2002, p. 191) points out that very few studies have manipulated the two primary dimensions of credibility (namely expertise and trustworthiness) independently, and thus little is known about the effect of these two dimensions on persuasive outcomes (cf. also O'Hara, Netemeyer & Burton, 1991, p. 305). Stiff and Mongeau (2003, p.108) point out that the combined credibility factor lacks the precision necessary for persuasion research. In those few studies that have manipulated the dimensions of trustworthiness and expertise separately, mixed results were again evident (cf.

Pornpitakpan, 2004, pp. 245-246, 251, 254-255, 257, 262-264). O'Keefe (2002, p. 211) argues that, although some studies manipulated perceptions of source expertise, one should be careful in interpreting these results as distinctly reflecting expertise effects, because expertise manipulations could also have influenced perceptions of the source's trustworthiness.

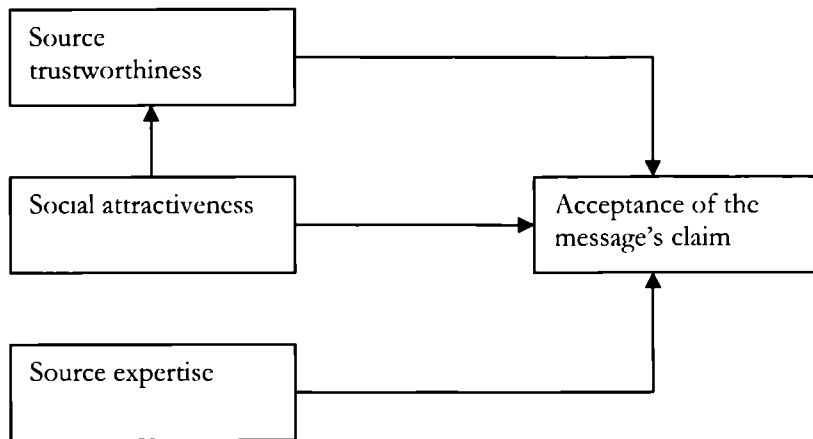
Generalisations about the effect of source expertise and source trustworthiness on acceptance of the message's claim are therefore not possible (cf. O'Keefe, 2002, p. 192). One factor that could influence the persuasiveness of high-expertise sources and highly trustworthy sources is the receiver's initial disposition towards the advocated position: receivers who are negatively predisposed toward the advocated position tend to find credible sources (i.e. high-expertise sources and highly trustworthy sources) more persuasive, while receivers who are positively predisposed towards the advocated position tend to find low-credibility sources more persuasive than high-credibility sources (cf. O'Keefe, 2002, 192-196; Pornpitakpan, 2004, pp. 257). In this study, participants' initial disposition towards the advocated position, i.e. not sleeping around, is not known beforehand and therefore it is difficult to predict how this could influence the impact of the source's expertise and trustworthiness on message acceptance. In this study, the commonly found result in studies examining the main effect of source credibility, namely that high-credibility sources (i.e. expert sources and trustworthy sources) are more persuasive than low-credibility sources (cf. Pornpitakpan, 2004, p. 247; Sternthal, Phillips & Dholakia, 1978, p. 287), is taken as point of departure.

The relation between social attractiveness and acceptance of the message's claim has received very scant attention in persuasion literature, but studies have shown that attractive sources can positively affect persuasion (Norman, 1976, quoted in Hass, 1981). Chaiken (1980) also found that a likeable source (i.e. a socially attractive source) is more persuasive than an unlikable source. However, very little is known about those factors (if any) that could influence the effect of attractive sources on persuasive outcomes. Although some studies reported persuasive effects for attitudinal similarities (cf. Berscheid, 1966; Brock, 1965), and membership-group similarities such as accented-speech similarity (cf. Giles & Powesland, 1975, p. 96-98), background similarity (cf. Burnstein, Stotland & Zander, 1961) and in-group

membership (cf. Mackie & Queller, 2000), these studies, however, did not examine the effect of the source's social attractiveness on persuasive outcomes.

Social attractiveness does not only influence message acceptance directly, but could also have an indirect influence on message acceptance. O'Keefe (2002, p. 203) argues that a strong relationship exists between social attraction and trustworthiness in that "enhanced liking for the communicator is commonly accompanied by enhanced judgments of the communicator's trustworthiness". In speaker evaluation studies, the dimensions of trustworthiness and social attractiveness seem to be very closely related. In some speaker evaluation studies, perceptions about the speaker are grouped in terms of status and solidarity dimensions – with the solidarity notion referring to both the source's trustworthiness and social attractiveness (cf. Carranza & Ryan, 1975; Ryan & Carranza, 1975; cf. also review by Edwards, 1982, pp. 25-27). From these speaker evaluation studies it seems that there is an implicit relation between social attractiveness and trustworthiness, although this relation was never explicitly examined in these studies. Given that a relation between social attractiveness and source trustworthiness is very likely, it is envisaged that social attractiveness could, either directly or indirectly (via the source's trustworthiness), influence the acceptance of the message's claim.

The dimensions of source expertise, source trustworthiness and social attractiveness have different weights when it comes to influencing acceptance of the claim made in the message. O'Keefe (2002, p. 197) argues that, when source expertise, source trustworthiness and social attractiveness are in conflict, the persuasive effects of social attractiveness seem to be weaker than the effects of source expertise and source trustworthiness. O'Hara et al. (1991) found source expertise to be more strongly related to persuasive outcomes than source trustworthiness and social attractiveness. Similarly, Wilson and Sherrell (1993) found, in a meta-analysis of 114 studies reporting on the source effects on persuasion, that expertise as source manipulation has a stronger effect on persuasion than other types of source manipulations, such as the source's trustworthiness, the physical attractiveness of the source and (ideological) source-receiver similarities. The above discussion could be summarised as follows:



**Figure 2.3:** Source characteristics and the acceptance of the message's claim

## 2.4 Language varieties and source expertise

Sandell (1977, p. 232) points out that receivers can form an impression of the source in messages based on, amongst others, the message form, i.e. receivers can draw inferences about the source on the basis of the language variety that is employed. Language varieties can serve as an important cue to evoke certain source perceptions (cf. Noels, Giles & Le Poire, 2003, p. 239; Schriver, 1997, p. 183).

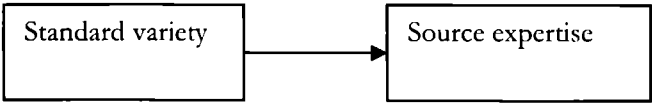
Speaker evaluation studies have shown that receivers respond differently to different language varieties (Giles, Williams, Mackie & Rosselli, 1995, p. 107).

In one of the earlier speaker evaluation studies, Giles (1971) examined the evaluative reactions of participants from Somerset and South Wales to RP (Received Pronunciation), South Welsh and Somerset accented speech “who were considered to be representative of the accent communities concerned” (Giles & Powesland, 1975, p. 68). Tape-recordings were made of two male speakers reading a neutral passage of prose in each of the three accents. Every attempt was made to control for all other paralinguistic and personality features throughout the recordings. Participants then rated the six voices on a bipolar scale. This attempt “to exert experimental control over potentially confounding speaker idiosyncrasies” (Cargile, Giles, Ryan & Bradac, 1994, p. 213) by using different speakers to make the audio-recordings, is a variation of the well-known matched-guise technique (MGT), introduced by Lambert,

Hodgson, Gardner and Fillenbaum (1960). In a typical MGT study, a single speaker is recorded reading a ‘factually neutral’ passage in different accents (Garrett, Coupland & Williams, 2003, p. 52). Garrett et al. (2003, p. 53) refers to this variant form of the MGT (where two or more speakers are used) as the “verbal-guise technique”.

Giles (1971) found that the participants rated RP most favourably on the competence dimension, while the regional accents (South Wales and Somerset accented speech) were rated more favourably with respect to personal integrity and social attractiveness.

Most speaker evaluation studies (conducted via audio recordings) found that speakers of the standard variety are upgraded, in general, on traits related to source expertise, compared to speakers of the non-standard varieties (Bourhis, Giles & Lambert, 1975; Bradac & Wisegarver, 1984; Brown, Giles & Thakerar, 1985; Cheyne, 1970; Creber & Giles, 1983; Garrett et al., 2003, pp. 130, 143; Giles, Henwood, Coupland, Harriman & Coupland, 1992; Giles et al., 1995; Giles, Wilson & Conway, 1981; Levin, Giles & Garrett, 1994; Saal & Fredericks, 2005, pp. 262-268; cf. also the reviews in Cargile & Bradac, 2001, pp. 350-351; Edwards, 1982, pp. 22-27; Giles & Billings, 2004, pp. 194-195; Giles & Powesland, 1975, pp. 28-32, 66-74; Giles & Street, 1985, pp. 219-221). From these speaker evaluation studies it is evident that the standard variety is consistently associated with the expertise dimension. To illustrate this discussion graphically:



**Figure 2.4:** Relation between standard variety and source expertise

**2.5 Language varieties and perceptions of the source’s social attractiveness and trustworthiness**

Non-standard varieties seem to operate through a different persuasion route than standard varieties. Cargile and Giles (1998, p. 340) argue that non-standard varieties fulfil integrative needs (e.g. to express a social-identity value), while standard varieties mainly posit an instrumental value (e.g. to acquire social status). It is argued in this section that identification with the non-

standard variety (as opposed to the standard variety) is more likely to evoke perceptions of the source as socially attractive and trustworthy.

### ***2.5.1 Motives for similarity in language use***

The non-standard variety is usually the marked linguistic form in speech communities. The use of the non-standard varieties in, for example, the formal context such as the print media where the standard variety is expected, is motivated by specific motives and could elicit specific source perceptions. Why then would speakers/writers adapt their linguistic style in certain contexts?

According to the Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), speakers are “motivated to use language in different ways to achieve a desired level of social distance between (them)selves and (their) listener” (My insertion – ES) (Giles & Noels, 2002, p. 119). The CAT explains why a speaker adapts his or her linguistic behaviour to converge or diverge with that of the recipient’s linguistic style. Convergence is defined as a strategy whereby individuals adapt to each other’s communicative behaviour by means of a wide range of linguistic-prosodic-nonverbal features (Giles, Coupland & Coupland, 1991, p. 7; Giles, Mulac, Bradac & Johnson, 1987, p. 14). The CAT posits that the extent of convergence “depends on the extent of speakers’ communicative repertoires, norms about the minimum and maximum limits of conversational attuning in the speech community, and the extent to which the interlocutor’s actual communication in the interaction matches the speakers’ beliefs about it” (Gallois, Giles, Jones, Cargile & Ota, 1995, p. 145).

There are a number of cognitive and affective reasons why speakers converge their linguistic style:

- *Cognitive function:* To attain communicational efficiency (to enhance comprehensibility)
- *Affective function:* To evoke social approval, be perceived favourably, become assimilated into an out-group, produce greater social attraction (by reducing language dissimilarities), provide social support

(Cf. Gallois, Ogay & Giles, 2005, pp. 125-126; Giles et al., 1991, pp. 18-21; Giles, Mulac, Bradac & Johnson, 1987, pp. 15-21; Giles & Powesland, 1975, p. 159.)

Empirical research has underlined the role of these motivational factors (cf. Giles, Taylor & Bourhis, 1973; Lambert et al., 1960; Simard, Taylor & Giles, 1976; Street & Brady, 1982; Street, Brady & Putman, 1983; see also Giles et al., 1991 for a review of the relevant research). There seems to be a linear relationship between the need for social approval and the level of convergence: the greater the need for social approval, the greater the perceived level of convergence (Giles et al., 1991, p. 19; Niedzielski & Giles, 1996, p. 337).

The speaker's conversational motive can shape accommodation in the immediate interaction situation (Gallois et al., 2005, p. 139). For instance, if the speaker's motive is of an affective nature, e.g. the speaker wants to identify with an out-group, the speaker could attend to the productive performance of the out-group by using convergence strategies that will give rise to behaviour relevant to the communicative characteristics he or she believes belong to the out-group (e.g. the language or dialect of the out-group) (cf. Gallois, Franklyn-Stokes, Giles & Coupland, 1988, p. 175; Gallois et al., 1995, p. 144).

Giles et al. (1991, p. 45) argue that in health care environments, the CAT can be an important component of many supportive encounters. By accommodating receivers linguistically, they can come to see the speaker or writer as someone whom they can trust and go to for support. Giles et al. (1991, p. 45) state that "feeling supported may be a function (...) of the degree of attuning (accommodating) one receives, and so those who are known or perceived to possess attuning skills, may be preferentially sought out as supporters" (My insertion – ES). Pettey and Perloff (2008, p. 42) also argue that communication accommodation could be an effective strategy in AIDS prevention. They emphasise that "speakers are more effective if they accommodate their language (e.g. speed of speech, dialect) to match the linguistic style of the audience".

The CAT makes a very important distinction between objective, subjective and psychological accommodation. Objective accommodation refers to the actual communicative behaviour, independently measured through direct observation of linguistic interactions, while subjective convergence refers to listeners' perceptions or interpretation of the speaker's accommodative act. Psychological accommodation refers to the intention of the speaker to converge (Gallois et al., 2005, pp. 126-127; Giles et al., 1991, p. 14; Giles & Noels, 2002, pp. 121-122). Objective, subjective and psychological accommodation may correspond, but this is not always the case (Giles &



Noels, 2002, p. 121; Shepard, Giles & Le Poire, 2001, pp. 37-38). Psychological and subjective accommodation could give rise to a mismatch or mismanagement in accommodation. The speaker thinks that he or she is converging, but in practice it can elicit some unfavourable response from the receiver. The main reason for this mismanagement in convergence is based on language stereotypes of certain social groupings. Classic examples of such mismanagement of convergence are baby talk (to elderly) (cf. Coupland, Coupland, Giles & Henwood, 1988, pp. 9-10) and 'pidginised' talking to a foreigner (or second or third language speaker). This type of mismanaged convergence is sometimes referred to as "over-accommodation" (Coupland et al., 1988, pp. 9-14). Speakers converge their linguistic style on the assumption of where they believe the receivers will be in terms of their linguistic performance (Giles, Mulac, Bradac & Johnson, 1987, p. 21). Giles and Smith (1979, p. 54) found that convergence is good and effective up to a point, but when it becomes extreme (over-accommodation) it can be viewed by receivers as patronising, condescending, demeaning or threatening.

Gallois et al. (1988, p. 161) point out that several studies have shown that speakers do not converge toward the actual communicative behaviour of the receiver, but rather to what they think or stereotypically believe/assume the communicative behaviour of the receiver is. Linguistic shifts are based on speakers' beliefs, expectations and stereotypes of where the speakers believe the receiver is perceived to be linguistically. All these speakers' beliefs, schemata and perceptions of the receiver's linguistic performance, the communicative situation and message recipients, have a direct influence on the linguistic style of the speaker as a means of gaining social approval/integration.

### ***2.5.2 Similar language use and social attractiveness***

The use of non-standard varieties (in the print media) could be a way to reduce the linguistic dissimilarities between the writer and reader, and the similarity perceived by the reader could enhance the writer's social attractiveness. With regard to the effect of similar language use on social attractiveness, two schools of thought are identified: on the one hand it is argued that there is a direct link between similarity and social attraction, while on the other hand it is argued that other factors could also play a role in positively affecting social attractiveness.

### 2.5.2.1 *Direct effects of similar language use on the source's social attractiveness*

The premise that similarity in language use could have a direct influence on the source's social attractiveness is embodied in the CAT. According to the CAT, an accommodative act could enhance the speaker's social attractiveness if the receiver perceives:

- the speaker's beliefs about the receiver's communication style as matching the receiver's own communication style,
- the linguistic style as positively evaluated, meaning that it must not be stigmatised,
- the linguistic style as appropriate for both speakers and receivers,
- the speaker's convergence as optimally distant sociolinguistically, i.e. the receiver perceives/recognises the speech act as an attempt to converge to the receiver's linguistic style,
- the linguistic style as matching a linguistic stereotype for a group in which the receiver perceives him-/herself to have membership.

(Cf. Gallois et al., 2005, p. 131; Giles, Mulac, Bradac & Johnson, 1987, p. 38.)

Speaker evaluation studies indicate that speakers of non-standard varieties tend to be upgraded on traits associated with trustworthiness and/or social attractiveness (Bourhis et al., 1975; Giles, 1971; Levin et al., 1994; cf. also the reviews in Cargile & Bradac, 2001, pp. 350-351; Edwards, 1982, pp. 22-27; Giles & Billings, 2004, pp. 194-195; Giles & Powesland, 1975, pp. 28-32, 66-74; Giles & Street, 1985, pp. 219-221). Cheyne (1970) examined the evaluative reactions of English-born and Scottish-born participants to male and female speakers of Scottish regional accented English and Standard English. Recordings were made of two female and two male student voices (which were perceived by the participants as native speakers) – each reading a Standard English passage, once with an English and once with a Scottish accent, as well as of four professional-class speakers (i.e. male and female Scottish-accented speakers, and male and female (standard) English speakers). Participants were then required to rate the 12 voices on a 6-point scale. Cheyne (1970) found that the Scottish participants rated the male Scottish-accented speakers higher in terms of traits relating to social attractiveness and trustworthiness.

The findings of the above speaker evaluation studies seem to imply that the non-standardness of the variety is the most salient determinant of the

source's social attractiveness and source trustworthiness. But some studies found that the use of non-standard varieties did not produce any effect on the source's social attractiveness (and trustworthiness) (Creber & Giles, 1983; Garrett et al., 2003, pp. 148-178; Giles & Sassoon, 1983; Ryan & Bulik, 1982; Ryan & Carranza, 1975). Within the context of the CAT, it seems that it is not the non-standard nature of the language variety that engenders greater social attractiveness, but the (seemingly) linguistic convergence in the above speaker evaluation studies. When a receiver perceives the linguistic behaviour as similar to his/her linguistic style, the social distance between the interlocutors is reduced, and such similarities in linguistic style could result in feelings of greater interpersonal attraction, social integration and social approval (Gallois et al., 2005, pp. 125-126; Giles et al., 1991, pp. 18-21; Giles, Mulac, Bradac & Johnson, 1987, pp. 15-21). Similarly, it could be argued that it is not the non-standardness of the language variety that is the stronger predictor of source trustworthiness, but rather receivers' perception of the non-standard variety as similar to their linguistic style. Stiff and Mongeau (2003, p. 121) argue that similarity has a direct effect on source trustworthiness. Given the close relation between social attractiveness and source trustworthiness (cf. Figure 2.3), similarity in language use does not only have a direct effect on source trustworthiness, but also an indirect effect (via social attractiveness) on source trustworthiness.

#### 2.5.2.2 *Indirect effects of similar language use on the source's social attractiveness*

The second school of thought is of the opinion that other factors could play a role in positively affecting the social attractiveness of the source. Cargile et al. (1994) have developed a process model of speaker evaluations, which was later extended by Cargile and Bradac (2001). The process model refers to "attitudes about language (...) not (being) a singular, static phenomenon. Rather, they affect, and are affected by, numerous elements" (Cargile et al. 1994, p. 215). According to the process model, the relation between language and impression formation is not a straightforward one, but a number of factors could affect speaker evaluations. Garrett et al. (2003, p. 176) argue that "there is (...) evidence that the social attractiveness often said to be a recurrent accompaniment of 'non-standard' dialects may be achieved by quite different (...) routes". Other factors that could influence speaker evaluations of social attractiveness include (i) affective effects (such as the mood of the receiver and

the receiver's awareness of their social identity) and (ii) other source-receiver similarities (such as attitudinal, value, and background similarities, and also the perception of the source as an in-group member).

(i) Affective effects

Cargile and Giles (1997) found that a speaker with a similar accent evokes more feelings of pleasure than a speaker of a dissimilar accent. Bresnahan, Ohashi, Nebashi, Liu and Shearman (2002) found that a strong ethnic identity could also influence receivers' state of pleasure and arousal. They found that (American) participants who exhibited a strong ethnic identity found American English more arousing and pleasant than those with a weak ethnic identity.

According to Bower (1981, quoted in Forgas & Moylan, 1987, p. 474) receivers' affective states are more likely to "activate mood-consistent cognitive categories, which are more likely to be selectively used in interpreting and processing the rich and ambiguous information". If a person is in a good mood on exposure to a message, positive associations or evaluations will most likely be generated (i.e. mood-congruent information will be selected). Hullett (2005) found in his meta-analysis of 14 studies, reporting on the effect of argument strength on attitude under various mood states, that receivers in a positive mood state are more likely to process the message in a manner that will maintain or attain their positive moods, i.e. if the message is no threat to receivers' positive mood state, then message elaboration is more likely, but when the message is a threat to their positive mood state, receivers will be less likely to scrutinise the messages.

Cargile et al. (1994, p. 220) argue that it is not only the receiver's current mood state on exposure to a message or social interaction that could affect language attitudes, but also the emotions that are stored away in a schema. On exposure to a certain language variety it is not only (prior) knowledge stored away in a schema that is activated, but also emotions (whether positive or negative). A previous positive affect towards a particular language variety can therefore elicit the salience and application of selective language attitudes, resulting in reinforcement of speaker evaluations already stored in the schemata (Cargile et al., 1994, p. 220).

The premise of this study is that a non-standard variety that receivers perceive as similar to their linguistic style may put receivers in a good mood, thereby making it more likely that the receiver will feel attracted to the source.

Cargile and Bradac (2001, p. 371) are also of the opinion that receivers in a good mood are more likely to exhibit greater liking for the speaker.

Two other factors that could also elicit an affective response are receivers' perceived attention for the language and their awareness of social categories. Included in this study is the possible influence that perceived attention for the language and one's awareness of social categories could have on evaluations of the source's social attractiveness.

The first factor, perceived attention for the language, is probably not so much attention for the language (or message) itself, but rather attention for the source of the message (cf. Gass & Seiter, 2004, p. 56). Receivers' perception of the non-standard variety as similar to their linguistic style could compel receivers' attention, and in turn evoke specific speaker evaluations.

Awareness of one's social identity, i.e. the second factor to elicit an affective response, could be evoked by, amongst others, one's identification with the non-standard variety. Non-standard varieties, in particular, could be an important tool to make receivers' more aware of their social identities. When the receiver becomes aware of his/her social identity and this social identity is similar to that of the source, then the receiver is more likely to evaluate the source in terms of the shared attributes of the in-group members, with greater social attractiveness as the result. Cargile and Giles (1997) found that participants who reflected a strong and salient in-group identity (in this case, an American identity), found the speaker of an out-group (in this case, a Japanese-accented speaker) less attractive. Cargile and Giles (1997, p. 213) argue that social identities mainly influence evaluations of the speaker's attractiveness.

#### (ii) Other source-receiver similarities

Simons et al. (1970, p. 2) distinguish between two types of similarities: attitudinal and membership-group similarities. Attitudinal similarities refer to shared subjective states such as interests, attitudes, beliefs, values, opinions and feelings. Membership-group similarities refer to demographic and social characteristics, personal experiences and social group affiliations (Stiff & Mongeau, 2003, p. 120). Membership-group similarities refer to characteristics of the individual that are not subject to change at all, or only change over an extended period of time. These similarities are thus characteristics that are relatively stable, identifiable, verifiable and observable. Membership-group similarities refer to external factors such as similarity in origin, age, schooling,

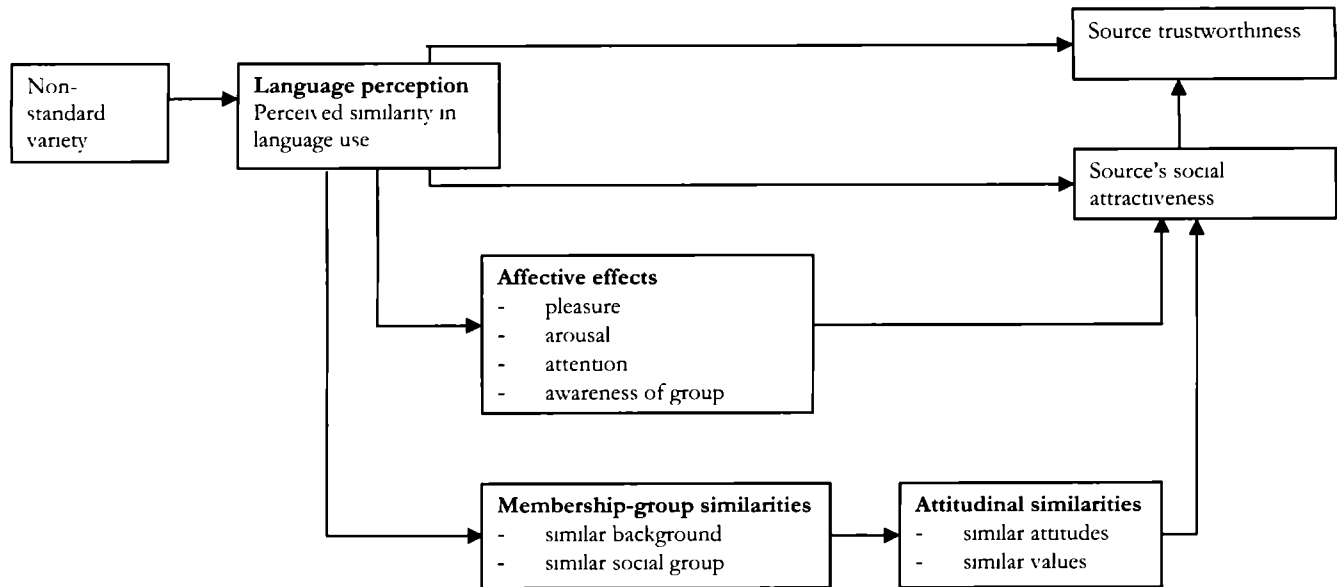
religion, work experiences, social class, social categories, language style, etc. (cf. Trenholm, 1989, p. 190). Similarity in language style is construed as perceived similarity (not actual similarity), i.e. the receiver could perceive the source's language variety as similar to his or her language variety, whereas in reality there may be a large divergence between them. If the perceived language varieties of the source and the receiver match, a similarity condition is formed.

Membership-group similarities such as similarity in language use (especially the non-standard variety), could also give rise to other membership-group similarities such as background and social group similarities. Hass (1981, p. 152) states that "when the characteristics that the recipient and the source have in common are irrelevant or only slightly relevant to the topic of the message, similarity probably increases a global or general feeling of attractiveness of the source and facilitates persuasion via the process of identification". Receivers' identification with a particular non-standard variety could therefore enhance a global feeling of similarity (cf. Sandell, 1977, p. 235), resulting in the source being perceived as, amongst others, having a similar background. Very few (if any) empirical attention has been given to the relation between similarity in language use and background similarity, or the influence of the latter on the source's social attractiveness.

Identification with a non-standard variety could also be an important marker of one's social group membership (cf. Brown & Turner, 1981, p. 42; Gallois et al., 1988, p. 175). Cargile and Giles (1997, p. 199) argue that "the stronger (the internalisation of) one's group identity and the more salient that identity is (i.e. the more one is aware of one's social identity), the more likely one is to behave in an intergroup fashion, a fashion that includes favoring in-group members" (my insertions – ES). When individuals perceive the situation more in intergroup terms, their behaviour towards themselves and others is not as individuals, but is in a uniform way and in terms of the in-group norms (Brown & Turner, 1981, p. 39; Ryan, Giles & Hewstone, 1988, p. 1074; Terry, Hogg & White, 2000, p. 72). Group membership elicits group norms that describe and prescribe the beliefs, attitudes, feelings and behaviours of the in-group members to enhance in-group similarity and accentuate intergroup differences (Terry et al., 2000, p. 72). Studies found that receivers with a strong social identity view speakers of their own group more favourably and were more socially attracted to them than to the out-group speaker (cf. Bresnahan et al., 2002; Genesee & Bourhis, 1988). Receivers who perceive the source as an

in-group member are more likely to evaluate the speaker in terms of the shared attributes of the in-group members (i.e. in terms of a shared social identity).

It therefore seems that membership-group similarities (such as a shared social identity) could overlap with attitudinal similarities: being a member of a certain social group could imply a particular set of values, attitudes and beliefs (Stiff & Mongeau, 2003, p. 120). According to Simons et al. (1970, p. 2) and O’Keefe (2002, pp. 201, 204), receivers may also infer attitudinal similarities from evidence of membership-group similarities (e.g. since the speaker talks like me, he must share my concerns about HIV). Sandell (1977, p. 235) also argues that other personality similarities (= attitudinal similarities) can be inferred from language style similarities. Sandell (1977, p. 235) argues that there is a “tacit assumption on the part of the receiver that (language) style mirrors personality and hence that (language) style similarity presupposes personality (attitudinal) similarity” (my insertion – ES). There is overwhelming support in literature that attitudinal similarity appears to be the stronger predictor of social attractiveness: studies found that as attitudinal similarity increases, attraction to the source increases (cf. Brock, 1965; Byrne, 1961, 1962, 1965; Byrne & Griffit, 1966; Byrne & Nelson, 1965; cf. also review by O’Keefe, 2002, pp. 200-201). To illustrate this discussion graphically:



**Figure 2.5:** Relation between non-standard variety, social attractiveness and source trustworthiness



## 2.6 A message effect model for teenager slang

A vast number of language variables and their relation to perceptions of the speaker and – to a lesser extent – persuasion, have been studied without a well-developed theoretical framework which could explain why these variables would have certain effects (cf. Bradac & Street, 1989/90, p. 195; Burgoon & Miller, 1985, p. 199; Hosman, 2002, p. 383; Krauss & Chiu, 1998, pp. 56, 60). Hosman (2002, p. 383) argues that most of the research on language and persuasion does not integrate the language variables into a coherent persuasion theory, such as the Elaboration Likelihood Model of persuasion. In this study, the Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and the Language Expectancy Theory (LET) were employed to explain and predict the effect of the non-standard variety on language and source perceptions. The LET holds that a positive violation could enhance attitude change towards the advocated position. The LET perceives attitude change as the result of a single variable effect, i.e. a positive violation of language expectations is directly linked to attitude change.

The CAT, on the other hand, claims that linguistic similarities/convergences, which are clearly perceived as an act of convergence, could enhance the social attractiveness of the speaker. In the print media where the standard variety is expected, the use of a non-standard variety (in this case, teenager slang) could be perceived (by the writer and/or reader) as an attempt to linguistically accommodate the reader. When readers perceive the accommodation as “over-accommodation”, i.e. when the writer thinks that he or she is converging to the linguistic style of the reader, but the reader does not perceive it as such, it could elicit unfavourable evaluative responses from the reader. When readers perceive the linguistic accommodation as “over-accommodation”, it could have a negative impact on the source’s social attractiveness.

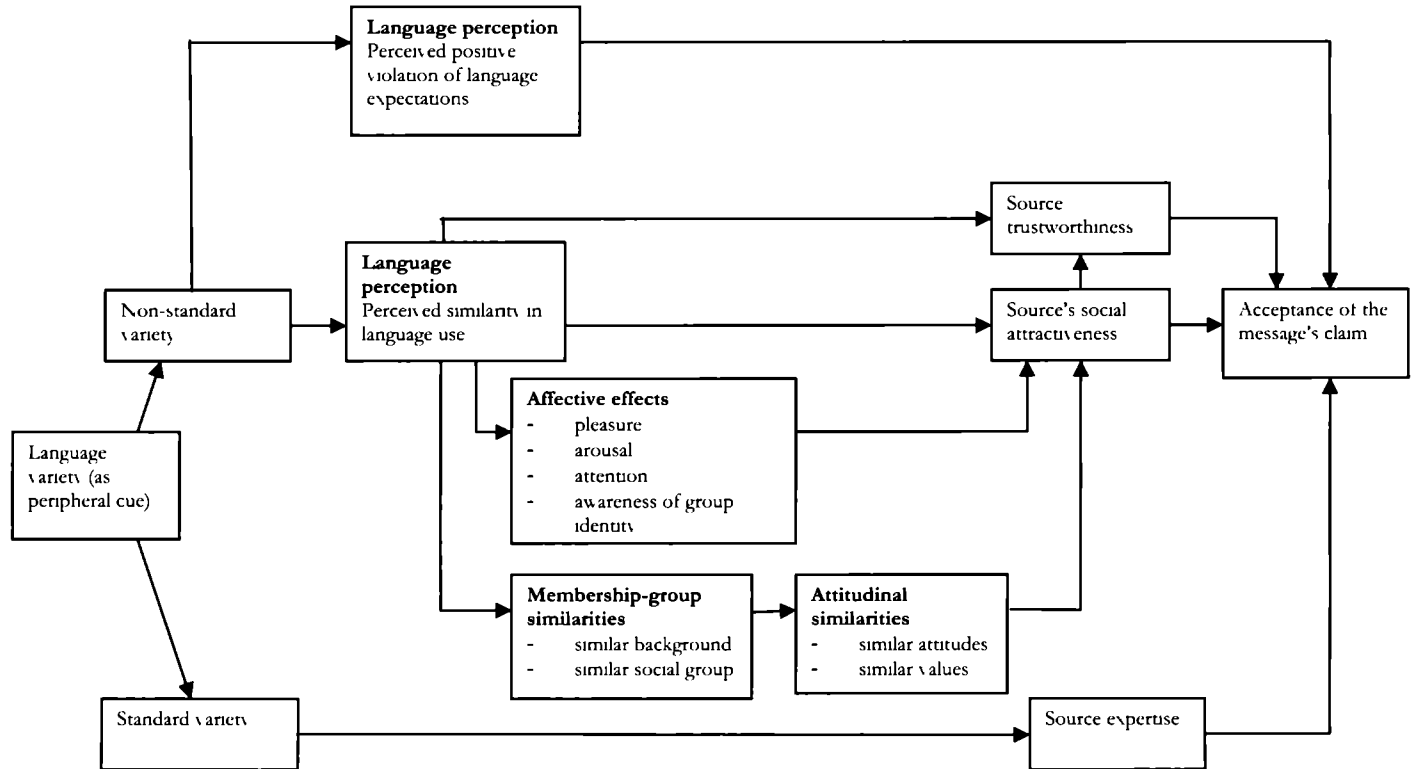
While the CAT seems to link the effect of the social attractiveness of the speaker to a single variable effect, namely linguistic similarities/convergences, Cargile and Bradac (2001, p. 357) are of the opinion that evaluative profiles of speakers are not the result of a single variable (cf. also Cargile et al., 1994, p. 215). They argue that a linguistic stimulus could interact with several other variables to influence receivers’ evaluative profiles of the speaker.

The non-standard variety (in this case, the loveLife variety or authentic teenager slang) operates through a psychological process of identification,

which can result in greater source attraction (cf. Kelman, 1972, pp. 38-39) and source trustworthiness. According to the ELM, persuasion via the process of identification follows a peripheral route to persuasion. Persuasion via identification with the source is based on the perceived characteristics of the source, and not on the merits of the relevant arguments. Although similarity with the non-standard variety, according to the CAT, could be a strong predictor of the source's social attractiveness, similarity could also interact with affective effects (such as pleasure and arousal, awareness of social identity and greater attention for the source) or with membership-group similarities (such as background and social group similarities), which in turn could correlate with attitudinal similarities (such as attitude and value) to evoke social attractiveness. It was argued above that social attractiveness could, either directly or indirectly (via source trustworthiness), enhance acceptance of the message's claim, given the strong correlation between these two source constructs.

The standard variety, on the other hand, is more likely to evoke evaluations of source expertise, which in turn could positively affect acceptance of the message's claim.

Based on the discussion in this chapter, the route to acceptance of the message's claim for a non-standard variety such as teenager slang, can thus be depicted as follows:



**Figure 2.6:** Message effect model for teenager slang (in the print media)

## **2.7 The possible effects of the loveLife variety and authentic teenager slang on language and source perceptions**

In this study, two non-standard varieties are employed: a loveLife variety taken from loveLife's print media campaign (which appeared in *thethaNathi*, Issue 13/June 03-07, 2002), and an authentic teenager variety elicited from the members of the target group themselves. From personal communications with loveLife staff, it was apparent that the teenager variety used in loveLife's print media was not tested amongst the target group, but was based on assumptions of how teenagers speak in South Africa (cf. also Kelly et al., 2001, p. 38). The copywriter(s) of the loveLife text attempts to converge to the actual language of the teenagers, based on the writer's beliefs, expectations, perceptions or stereotypes of where the intended target audience is perceived to be linguistically (cf. Gallois et al., 1988, p. 161; Gallois et al., 2005, pp. 126-127). The teenager slang portrayed in the loveLife text (cf. the "Getting around" text in 1.1.2) could be a successful attempt to use the verbal style of the target group, but it could also be a classical example of "over-accommodation": the copywriter(s) of the loveLife text seemingly believes that his or her teenager slang, based on the perceptions and beliefs of the writer, would match the style of the receiver, while the receiver could perceive it differently. This type of possible "over-accommodation" could be viewed by the receivers as inappropriate, patronising, condescending, demeaning or threatening (cf. Giles et al., 1991, p. 42; Giles & Smith, 1979, p. 54), therefore resulting in unfavourable source perceptions.

It is claimed in this study that the loveLife teenager variety will probably not be perceived by the participants as similar to their language style, and that participants could perceive the loveLife variety as a negative violation of their language expectations. On the other hand, the authentic teenager variety is more likely to be perceived by the participants as similar to their linguistic style and as a positive violation of their language expectations, based on the fact that this teenager slang was elicited from the participants themselves.

The CAT holds that receivers who perceive the language style as similar to their communication style, are more likely to be socially attracted to the speaker. The likelihood of the authentic teenager slang to create a similarity condition could also elicit positive affective associations and/or result in other perceived source similarities, with greater social attractiveness as the subsequent result.

## 2.8 Hypotheses

The effect of language varieties on perceived source characteristics has mainly been examined in audio contexts. In this study, the effect of language varieties on source perceptions is extended to document-mediated communication.

The motivation to use teenager slang in the print media is to increase perceived linguistic similarity between the writer and reader, in order to show in-group solidarity and to enhance the social attractiveness of the writer. The writer's psychological accommodation (the intent to converge) is therefore geared at those perceived communicative characteristics of the teenager group which are seen as typical of the group: the group's slang language. The writer attends to the productive performance of the reader as perceived (or stereotyped) by using convergence strategies which involve group-marked behaviour, i.e. the use of teenager slang. But as pointed out earlier, the loveLife teenager variety will most probably not match the communication style of the teenager reader, and could be perceived as over-accommodation, thus resulting in unfavourable source perceptions. As discussed earlier, authentic teenager slang is more likely to be perceived as similar to the language style of the teenager participants because it was elicited from the members of the target group themselves. As discussed earlier, perceived similarities in language variety could also give rise to other source-receiver similarities (such as perceived similarities in background, attitude and value).

As pointed out above, the supposed similarity with the authentic teenager slang could be a strong predictor of receivers' affective states, and could subsequently enhance the source's social attractiveness. The supposed similarity with the authentic teenager variety could also result in the source being perceived as trustworthy, either directly or indirectly (via the source's social attractiveness).

Furthermore, the use of teenager slang in the print media could also be perceived as a violation of the receiver's language expectations. I have argued that participants who exhibit a greater liking for the teenager slang (most probably the authentic teenager slang), are more likely to perceive the language behaviour as a positive violation of their expectations than those who dislike the teenager variety (most probably the loveLife variety).

The standard variety, on the other hand, is rather consistently associated with source expertise. In this study, the inclusion of the standard variety constitutes the baseline study and is used for comparative purposes.

Both source expertise and social attractiveness could have a positive effect on acceptance of the message's claim.

The following hypotheses, based upon the message effect model for teenager slang in 2.6, are proffered for this study:

## **Language perceptions**

### **Hypothesis 1**

- (a) The use of authentic teenager slang will result in a more positive violation of the expected language behaviour than the loveLife variety would.
- (b) Participants are more likely to perceive authentic teenager slang as more similar to their communication style than they would the loveLife variety and the standard variety.

## **Effect on perceived source-receiver similarities**

### **Hypothesis 2**

Authentic teenager slang will result in the writer being perceived more as an in-group member, and as more similar in attitude, value and background than the loveLife variety and standard variety.

## **Affective effects**

### **Hypothesis 3**

Authentic slang will evoke more feelings of pleasure and arousal, result in greater perceived attention, and make teenager identities more salient, than the loveLife variety and the standard variety would.

## **Effect on persuasion-related source characteristics**

### **Hypothesis 4**

- (a) Authentic slang will result in greater social attractiveness and trustworthiness than the standard variety and loveLife variety would.
- (b) The standard variety will produce higher ratings of source expertise than authentic slang and the loveLife variety would.

## **Acceptance of the message's claim**

### **Hypothesis 5**

Authentic slang and the standard variety will result in greater acceptance of the message's claim than the loveLife variety would.

### **Summary**

In this chapter, the concept *slang* has been operationalised, followed by a discussion predicting under what conditions teenager slang is more likely to influence the acceptance of the message's claim. Those language- and source-related factors that are more salient to influence persuasive outcomes were examined. Two persuasion routes for the non-standard variety were highlighted: the effect of a positive violation of language expectations on acceptance of the message's claim and the influence of source characteristics (i.e. the source's expertise, trustworthiness and social attractiveness) on acceptance of the message's claim. These persuasive effects of non-standard varieties were discussed within the context of the LET and the CAT as theoretical frameworks. An examination then followed of empirical studies pertaining to how perceived similarity with language varieties can serve as cue to evoke certain source perceptions and/or positive affective associations. This chapter concludes with a message effect model for teenager slang and the hypotheses relevant for this study. In the next chapter, the research design is discussed.





# CHAPTER 3: Research design

## Introduction

In Chapter 2, the literature on the relation between language varieties (standard and non-standard varieties), source perceptions and persuasive outcomes is reviewed. The variables that could influence the persuasiveness of the text have also been identified. Two non-standard varieties have been identified in this study: an English loveLife variety and an authentic teenager slang. These non-standard varieties (i.e. slang forms) were compared with the standard variety.

The relevant research questions are:

- RQ1: What effect do different varieties of teenager slang have on acceptance of the message's claim?
- RQ2: Do different language groups differ with respect to their perception of the use of teenager slang in the print media, the source perceptions that are evoked and acceptance of the message's claim?
- RQ3: Along which route can teenager slang influence acceptance of the message's claim?

As was argued in Chapter 2, the effect of language varieties on acceptance of a message's claim is in most cases not a single-variable effect, but entails a process where various variables combine or interact to influence acceptance of the message's claim.

In the first part of this chapter, the experimental set-up is explained, followed by a discussion of how the stimulus texts were created. Finally, a discussion follows on how the dependent variables will be measured via rating scales and close and open-ended questions, and a motivation is provided for these selections.

## 3.1 Sampling of participants

The selected study population is discussed below, followed by the sampling procedures.

### **3.1.1 Study population**

The research population of this study consisted of grade 11 learners with Afrikaans, English or Sepedi as home language, attending high schools in the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. The selection of this study population was informed by the following:

- In most speaker evaluation studies (cf. Chapter 2), students are selected as the study population. Ryan et al. (1988, p. 1076) criticise the overall emphasis on students as the study population and suggest a move “beyond such populations who have been best suited to the comfort of present methods”. This study intends to do just that: the study moves beyond the “safe haven of studying students” (Ryan et al., 1988, p. 1076) and examines teenagers as the study population.
- Teenagers in the age group 15 to 17 years were selected to correspond to loveLife’s target group. As already mentioned earlier, loveLife’s target group consists of teenagers aged 12 to 17 years. Given the fact that an original loveLife text is used in this study, it makes sense to measure the effects of these texts on the same age group that loveLife targets. However, a slightly older target group was selected for this study (ages 15 to 17 years), because several studies have shown that older teenagers are more sensitive to accent differences and produced more differentiated speaker evaluations than their younger counterparts (cf. Giles & Powesland, 1975, p. 30; Lambert, Giles & Picard, 1975, p. 145). Garret et al. (2003, pp. 86-87) argue that adolescents focus more on peer group identity and find themselves in an experimental phase where they try out various identities (primarily through language as the means to make their social identity salient).
- Teenagers attending high school (as opposed to teenagers who are still at primary level or who are not attending school) were selected because studies have shown that the level of education could influence the level of HIV/AIDS knowledge amongst teenagers (cf. Kelly et al., 2001; Mantakana, Nqinana, Makinana, Ntlabati, Fawcett & Kelly, 2002; Human Sciences Research Council, 2002). Older, high school pupils’ level of HIV/AIDS knowledge is much higher than their younger counterparts in primary schools or those with no education. This is attributed to the fact that sex education occurs more regularly at high

schools than at primary schools (cf. Mantakana et al., 2002). It is also unclear how much exposure teenagers who are not school attendees, get to sex education. Furthermore, the quality of the education is also an issue. Given that the loveLife text constitutes the primary stimulus text for this experimental study, this study presupposes that the selected study population must have heard of loveLife. This is motivated by the fact that loveLife (2001b) found in their national survey that 81% of the teenagers who live in urban areas had heard of loveLife from their school (as opposed to 58% in the rural areas).

- Besides the easier accessibility, the selection of the Tshwane municipality region as the research area was based upon the fact that it is urban and that it is in Gauteng, which is rated by studies as the province with the second highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate (Department of Health, 2003; Human Sciences Research Council, 2002). A study conducted by the Tshwane Metropolitan Council (2002) among 19 high schools in the Tshwane municipality, found that 40,4% of the participants indicated that they had sexual intercourse. Of those participants who were sexually active, 27,3% had more than one partner. 22,2% of those who had more than one partner, indicated that they prefer unprotected sex. This study therefore strongly suggests that there are high-risk sexual practices among the sexually active teenagers in the Tshwane region. It is for this reason that the Tshwane municipality constitutes the focal point of the study.
- The language groups Afrikaans and Sepedi (Northern Sotho) were selected on the basis that they are the dominant home languages in the Tshwane municipality. There are 439 732 home language speakers of Sepedi, while 422 867 have Afrikaans as home language (Statistics South Africa, 2003). English, with a total of 129 925 speakers, is not one of the four dominant languages in the Tshwane municipality, but is selected on the basis that English is for most of the learners in high school a second or third language. English and Afrikaans are the dominant languages of learning and teaching in schools in the Tshwane municipality, i.e. all the selected language groups are exposed to either English or Afrikaans. English is seen as the *lingua franca* of South Africa, and the English language group is included to see how they perceive the use of loveLife slang in comparison with the other

language groups' perception of the loveLife slang. These three languages constitute 50% of the languages spoken in the Tshwane municipality, i.e. 992 524 speakers of a total of 1.9 million people living in the Tshwane municipality (Statistics South Africa, 2003).

### ***3.1.2 Multistage cluster sampling***

Multistage cluster sampling was used to select the participants. This design “involves the repetition of two basic steps: listing and sampling” (Babbie & Mouton, 2002, p. 195). Three stages were identified in the sampling process:

(i) First stage: Identification of language clusters

As already indicated, three language groups were selected: Afrikaans, English and Sepedi. In determining the concentration of the three language groups in the Tshwane municipality, the digital map of Statistics South Africa (2003) was used (see Appendix A). According to this map, Afrikaans speakers are mostly concentrated in the east of Tshwane, while the Sepedi speakers are mainly concentrated in the west of Tshwane. The English speakers are much more dispersed over Tshwane, but pockets of concentration could be found in the east and south of Tshwane.

(ii) Second stage: Selection of public high schools

Three language clusters were identified:

- Tshwane East: Afrikaans
- Tshwane West: Sepedi
- Tshwane East and South: English

Nine public high schools were selected, i.e. 3 schools per language cluster. In selecting the schools, the Tshwane street map of Mapstudio (s.a.) was used (see Appendix B). This street map divided Tshwane into several numbered blocks.

For the Tshwane East region, the most eastern blocks were identified: blocks 29-33 and 41-43. Blocks 29, 41 and 42 were selected on the basis that they include a high concentration of Afrikaans-medium high schools. On this basis, the following suburbs were selected: Eersterust, East Lynne, Lynnwood Glen, Silverton and Die Wilgers (Willows). (The schools in Mamelodi were

excluded on the basis that they are not Afrikaans-medium schools.) (For a list of the high schools in these suburbs, see Appendix C.)

The schools selected for the Afrikaans language group (representing each of the three blocks: 29, 41 and 42, respectively) were:

- Eersterust Secondary (in block 29)
- Silverton High (in block 41)
- Wilgers High (in block 42)

For the Tshwane West region, the most western blocks were identified: blocks 2, 12, 22 and 34. Block 34 was selected on the basis that it contains the highest concentration of Sepedi speakers. Atteridgeville was selected as the most western point. (For a list of the high schools in Atteridgeville, see Appendix D.) The schools selected for the Sepedi language group were:

- Hofmeyr Secondary
- Saulridge Secondary
- Phelindaba Secondary

For the Tshwane East and South regions, the most eastern and most southern blocks were identified. The following blocks were identified in selecting English-medium public high schools:

- Tshwane East: blocks 29, 41 and 42 (the same blocks that were selected for the Afrikaans language groups)
- Tshwane South: blocks 66-67; 56-57 (there were no high schools in blocks 80-81)

Only one English-medium public high school could be found in the selected blocks for Tshwane East: Willowridge High. The next closest English-medium school to Willowridge High was then selected: The Glen High (situated in block 51). For Tshwane South, one high school was found in block 66: Uitsig High School. This school was excluded because it is a double-medium school (English and Afrikaans). One English-medium high school was found in block

57, namely Sutherland High School. The schools selected for the English language group were therefore:

- Willowridge High
- The Glen High
- Sutherland High

Permission for accessing the public schools was granted by the Gauteng Department of Education, and the principals of the relevant schools.

(iii) Final stage: sampling of participants

As already indicated, grade 11 learners constituted the study population. In each of the selected schools, three grade 11 classes were selected. The sample size for the different language groups was as follows: Afrikaans: 255 (as discussed below in 3.2, the Afrikaans group was divided into two groups: Coloured Afrikaans: 106 and White Afrikaans: 149), Sepedi: 240 and English: 162.

### **3.2 Construction of stimulus text**

An original loveLife text was identified and used as primary stimulus material (see Appendix E). The loveLife text appeared in *thethaNathi* (Issue 13/June 03-07, 2002). The selection of this text was informed by the following:

- The text (“Getting around”) advocates a clear position, i.e. not to sleep around. The goal of the text is therefore to persuade readers not to sleep around. The persuasive nature of the text makes it ideal for examining the persuasive power of the text when manipulated linguistically.
- The text contains no less than 18 different slang lexical items and/or expressions, i.e. more than 20% of the lexical items in the text are slang items.

The slang lexical items and expressions, identified according to the guidelines provided in 2.1.3, are underlined in the loveLife text below.

## loveLife variety

### Getting around

Why have one guy or gal when you can have many? It's about quantity, right? WRONG. The days of the playa are over.

Some of us lurv to score. We mean sleeping with a hot new babe or guy every night, or trying to be a bigger playa than the rest of the crowd. But these games could land us in a pit of problems. You know that it will probably kill you as your chance of catching HIV/Aids skyrockets. Having one love is heaps better than being a playa.

The above loveLife text was translated by an English mother tongue speaker (Dr. C.R. Fredericks) into Standard English. The changes that were introduced are underlined.

### Standard English version

#### Sleeping around

Why have one boy- or girlfriend when you can have many? It is about quantity, you agree? WRONG. The days of sleeping around are over.

Some of us love to sleep around. We mean sleeping with a new sexually attractive girl or boy every night, or trying to have more sex partners than the rest of the group. But these games could cause us serious problems. You know that it will probably kill you as your chance of getting HIV/AIDS is sky-high. Having one relationship is far better than being with different sex partners.

The following changes were introduced:

- All the slang lexical items were replaced by standard lexical items. In some cases it was not possible to replace the slang item with the standard lexical item, without also altering the sentence structure, but sentence modifications were limited to the absolute minimum.

- Contractions were not identified as slang items, but were retained in the slang text, while in the standard text contractions were replaced by the standard version (i.e. *it's* > *it is*). The reason for this was to enhance the credibility of the standard language text, because in the standard language (especially in the written mode) with its more formal character, contractions are not commonly used, while in spoken language, with its informal nature, contractions are frequently used. Contractions were used in the slang text because slang is usually a spoken variant.

The Standard English text above was then translated into Standard Afrikaans and Standard Sepedi by mother tongue speakers of Standard Afrikaans and Standard Sepedi respectively (see Appendix F). Two mother tongue speakers of Standard Afrikaans (Prof. P.H. Swanepoel and Ms D. Ehlers) translated the English text into Standard Afrikaans. Where differences occurred, it was reconciled with the mother tongue speakers. For the Standard Sepedi text, bilingual speakers of Sepedi and English (Mr V. Ngamba and Ms H. du Plooy) translated the Standard English text into Standard Sepedi. To ensure equivalence of the Standard English and Sepedi versions, back translation (into English) was then conducted by two different bilingual speakers of Sepedi and English (Prof. H.J.J. Louwrens and Ms R.H. Mabule). Differences were reconciled. Back translation was not used in the case of the Standard Afrikaans text because the researcher, who is proficient in both Afrikaans and English, was able to assess the accuracy of the translation.

The standard language texts were used as the stimulus text to elicit participants' authentic slang lexical items and to create a full text in the slang of each group. Participants (in the different language groups) were given the (Afrikaans/Sepedi/English) standard language text where certain words and expressions were underlined (see Appendix G); thereafter, participants were asked to provide equivalent slang items for the underlined words, if they existed in their slang lexicon. Participants could also provide equivalent slang items for the words that were not underlined. The participants for the above experiment were as follows:

- The Afrikaans participants consisted of Coloured and White learners. The Coloured learners ( $n = 36$ ;  $M = 13$ ,  $F = 23$ ) attended Eersterust



Secondary School in the east of Tshwane. The White learners ( $n = 39$ ;  $M = 21$ ;  $F = 18$ ) attended Silverton High School and Die Wilgers High School in the east of Tshwane. Both the Coloured and the White Afrikaans participants received the Standard Afrikaans text.

- The Sepedi participants ( $n = 45$ ;  $M = 25$ ;  $F = 20$ ) attended Hofmeyr Secondary School and Saulridge Secondary School in Atteridgeville (west of Tshwane). The Sepedi participants received the Standard Sepedi text.
- The English participants ( $n = 71$ ;  $M = 26$ ;  $F = 45$ ) attended Willowridge High School and Sutherland High School in the east and south of Tshwane respectively. The English participants received the Standard English text.

Coding for frequency was used in analysing the data, i.e. it was recorded how frequently an equivalent slang item appeared (Babbie & Mouton, 2002, p. 388). The selection of the slang items was informed by a combination of the following factors:

- Frequency – the higher the frequency of the item, the more likely its probability to be selected. A minimum of 10%-frequency was employed as cut-off point for selection.
- Distribution among sexes – slang items that were used by both sexes were more likely to be selected.
- Similar meaning – the equivalent slang item should correspond in meaning with the standard lexical item.

In creating the authentic teenager slang texts, the following were also taken into consideration:

- The construction of the slang texts had to be done in such a manner that they would correspond stylistically as closely as possible with the standard language texts, e.g. if few lexical variations were used for a certain word in the standard language text (e.g. for “sleeping around”), then lexical variations were also limited in the slang text.

- The spelling of slang items was based on the spelling of items with the highest frequency.
- In cases where no equivalent slang item was given, but another standard lexical item was listed as alternative, the standard alternative with the highest frequency was included to make the slang text more credible.
- Only in one instance it was necessary to coin a “new” word, due to the fact that the slang equivalent did not reflect the same meaning as the standard item. In one of the authentic Afrikaans slang texts (see the “Rondraps” text in Appendix H), participants listed the word “raps” as slang alternative for “sleeping around”. But a closer analysis revealed that “raps” was used to refer to “having sex” which does not necessarily imply “sleeping around”. The word “rondraps” was coined to underscore the meaning of “sleeping around”. The White Afrikaans participants did not have any problems in understanding and identifying with the word “rondraps”.
- For certain lexical items, a gender-neutral equivalent was necessary. For instance: the phrases in the standard variety text “to have more sex partners” and “the rest of the group” are gender neutral. Gender-neutral slang equivalents with the highest frequency were then selected.

Four authentic teenager slang versions were thus created (see Appendix H):

- Two authentic teenager slang versions for Afrikaans: one for the Coloured participants and one for the White participants. From the coding for frequency analysis it became evident that the slang items were different for the Coloured and White participants. This necessitated subdividing the Afrikaans group into two subgroups: a Coloured Afrikaans and a White Afrikaans group.
- One authentic slang version for the Sepedi participants.
- One authentic slang version for the English participants. The authentic slang version for the English participants differed substantially from the loveLife slang text, and justified therefore a separate authentic slang version.

The four authentic teenager slang versions (see Appendix H) were then evaluated by (mostly) the same participants (in the different language groups) that were used for the construction of the authentic slang versions. This was conducted to determine the credibility and authenticity of the slang versions. The participants in the different language groups were asked to evaluate the authentic teenager slang text with regard to the following:

- Comprehension: *Are there any words in the text that you do not understand/ know? If so, write them down and give an alternative.*
- Words that do not fit: *Are there any words that you feel do not fit in the text? Give an alternative for each one that does not fit.*
- Preference for any one of the three text versions: *Which one of the text versions do you prefer?*

The last question was included to get an indication of how the authentic teenager slang version would compare with the other two text versions (the standard version and the loveLife version). Although the possibility of a carry-over effect could not be excluded, the comparison of the authentic teenager text with the other two text versions gave an indication of the perceived credibility of the authentic teenager text.

Authentic teenager slang words were only replaced if the participants showed a 25%-consensus that a particular slang word is not understandable and/or does not fit. Participants were given three text versions (authentic slang, the loveLife variety and the standard variety) and were asked whether they would prefer the authentic teenager slang, the English loveLife variety or the standard variety version. The results were as follows:

Table 3.1: Evaluation of the perceived authenticity of the authentic slang version

	Understand all the words	Words that do not fit (with a 25% frequency rate)	*Preference for text version
<b>Coloured Afrikaans participants</b> (n = 36)	100%	<i>Aids</i> : 97% (Alternative: <i>Groot siekte</i> : 70%)	Authentic slang: 76% Standard variety: 11% loveLife slang: 19%
<b>White Afrikaans participants</b> (n = 19)	100%	none	Authentic slang: 63% Standard variety: 16% loveLife slang: 26%
<b>Sepedi participants</b> (n = 20)	70%	none	Authentic slang: 50% Standard variety: 30% loveLife slang: 30%
<b>English participants</b> (n = 37)	97%	none	Authentic slang: 54% Standard variety: 39% loveLife slang: 8%

(\*Some participants listed a preference for more than one text version. The calculation was done on basis of the frequency of the listed preference, i.e. if a participants listed two preferences (e.g. authentic slang and standard variety version), it was calculated accordingly; therefore the calculation does not add up to 100%.)

From the above table the following is apparent:

- No changes had to be effected for the authentic slang versions (except for the Coloured Afrikaans slang version “Rondbak”). For the Coloured Afrikaans slang version “Rondbak”, the lexical item “Aids” was replaced by “die Groot Siekte”.
- The authentic Sepedi slang version scored the lowest in terms of language comprehension. 30% of the Sepedi participants listed a maximum of two words as unintelligible. The Sepedi slang words listed in terms of unintelligibility were never beyond a frequency rate of 10%, i.e. not one lexical item was listed more than twice. Because of the low rate of consensus in terms of lexical items not understood, the lexical items in question were maintained.

- All the participants favoured the authentic slang version. In the case of the Afrikaans participants, a clear majority preferred the authentic slang version. Afrikaans participants (both the Coloured and White participants (n = 55)) listed the following two reasons most frequently as to why they prefer the authentic slang version:
  - The way we (young people) talk (40%)
  - Understand text better (16%)
- In the case of the Sepedi and English participants, the preference for the authentic slang version was much smaller compared to the Afrikaans participants' preference for the authentic slang version. The participants listed the following two reasons most frequently as to why they preferred the authentic slang versions:

English participants (n = 37)

- The way we (young people) talk (38%)
- Easier to understand (8%)

Sepedi participants (n = 20)

- Use mixed language (30%)
- Understand text better (15%)

The above analysis reveals that all the participants (Coloured Afrikaans, White Afrikaans, Sepedi and English) tend to view the authentic slang versions as more credible and authentic versions.

The three text versions (loveLife slang, authentic teenager slang and standard variety) that were employed in this study were identical in content, advocated position, sentence structure (as far as possible), but only differed with regard to certain lexical items or expressions to manipulate the “slangness” of the text. As discussed above, in two text versions (the loveLife variety and authentic slang), slang lexical items were prevalent, while in the other text (the standard variety), these slang items were replaced by standard lexical items.

### 3.3 Procedure for main experiment

As already indicated in 3.1.2, three schools were selected for each of the three main languages: Afrikaans, English and Sepedi. For each of the three schools, three grade 11 classes were randomly selected by the teachers to participate in the experiment. To enhance the inclusion of more mother tongue speakers of Afrikaans, English and Sepedi, subject teachers of Afrikaans, English and Sepedi as first languages were used to randomly select three grade 11 classes.

The questionnaires were administered by the researcher during normal school hours (i.e. during a double period of approximately 80 minutes). The instructions in the questionnaire on how to fill in the different rating scales were explained by the researcher to the participants to ensure that they understood what to do. When questions arose while participants were completing the questionnaire (which were limited), it was explained to the whole class.

Most participants completed the questionnaire within 40 minutes. It seemed that participants enjoyed filling in the questionnaires, because as some of them indicated, it was an opportunity to skip formal teaching.

A major challenge for the researcher was to negotiate with the teachers for suitable double periods to conduct the experiments.

For the main experiment, the three text versions (the (English) loveLife variety, the Afrikaans/English/Sepedi standard variety, and the authentic Coloured Afrikaans/White Afrikaans/English/Sepedi teenager slang) were randomly distributed in each language group (Coloured Afrikaans/White Afrikaans/English/Sepedi) to minimise effects attributable to differences between the participants. The authentic White Afrikaans and Coloured Afrikaans slang versions (the “Rondraps”- and “Rondbak”-texts) were distributed respectively to the White Afrikaans and Coloured Afrikaans participants.

The participants used in the main experiment did not include any of the participants that were used for the construction and evaluation of the authentic teenager text in the different language groups. The experiment for the authentic teenager text and the main experiment were conducted over a period of two years: the construction of the authentic teenager text was conducted with the grade 11 class of 2005, while the main experiment was conducted with the grade 11 class of 2006. The possibility that participants who were involved

in the construction of the stimulus texts could also be involved in the main experiment was therefore substantially reduced.

The three text versions were distributed equally (as far as possible) among both sexes in each language group (Coloured Afrikaans, White Afrikaans, Sepedi and English). The total number of participants for each language variety condition in the main experiment was as follows:

Table 3.2 Number of participants for each language variety condition according to language group

<b>Language variety</b>	<b>Coloured Afrikaans participants (n = 106)</b>	<b>White Afrikaans participants (n = 149)</b>	<b>English participants (n = 162)</b>	<b>Sepedi participants (n = 240)</b>
loveLife variety ( <i>Getting around-text</i> )	29	46	53	92
Authentic teenager slang	50 ( <i>Rondbak-text</i> )	55 ( <i>Rondraps-text</i> )	55 ( <i>Screwing around-text</i> )	71 ( <i>Go gidla le baie mense-text</i> )
Standard variety	27 ( <i>Rondslaap-text</i> )	48 ( <i>Rondslaap-text</i> )	54 ( <i>Sleeping around-text</i> )	77 ( <i>Go robalana le yo mongwe le yo mongwe-text</i> )

### 3.4 The salience of language variety as cue to shape evaluative profiles

The fact that language varieties (and in particular teenager slang) are employed in the context of document-mediated communication, could reduce the reliance on language cues in forming attitudes about the speaker. According to Sparks, Areni and Cox (1998, p. 110), presentations in audio and audiovisual mode enhance the likelihood that receivers will rely on speaker-related heuristics when forming attitudes about the speaker, i.e. audio and audiovisual presentations make the speaker more salient. In contrast, the print mode enhances the likelihood of a central route of information processing, i.e. it makes the scrutiny of arguments more salient. Wilson and Sherrell (1993) also

found in a meta-analysis of 114 studies, reporting on the effects of the source on persuasion, that source effects tend to be greater in oral communication than in other types of message media. Furthermore, the fact that participants in this study were required in the experimental situation to read the stimulus text on HIV/AIDS, could enhance the likelihood of elaboration. However, Petty et al. (2004, p. 70) argue that elaboration (i.e. the amount of mental engaging) varies along a continuum. One person may, for instance, evaluate the arguments and information more carefully than another person. Benoit and Strathman (2004, p. 101) also argue that a source variable (such as the source's credibility or social attractiveness) can decrease the motivation to scrutinise the arguments; because if the source is an expert or socially attractive, it could encourage receivers to relax and pay less attention to the merits of the arguments.

These arguments are also applicable to this study. Although the participants had to *read* the stimulus text, and although print media is more likely to enhance the likelihood of elaboration, it does not necessarily imply that elaboration will be high, because elaboration varies along a continuum. Following the above argument of Benoit and Strathman (2004, p. 101), identification with the language variety could decrease motivation to scrutinise the arguments, because the source will be seen as similar to the receiver, and the latter will "relax their guards" (Benoit & Strathman, 2004, p. 101) and feel less motivated to scrutinise the arguments.

Also, in contexts where there is very little (or no) shared interpersonal history between the interlocutors, receivers will most probably process information in a peripheral manner. In this study, the speaker in the stimulus text is unknown to the participants, and this creates a context where there is no previous shared interpersonal history between speaker and participants. Cargile et al. (1994, p. 220) argue that in such low-familiar contexts, "the available language behaviours will almost automatically cue attitudes in the hearer". In such low-familiar contexts, language cues become more salient for deriving inferences about the speaker.

On the impact of mood on receivers' motivation to engage in message elaboration, there are clearly different schools of thought.

Cargile and Bradac (2001, p. 371), on the one hand, argue that receivers who are in a good mood are more likely to make automatic judgements about the speaker, while receivers in a negative mood are more likely to scrutinise the



merits of the arguments (i.e. controlled processing). In the words of Cargile and Bradac (2001, p. 371):

A hearer who is feeling good is relatively likely to use linguistic cues (e.g. a speaker's accent) to make automatic judgments of speaker status, intelligence, attractiveness, and so forth.

Hullett (2005), on the other hand, found in his meta-analysis of 14 studies, which reported on the impact of mood on persuasion, that participants who are in a positive mood and who perceive the message as no threat to their existing mood (e.g. pro-attitudinal or neutral messages), are more likely to carefully process the persuasive message, than those positive mood participants who perceive the message as a threat to their existing mood (e.g. counter-attitudinal messages). Hullett (2005) argues that people's processing of the message is motivated by attaining or maintaining a positive mood state.

However, in this study the following measures were introduced to enhance the salience of language cues, as a basis for forming attitudes about the speaker, thus increasing the likelihood of a peripheral route of information processing:

- Participants were required to read the text on HIV/AIDS only once and then fill in the rating scales quickly without referring back to the text. This was done to shift the attention away from the information/content and to highlight the language variety as the focal point for language attitude formation (cf. also Garrett et al., 2003, p. 52). Several studies have utilised this technique as a means to make language cues more salient than the actual content (cf. Giles & Sassoon, 1983, p. 308; Ryan & Carranza, 1975, p. 858; Ryan et al. 1988, p. 1074; Ryan & Sebastian, 1980, p. 230; Stewart, Ryan & Giles, 1985, p. 101).
- The advocated position of the message was one-sided, i.e. only one side of the issue was presented, namely by sleeping around you can get HIV/AIDS (cf. also Aune & Kikuchi, 1993, p. 228). The counter-argument, namely that you can sleep around as long as you use condoms, was not entertained in the stimulus text. The introduction of

pro- and counter-arguments could have enhanced the motivation to scrutinise the relevant arguments.

### **3.5 The questionnaire as measuring instrument**

In this study, a questionnaire was employed as the only measuring instrument. As mentioned earlier, the focus was on how language and source perceptions were shaped by the use of teenager slang, and subsequently on the effect of these language and source variables on acceptance of the message's claim.

This study involved a 3x4 between-subject design with the independent variables *language variety* (with the levels authentic teenager slang, the loveLife variety and the standard variety) and *language group* (with the levels Coloured Afrikaans, White Afrikaans, English and Sepedi).

The measurement items included in the questionnaire focused on the following areas:

- demographic information
- hypothesis-related variables
- control variables

#### ***3.5.1 Control for demographic information***

Demographic information was included to ensure comparability among the four language groups regarding age, language (first and second language), gender, and religion. With regard to language, participants were required not only to indicate their home language but also their second language at school. This was included to determine the exposure of the Afrikaans and Sepedi participants to English. Given that the questionnaire was only conducted in English (with the exception of the standard language and authentic slang texts), this question on second language was included to determine the participants' level of exposure to English. In addition, a 5-point rating scale was included (at the end of the questionnaire) to determine the level of difficulty of the questionnaire. Participants had to rate the level of difficulty of the questionnaire on a 5-point scale (with 5 indicating many difficulties and 1 no difficulties).

The demographic information of the different language groups were as follows:

Table 3.3: Demographic information of the four language groups

		<b>Coloured Afrikaans</b>	<b>White Afrikaans</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Sepedi</b>
<b>Mean age</b>		17.28	17.08	16.40	17.64
<b>Sex</b>	<b>Male (%)</b>	31.1%	46.3%	50%	48.8%
	<b>Female (%)</b>	68.9%	53.7%	50%	51.2%
<b>Language</b>	<b>Home language (%)</b>	Afrikaans (100%)	Afrikaans (100%)	English (100%)	Sepedi (100%)
	<b>Second language (%)</b>	English (94.3%)	English (95.3%)	Afrikaans (96.3%)	English (92.1%)
<b>Religion</b>	<b>Christian</b>	95.3%	99.3%	78.4%	89.2%
	<b>Muslim</b>	4.6%	-	2.5%	3.3%
	<b>Other</b>	-	0.7%	18.5%	4.2%

### 3.5.2 Manipulation checks

To determine whether participants would perceive the manipulations of the language variety as intended (as being either standard or non-standard and formal or informal), the following scales were included:

To measure the standard and non-standard nature of the selected language varieties, a 2-item, 5-point bipolar scale was selected:

I find the language in the text:

slang language – standard language

is used by teenagers on the playground – is used by teachers in the classroom

The first item was taken from Arthur, Farrar and Bradford (1974, p. 257). The second item was included because after testing of the questionnaire among Afrikaans ( $n = 4$ ) and Sepedi participants ( $n = 4$ ), it became apparent that the item “standard language” caused intelligibility problems. A context-based item was constructed to measure the language variety as standard/non-standard in combination with the original item (*slang language – standard language*). The context-based item was received favourably by the participants during the pretesting phase of the questionnaire.

To determine whether participants would perceive the manipulations of the language variety as formal or informal, a 2-item bipolar scale was selected. Burgoon and Hale (1987, pp. 36-37) constructed a measure for the fundamental themes of relational communication. One of the factors of the relational measure is formality. A 3-item, 7-point Likert scale for the measuring of language formality was constructed with an alpha reliability of more than .70 (Burgoon & Hale, 1987, pp. 33, 37). The items included were formal, informal and casual. To measure formality, a 2-item bipolar scale was used:

I find the language in the text:

formal – casual

is used by news readers – is used by teenagers

As was the case with the standard/non-standard scale, pretesting of the questionnaire revealed that the participants also experienced intelligibility problems with the items “formal” and “informal”. The item “informal” from the original scale was replaced by the item “casual”, and an additional context-based item (*is used by news readers – is used by teenagers*) was included to provide examples of formal and informal encounters for the participants. The context-based item was received favourably by the participants during the pretesting phase of the questionnaire.

### ***3.5.3 Measuring hypothesis-related variables***

In this study, a distinction is made between hypothesis-related variables and control variables. Hypothesis-related variables, as the name indicates, refer to those dependent variables that relate to the hypotheses. These variables are categorised as follows:

- Language perceptions (related to hypothesis 1)
- Perceived source-receiver similarities (related to hypothesis 2)
- Affective effects (related to hypothesis 3)
- Persuasion-related source characteristics (related to hypothesis 4)
- Perceived acceptance of the message’s claim (related to hypothesis 5)

### 3.5.3.1 *Measuring language perceptions*

The following measures focus on how participants would perceive the language use in the text, i.e. as similar and/or as a violation of their language expectations. The hypothesis in question is the following:

#### Hypothesis 1

- (a) The use of authentic teenager slang will result in a more positive violation of the expected language behaviour than the loveLife variety would
- (b) Participants are more likely to perceive the authentic slang as more similar to their communication style than they would the loveLife variety and the standard variety

As discussed in Chapter 2, these language-related perceptions can either directly (i.e. hypothesis 1a) or indirectly (i.e. hypothesis 1b) influence the perceived acceptance of the message's claim.

#### (i) Violation of language expectations

No appropriate scale could be found in the literature to measure violation of language expectations; consequently a 2-item, 5-point bipolar scale was constructed (to measure hypothesis 1a):

I find the language in the text  
is what I expected it to be – is not what I expected it to be  
surprising – not surprising

To determine whether a violation is viewed as positive or negative, the close-ended question *Do you like the language used in the text?* was used: If participants answered *Yes* to the close-ended question, then the violation was perceived as positive (and vice versa).

#### (ii) Perceived similarity in language use

In the literature on source similarity, no measure of perceived similarity in language use in particular was found. For that reason a rating scale for measuring similarity in language use had to be constructed (to measure hypothesis 1b). Two pilot studies were conducted to determine which evaluative dimensions the participants use for language similarity. In the first pilot study among grade 10 learners (n = 33) at Steynville Secondary School, a

1-item, 5-point Likert-type scale was used to measure language similarity (Saal, 2003, p. 99). The relevant scale was:

Die taalgebruik in die teks stem ooreen met die soort Engels wat ek soms gebruik wanneer ek en my vriende/vriendinne (oor seks) praat (Translated The language use in the text is similar to the type of English I sometimes use when speaking to my friends (about sex))

Participants were also asked to respond to the following open-ended question: *Why do you / do you not identify with the writer?* A content analysis of the responses to this question revealed two categories: firstly, and predominantly, the participants identified with the writer because of the advocated position – thus a similarity condition that is issue-relevant, and secondly, participants identified with the writer based on language cues – thus a similarity condition on the basis of language cues (Saal, 2003, p. 104). As far as identification with the writer on language-related issues is concerned, the participants in the pilot study provided the following statements.

- It is the way young people speak today
- The language use is similar to how we talk
- The words used in the text are similar to those that we use

On the basis of this content analysis, a second pilot study was conducted among grade 9 learners ( $n = 90$ ) at Fersterust High School to measure similarity in language use. Perceived similarity in language variety was measured using a 4-item, 5-point Likert scale. The relevant statements were:

Die skrywer praat dieselfde soos hoe ek met my vriende praat (Translated The writer's language use is like mine when talking to my friends )

Wanneer ek en my vriende praat, praat ons dieselfde soos die skrywer in die teks (When talking to my friends, our language use is similar to that of the writer )

Die skrywer praat soos ons jongmense vandag praat (The writer's language use is similar to the way we young people speak today )

As ek en my vriende praat, gebruik ek ook dieselfde woorde wat die skrywer in die teks gebruik. (When talking to my friends, I use the same words as the writer uses in the text.)

(Cf. Saal & Fredericks, 2005, pp. 258-259.)

The four items yielded a coefficient alpha reliability of .70. When the third item (*The writer's language use is similar to the way we young people speak today*) was omitted, an alpha reliability of .80 was obtained. The fact that item 3 produced a lower reliability, is interesting. All of the remaining three items have one factor in common: they all refer to a particular discourse context, i.e. speaking with friends. Item 3, however, refers to a more general context (the way young people speak today), and this item expects from participants to make some generalisations on how young people speak today. Item 3 does not refer to how the participant perceives his or her language use, but how he or she perceives young people to speak (in general) today.

The goal of the measure for perceived similarity in language variety is to find out how the particular participant perceives his or her language use in a specific discourse context, and not those of young people in general. The discourse context “when talking with friends” was introduced, because standard language and non-standard language are viewed differently in terms of register (formal vs. informal). Standard language and non-standard language are associated with different registers. Taylor and Clément (1974, p. 206) examined the interaction between different speech styles (i.e. Standard French, familiar French and *joual* French) and social situations that differed in terms of formality. They found that Standard French was perceived as more appropriate in formal situations (such as talking to an employer or in class situations), while familiar (and *joual*) French was seen as more appropriate in informal situations (such as talking to friends or at home).

The following 5-item Likert-type scale was used to measure perceived similarity in language use (i.e. to measure hypothesis 1b):

- (a) The writer's language use is like mine when I talk to my friends.
- (b) When talking to my friends, my language use is different to that of the writer. (reverse coded)
- (c) When I talk to my friends, I would use words similar to that of the writer.
- (d) I would use the same words when talking to a friend.
- (e) When talking to my friends, I talk like the writer.

The selection of the five items was informed by the following:

- The first three items ((a) – (c)) were similar to the items developed for and used in the second pilot study (alpha reliability = .80). The second item above, i.e. (b), differed from the corresponding item used in the second pilot study (*When talking to my friends, our language use is similar to that of the writer*), in the sense that it was reverse coded. The item was reverse coded here because the wording of the two items (i.e. item (a) and (b)) used in the second pilot study was too closely related (cf. *The writer's language use is like mine when talking to my friends* x *When talking to my friends, our language use is similar to that of the writer*). The first and third items, i.e. (a) and (c), corresponded largely with the items used by Aune and Kikuchi (1993, p. 229) to assess perceived similarity in language intensity.
- The fourth item corresponded with the items used by Aune and Kikuchi (1993, p. 229) to assess perceived similarity in language intensity. The 3-item, 7-point Likert scale used by Aune and Kikuchi (1993, p. 226) to assess perceived similarity in language intensity yielded an alpha reliability of .79.
- The fifth item was a paraphrase of item (a).

In determining the reasons why participants identify/do not identify with the language variety, the following question was included:

Do you like the language used in the text?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Don't know ☐

Give one reason why you say so.

### 3.5.3.2 Measuring perceived source-receiver similarities

Measuring of perceived source-receiver similarities focuses on the similar attitudes, values and background between the source and receiver. Furthermore, it includes the participants' perception of the source as an in-group member. The hypothesis in question is:



## Hypothesis 2

Authentic teenager slang will result in the writer being perceived as an in-group member, and as more similar in attitude, value and background than the loveLife variety and standard variety

### (i) Similar attitudes, value and background

McCroskey, Richmond and Daly (1975) developed a measure of perceived source-receiver similarity (referred to as *homophily*) in interpersonal interactions. Four dimensions were identified: attitude, value, background and appearance. These four dimensions (consisting of 18 items) were combined with scales for credibility and interpersonal attraction – used respectively by McCroskey, Jensen and Valencia (1973, quoted in McCroskey et al., 1975, p. 327) and McCroskey and McCain (1974, quoted in McCroskey et al., 1975, p. 327) – to determine their independence of one another. McCroskey et al (1975, p. 327) found that the four dimensions of source similarity loaded independently, but they also loaded independently of the credibility and attraction dimensions.

McCroskey et al. (1975) conducted a number of experiments with college and high school students as target groups to establish the replicability of these factors in different contexts. The result was a 14-item, 7-point bipolar semantic differential scale which provides researchers with a “useful measure of homophily” (McCroskey et al., 1975, p. 332) for the dimensions of attitude, value, background and appearance. Given the nature of this study (where no physical interaction is present), only the first three dimensions are relevant. The following 13 items were selected to measure perceived attitudinal, value and background similarity (i.e. hypothesis 2):

I find the writer

#### Attitude

does not think like me – does think like me

behaves like me – does not behave like me

similar to me – different from me

unlike me – like me

## Value

has morals like mine – has morals unlike mine

has sexual attitudes unlike mine – has sexual attitudes like mine

## Background

to be from a social class similar to mine – to be from a social class different from mine

has an economic situation different from mine – has an economic situation like mine

has a background different from mine – has a background similar to mine

culturally similar – culturally different

has a social status like mine – has a social status different from mine

to be of an inferior social status to mine – to be of a superior social status to mine

to be from an upper social class – to be from a lower social class

(Cf. McCroskey et al., 1975, pp. 326, 328.)

The item *culturally different – culturally similar* was excluded by McCroskey et al. (1975) from their final (and reduced) measure of perceived homophily, but the item loaded satisfactorily in their initial 26-item scale on the background dimension (cf. McCroskey et al., 1975, p. 326). This item was included here given the fact that this study deals with different language groups, implying different cultures. The items *to be of an inferior/superior status to mine* and *to be from an upper/lower social class* were not part of the original scale by McCroskey et al. (1975), but were included here to provide an indication of the perceived status and social class level of the participants. When participants perceive their status as different to that of the writer (see item *status like mine/different from mine*), it is not clear what the status level (low, middle or high) is.

## (ii) Source's in-group identification

Identification of the interaction in interpersonal or intergroup terms has implications for the evaluation of the speaker. Interactions perceived to be in interpersonal terms are more likely to be evaluated on person-oriented traits (such as source expertise), while interactions viewed in intergroup terms tend to be evaluated on group traits (such as language similarity).

Identification with authentic teenager slang could result in the interaction being perceived in in-group terms, i.e. the speaker could be perceived as a member of the in-group

To determine the in-group membership of the source, the Group Identification Scale developed by Brown, Condor, Mathews, Wade and Williams (1986) was used. This scale was also employed by Cargile and Giles (1987) to measure the strength of listeners' American identities. The following four items were selected from the Group Identification Scale to measure how participants would perceive the writer in terms of in-group identification (i.e. hypothesis 2):

The writer is a person who identifies with teenagers

The writer is a person who feels strong ties with teenagers

The writer is a person who is glad to belong to the group of teenagers

The writer is a person who sees himself or herself as belonging to teenagers

The scale above only provides information on the in-group status of the writer, with no indication of the (relevant) out-group status. Studies on inter-group behaviour revealed that two factors are always salient in intergroup behaviour: being a member of the in-group or a member of a relevant out-group (cf. Brown & Turner, 1981; Mackie & Queller, 2000; Terry, Hogg & White, 2000). As an extension of the above scale, the following 1-item bipolar evaluative scale was included to determine the (relevant) out-group status of the writer:

I find the writer

to be an adult – to be a teenager

In the above bipolar scale “adult” represents the relevant out-group. The selection of “adults” as representative of a relevant out-group for the in-group “teenagers” was based on the following: A study conducted among grade 11 Sepedi ( $n = 20$ ) and English participants ( $n = 19$ ), where they were required to list 4 characteristics that are typical of teenagers, produced the following characteristics:

Table 3.4: Four most frequent characteristics associated with teenagers

Category	Frequency
1. Experimenting with alcohol and/or drugs and/or cigarettes	14 (36%)
2. Having sex	11 (28%)
3. Partying	9 (23%)
4. Rebel against parents/No respect for authority	6 (15%)

(Coding for frequency was used in analysing the data.)

From these results, it is apparent that category 4: *Rebel against parents/no respect for authority* relate to adults. From this it is inferred that teenagers would view adults as a relevant out-group.

### 3.5.3.3 Measuring affective effects

Measuring affective effects refer to the measuring of the receivers' affective state, namely the feelings of pleasure and arousal, perceived attention for the language (and source), and the salience of social identity (i.e. a greater awareness of the receiver's group identity). The hypothesis in question is:

#### Hypothesis 3

Authentic slang will evoke more feelings of pleasure and arousal, result in greater perceived attention, and make teenager identities more salient than the loveLife and the standard variety would.

#### (i) Feelings of pleasure and arousal

Mehrabian and Russell (1974, p. 216) distinguish between pleasure and arousal dimensions in measuring emotional state. The semantic differential scale by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) was used to measure participants' state of pleasure and arousal (i.e. hypothesis 3). The following 10 items were selected:

After reading the text, how do you feel right now, at this very moment (cf. Schwarz, Bless & Bohner, 1991, p. 170):

Pleasure:

happy – unhappy

annoyed – pleased

satisfied – unsatisfied

hopeful – despairing  
relaxed – bored

#### Arousal

aroused – unaroused  
sleepy – wide-awake  
excited – calm  
jittery – dull  
stimulated – relaxed

To determine why participants would enjoy the text (or not), the following question was included:

Did you enjoy reading the text?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Don't know ☐

Give one reason why you say so.

#### (ii) Perceived attention for the language

The type of language used can elicit greater attention for the language (and subsequently the source), and could enhance peripheral processing. To measure attention for the language (i.e. hypothesis 3), a 6-item semantic differential scale was selected:

I find the language in the text:

attracts my attention – does not attract my attention

interesting – uninteresting

creates a sense of distance – creates a sense of involvement

stimulating – boring

personal – impersonal

inviting – detached

These items (with the exception of the first) were selected from both the “immediacy/affection/involvement” factor developed by Burgoon and Hale (1987, pp. 33, 36-37) with a Cronbach’s alpha reliability of more than .80, and the scale for attractiveness constructed by Hoeken (1994, quoted in Maes, Ummelen & Hoeken, 1996, p. 209).

(iii) Salience of social identity

To measure the salience of social identity (i.e. hypothesis 3), a modified 2-item Likert scale was used from Cargile and Giles (1997, p. 201):

While reading the text on HIV/AIDS I felt like a teenager.

The text on HIV/AIDS made me conscious of being a teenager.

*3.5.3.4 Measuring persuasion-related source characteristics*

These variables refer to those dependent variables that have been identified as having a direct influence on the perceived acceptance of the message's claim, namely the perceived social attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise of the source. The discussion to follow focuses on the measuring of the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4

- (a) Authentic slang will result in greater social attractiveness and trustworthiness than the standard variety and loveLife variety would.
- (b) The standard variety will produce higher ratings of source expertise than authentic slang and the loveLife variety would.

(i) Perceived social attractiveness of source

Two attraction measures that are frequently used in studies on attraction are the Interpersonal Judgement Scale by Byrne (1971) and the Interpersonal Attraction Scale by McCroskey and McCain (1972, quoted in McCroskey, Hamilton & Weiner, 1974, pp. 44-45). Zahn and Hopper (1985) also constructed a measure, referred to as the Speech Evaluation Instrument (SEI), with the dimensions of superiority, attractiveness and dynamism. Their attractiveness dimension is a hybrid and all-inclusive dimension, including factors previously termed as solidarity, trustworthiness, likeability, aesthetic quality, benevolence and social attractiveness (Zahn & Hopper, 1985, p. 119). Distinguishing between the dimensions of trustworthiness and attraction, is important in this study. As argued in 2.3.3, attraction and trustworthiness belong to different evaluative dimensions and need to be measured independently. Burgoon and Hale (1987, p. 32-33) found in their factor analysis that the factors attraction and trust (i.e. trustworthiness) loaded

independently of each other. For this reason, the more hybrid SEI, and in particular their attractiveness dimension, is not used in this study.

In this study, preference was given to the attraction scale developed by McCroskey and McCain (1972, quoted in McCroskey et al., 1974, pp. 44-45). The interpersonal attraction measure of McCroskey and McCain (1972, quoted in McCroskey et al., 1974, pp. 44-45) loaded independently of both source similarity and source credibility (cf. McCroskey et al., 1975, p. 327). For this reason, the attraction measure of McCroskey and McCain was used. McCroskey et al. (1974, p. 44) found the 15-item Likert-type attraction scale developed by McCroskey and McCain “to be reliable and the factor structure has been replicated across several studies (McCroskey & McCain 1972; Quiggens, 1972; Wakshlag, 1973)”. Factor analysis observed three independent dimensions of interpersonal attraction: task, social and physical. For the purpose of this study, only the social dimension is relevant. Given the focus of this study on the effect of teenager slang in document-mediated communication, the dimension of physical attraction is not included. The task dimension is also not relevant for this study because it requires from teenager participants to put themselves in a (future) imagined position of working alongside the writer. This task dimension is excluded on the basis that it does not relate to teenager life. Byrne’s (1971, pp. 52, 427) measure of attraction also includes only two dimensions: personal feelings and working together, with no scales for physical attractiveness. The two dimensions, namely personal feelings and working together, correspond respectively with the social and task dimensions by McCroskey and McCain (1972, quoted in McCroskey et al., 1974, pp. 44-45). Of importance is the measure for social attraction. The measure of the social dimension indicates whether the writer is perceived as a friend or not by the participants.

To measure perceived social attraction (i.e. hypothesis 4a), a 4-item, 5-point Likert scale was selected (cf. McCroskey et al., 1974, p. 45). The items were as follows:

The writer and I could never have a personal friendship with each other.  
(reverse scoring)

I think the writer could be a friend of mine.

I would like to have a friendly chat with the writer.

The writer would fit into my circle of friends.

The social attraction scale by McCroskey and McCain (1972, quoted in McCroskey et al., 1974, pp. 44-45) included the item *It would be difficult to meet and talk with the writer*. It was excluded here on geographical grounds: the participants could, for example, argue that the writer is from America, therefore making it difficult to meet the writer, in any case.

To determine why participants would be socially attractive (or not) to the writer, the following question was included:

Would you regard the writer as a friend?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Don't know ☐

Give one reason why you say so.

#### (ii) Perceived source expertise and trustworthiness

In a pilot study conducted among grade 10 learners ( $n = 66$ ) at Steynville Secondary School, source expertise and trustworthiness were measured with an 8-item, 5-point Likert scale. The items for source expertise were selected from the authoritativeness scale developed by McCroskey (1966). The selected items from McCroskey's (1966, p. 71) authoritativeness scale to measure source expertise in the pilot study, were the following:

I would consider the speaker to be an expert on the topic.

This speaker has had substantial experience with this subject.

This speaker has considerable knowledge of this subject.

Few people are as qualified to speak on this topic as the speaker.

A low internal reliability was obtained (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .35$ ) (Saal, 2003, p. 100). In a second pilot study conducted among grade 10 learners ( $n = 90$ ) at Eersterust High School, the above source expertise items again obtained a low internal reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .50$ ) (Saal & Fredericks, 2005, p. 259).

The selected items in the first pilot study to measure source trustworthiness were selected from Hoeken (1998, p. 201), which were mainly based on McCroskey's (1966) scale for source trustworthiness:

The speaker appears to be honest.

The speaker appears to be trustworthy.



The speaker appears to be sincere.

The speaker appears to be neutral.

With the exclusion of the last item, the reliability of the scale was adequate (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .80$ ) (cf. Saal, 2003, p. 100). In a second pilot study (among grade 10 learners ( $n = 90$ ) at Eersterust High School), the corresponding three items (*The speaker appears to be honest/The speaker appears to be trustworthy/The speaker appears to be sincere*) obtained, however, a low reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .54$ ) (cf. Saal & Fredericks, 2005, p. 259). On the basis of these low reliabilities for source expertise and trustworthiness, the scales used in the two pilot studies were not used in this study.

The 12-item bipolar semantic differential scale constructed by McCroskey and Young (1981, p. 33) were selected to measure source expertise (referred to as "competence") and source trustworthiness (referred to as "character"). The selection of this measure of source credibility by McCroskey and Young (1981) was informed by the following factors:

Firstly, the construction of this measure of perceived source credibility incorporated previous research on ethos and credibility, as well as previous research on measures of source credibility. The construction of this evaluative scale originated from three methods that were used (McCroskey & Young, 1981, p. 29):

- The participants (college students) were asked to give adjectives for the statements "the person you would be most likely to believe" and "the person you would be least likely to believe"
- A survey of the literature on ethos and credibility to determine which adjectives are frequently used in relation to credible and non-credible sources
- A revision of the scales for the measurement of credibility to determine the adjectives most commonly used

Secondly, this credibility scale was conducted among different types of sources, including peers, media sources, major organisations, etc. Of particular importance for this study, is the fact that this credibility measure was conducted among peers as sources and in different media (including

the print media). These sources correspond with the sources used in this study in that similar sources (peers) were measured, as well as the influence that the print media could exert on the perception of the source. These scale items seem therefore particularly relevant for this study, given the fact that it was conducted among those sources that this study intended to measure.

Lastly, several of these items measuring credibility, as constructed by McCroskey and Young (1981), have been used in various studies as measures of perceived source credibility, and were found to be very reliable (cf. Aune & Kikuchi, 1993). McCroskey and Young (1981, p. 34) argue that using their proposed 12-item bipolar scale should produce reliabilities in the region of .80 and higher. They argue that these 12 items are more than adequate to provide researchers with a concise measure of source credibility (McCroskey & Young, 1981, p. 34).

To measure source trustworthiness (i.e. hypothesis 4a) and source expertise (i.e. hypothesis 4b), the following bipolar scales developed by McCroskey and Young (1981, p. 33) were used:

I find the writer:

Source trustworthiness

sympathetic – unsympathetic

trustworthy – untrustworthy

of low character – of high character

sinful – virtuous

selfish – unselfish

honest – dishonest

Source expertise

unintelligent – intelligent

untrained – trained

an expert – an inexperienced

competent – incompetent

stupid – bright

informed – uninformed

The items measuring expertise assess “whether the communicator is in a position to *know* the truth, to know what is right or correct” (O’Keefe, 2002, p. 183). The items measuring the trustworthiness of the source assess whether “the communicator will likely be inclined to *tell* the truth as he or she sees it” (O’Keefe, 2002, p. 183).

The above bipolar scales were complemented with the following open-ended question:

If your friend asks you who the writer of the text is, how will you describe the writer? Give two characteristics. List each characteristic on a separate line.

This question was included to provide insight into how participants would perceive the writer.

### 3.5.3.5 *Measuring perceived acceptance of the message’s claim*

A 6-item Likert scale was selected to measure the following hypothesis:

#### Hypothesis 5

Authentic slang and the standard variety will result in greater acceptance of the message’s claim than the loveLife variety would.

The 6 items were:

- I support the position taken by the writer, namely not to sleep around.
- The writer is right when saying not to sleep around.
- I am in favour of the position taken by the writer, namely not to sleep around
- I intend to do what the writer advises, namely to not sleep around.
- I plan to do what the writer advises, namely not to sleep around
- I will make an effort to do what the writer advises, namely not to sleep around.

The first three items were adapted from a scale used by Aune and Kikuchi (1993, p. 230) with an alpha reliability of .87. The fourth item was used in a pilot study among grade 10 learners ( $n = 90$ ) at Eersterust High School, and significant differences were found between the experimental and control groups on this item. It was therefore included in this scale. The last three items correspond with the items from the behavioural intention scale by Ajzen (2006).

### ***3.5.4 Measuring control variables***

A number of control variables were included in this study to control or check for the effects of these variables on receivers' perceptions of the language variety, the source, their affective state and acceptance of the message's claim. The control variables mentioned below could provide for a better and richer understanding if the expected effects (cf. the hypotheses) do not occur. The following control variables were identified: background variables, comprehensibility factors, accommodation indicators, sex of the source, the perceived vitality of the languages, and appropriateness of the language variety.

#### ***3.5.4.1 Checking background variables***

These variables refer to participants' existing attitude towards the intended behaviour (in this case not to sleep around), their perception of their control to perform the intended behaviour, and their normative beliefs about the intended behaviour.

Furthermore, it is assumed in this study that the teenager participants would subscribe to the teenager identity, but to test this assumption, participants' identification with their in-group (in this case the teenager group) was measured.

- (i) Attitude towards the intended behaviour, normative beliefs and perceived behavioural control

The Theory of Planned Behavior of Ajzen (1991) reasons that behavioural intention is determined by three factors: attitude towards the behaviour, normative beliefs about the behaviour (referred to as the subjective norm), and perceived behavioural control (cf. also Ajzen, 2006, pp. 1-2). The main dependent variable in this study is the acceptance of the message's claim. The claim in this message pertains to a certain behaviour, or rather to *not* perform a certain behaviour. Given that intention to perform such a behaviour is believed to be the function of other determinants, such as the attitude towards the behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control, these variables were measured as well. It is expected that authentic slang could have an effect on participants' attitude towards the intended behaviour and their normative beliefs, based on the assumption that participants will be more likely to identify

with authentic slang and, consequently, perceive the writer of authentic slang as an in-group member.

To control for the effect of these three factors on the perceived acceptance of the message's claim, the following semantic bipolar and Likert-type scales from Ajzen (2006) were selected respectively:

#### Attitude

I find sleeping around:

good – bad

negative – positive

wise – foolish

#### Perceived behavioural control

For me **not** to sleep around is:

easy – difficult

possible – impossible

not up to me – up to me

#### Normative beliefs

Most people who are important to me think that I should not sleep around.

It is expected of me not to sleep around.

Most people whose opinions I value would approve my not sleeping around.

#### (ii) Participants' identification with the in-group

It has been argued in 2.5.2.2(ii) that receivers' identification with the non-standard language variety could result in a greater awareness of their social identity. For social identities to become salient in the interaction, individuals first need to internalise their group membership (strength of social identity) and, secondly, become aware of their group identity (salience of social identity) in any given interaction (Cargile & Giles, 1997, p. 197). To say that one belongs to a certain social group does not necessarily imply that one is aware of one's social identity in any given interaction. Giles and Ryan (1982, p. 213) emphasise the importance of determining whether the participants concerned identify with and subscribe to the social categories ascribed to them.

In measuring the strength of social identity, a 10-item Likert scale from the Group Identification Scale of Brown et al. (1986) was used:

- I am a person who considers teenagers important.
- I am a person who identifies with teenagers.
- I am a person who feels strong ties with teenagers.
- I am a person who is glad to belong to the group of teenagers.
- I am a person who sees myself as belonging to teenagers.
- I am a person who makes excuses for belonging to teenagers. (reverse scoring)
- I am a person who tries to hide belonging to the group of teenagers. (reverse scoring)
- I am a person who feels held back by teenagers. (reverse scoring)
- I am a person who is annoyed to say I am a member of the group of teenagers. (reverse scoring)
- I am a person who criticises teenagers. (reverse scoring)

#### 3.5.4.2 *Checking sex of the source*

A 1-item bipolar scale was included to determine the sex of the source:

- I find the writer:  
to be male – to be female

Although studies have found no effect of the sex of the source on the source's social attractiveness (cf. Cargile & Bradac, 2001, p. 359; Mulac, 1998, quoted in Bradac & Giles, 2005 p. 210), this scale was included to check whether the same effect is found in this study.

#### 3.5.4.3 *Checking accommodation indicators*

The speaker's accommodative act is evaluated by the listener on basis of the perceived underlying motives and intentions that the listener thinks caused the act. If the listener labels the speaker's intent positively, then the listener is likely to evaluate the speaker's behaviour more favourably. Listeners consider three factors when attributing motives and intentions to a speech act: the speaker's linguistic ability, the amount of effort to accommodate, and external pressures on the speaker to perform the selected speech act (Simard et al., 1976, p. 376). Simard et al. (1976) found that speakers who converge (whether by effort or external pressure) are generally perceived favourably, while speakers who do not converge are likely to elicit unfavourable speaker evaluations. It is expected that the non-standard language varieties would be perceived more as an

accommodative act (whether perceived as a genuine effort or due to external pressure), compared to the standard variety.

In this study, linguistic ability was already measured by the scale measuring the perceived similarity in language variety.

The following 1-item and 2-item Likert scales were constructed to measure the other two indicators of language accommodation (i.e. effort and external pressure):

#### Effort

The writer made an effort to speak the language I use among friends.

#### External pressure

The writer was under pressure to use this kind of language.

The writer was instructed by his or her immediate superiors to use this kind of language.

The selection and wording of the items were mainly based on a discussion of the three factors of accommodation identified by Simard et al. (1976, p. 376).

As was the case with the measure of perceived language variety similarity, a specific discourse context is used, namely speaking with friends. Languages have different registers/styles for different contexts. Of relevance for this study, is the informal context which is portrayed in this study as “speaking with friends”.

#### 3.5.4.4 *Checking comprehensibility*

Comprehensibility refers to the perceived comprehension of the language variety and the perceived comprehension of the text (as a whole). The measuring of actual comprehensibility was included to compare it with participants’ perceived comprehensibility. The questionnaire was only conducted in English, and therefore the level of difficulty of the questionnaire was also checked.

Cargile et al. (1994, p. 219) argue that intelligibility problems could give rise to a negative state which results in a negative attitude towards the particular language variety (and subsequently an unfavourable speaker evaluation). To control for the effect of comprehension on speaker evaluations and the persuasive process, different measures were used in controlling for

comprehension, namely rating scales and multiple choice questions (cf. Ballstaedt & Mandl, 1988, pp. 1041-1044). Comprehension was measured on two levels: perceived language comprehension and perceived and actual message comprehension.

Firstly, rating scales were selected to measure perceived comprehension of the language used. The rating scales measured self-reports on the perceived level of language difficulty. Several studies used the following Likert scale in rating intelligibility (cf. Ryan & Bulik, 1982, p. 54; Ryan & Sebastian, 1980, p. 230; Stewart et al., 1985, p. 100):

The language is easy to understand.

In this study, a 3-item, 5-point semantic differential scale was used to measure language intelligibility. The relevant items for measuring language intelligibility, based on a scale constructed by Hoeken (1994, quoted in Maes et al., 1996, p. 208), were:

I find the language in the text  
simple – complicated  
clear – unclear  
difficult – easy

Secondly, perceived and actual message comprehension was measured via the use of a 2-item, 5-point Likert scale and multiple choice questions respectively. The Likert-scale items measuring perceived message comprehension were:

I find it easy to understand what the writer was trying to tell me.  
I find it difficult to understand what the writer was trying to tell me

The 3-option multiple choice questions measuring actual message comprehension were the following:

What is the writer's view on sleeping around?  
Sleeping around is a good thing ☐  
Sleeping around is good as long as you use a condom. ☐  
Sleeping around is not a good thing. ☐



- According to the writer, by sleeping around you can
- get many different partners. ☐
  - become very popular. ☐
  - get killed by AIDS. ☐

- The writer advises the reader to
- have more sex partners than the rest of the group. ☐
  - sleep every night with a new boy or girl. ☐
  - have one lover rather than being with different sex partners. ☐

- According to the writer, you can get HIV/AIDS by
- using a condom. ☐
  - having sex with only one partner. ☐
  - having sex with different partners. ☐

To check for the level of difficulty of the questionnaire, a 5-point scale was included near the end of the questionnaire:

Did you have difficulties in understanding the questions in the questionnaire?

no difficulties   1   2   3   4   5 many difficulties

#### *3.5.4.5 Checking appropriateness of language variety*

As was argued in 2.2, people have certain expectations about what constitutes appropriate language behaviour in a particular context. It is expected that participants would perceive the standard variety as more appropriate for the print media than the non-standard varieties.

To check whether participants would perceive the standard variety as more appropriate for the print media than the non-standard varieties, the following control item was included:

- I find the language in the text:
- inappropriate for written brochures on HIV/AIDS – appropriate for written brochures on HIV/AIDS
- (Cf. Chaiken & Eagly, 1976, p. 608.)

#### *3.5.4.6 Checking perceived language vitality of the different languages*

The term *vitality* here refers to the instrumental and symbolic functions served by a given language (or variety). The more functions and particularly the more high functions (e.g. as medium of instruction, language of the broadcast industry, language of parliament, etc.) a language or variety (such as the standard variety) serves, the greater its vitality (Ryan, Giles & Sebastian, 1982, p. 4). Three factors influence the perceived vitality of a language: status, demography and institutional support (Giles, Bourhis & Taylor, 1977).

The perceived vitality of a language could influence evaluations of the speaker's competence. It is expected that participants will perceive English and Afrikaans to be of high vitality, while Sepedi will be perceived as a low-vitality language. The premise that Afrikaans and English will be perceived to be of high vitality was based on the fact that these two languages were the only official languages before 1994 and that they enjoyed considerable institutional support and economic status. It is expected that speakers of Standard Afrikaans and Standard English could be perceived as being higher in competence than speakers of Sepedi.

Bourhis, Giles and Rosenthal (1981, pp. 151-155) developed a 22-item, subjective vitality questionnaire for ethnolinguistic groups. For this study, only perceived language status was measured. To measure the perceived status of Afrikaans, English and Sepedi (Northern Sotho), the following items were selected and measured on a 5-point scale, with 1 having the value "not at all important" and 5 "extremely high":

How important are the following languages in South Africa?  
Afrikaans / English / Sepedi (Northern Sotho)

How important are the following languages internationally?  
Afrikaans / English / Sepedi (Northern Sotho)

How important are the following languages in South African schools?  
Afrikaans / English / Sepedi (Northern Sotho)

#### ***3.5.5 Reliability and validity of measuring instrument***

Language attitude measures have for the past 35 years relied predominantly on the use of Likert-type and semantic differential scales (Bradac, 1990, p. 389). Ryan et al. (1988, p. 1076) argue that very few methodological developments

have occurred in language attitude research, explaining the predominant reliance on rating scales as language attitude measures. The situation has not changed much since.

In this study, the semantic differential and Likert-type scales also constitute the primary mode of measurement. Various rating scales have been standardised by their replication in a number of experimental studies. These standardised rating scales were employed where possible. A range of language variables was measured that could influence language attitudes, for which there were sometimes no (standardised) rating scales available. Where no standardised rating scales existed, multiple-item rating scales were developed on basis of the literature study and pilot studies conducted among the relevant participants.

Although rating scales constituted the major thrust of the mode of measurement in this study, they were combined with close- and open-ended questions. The open-ended questions can give one insight into the different evaluative profiles of speakers, and the processes of the evaluation itself (Garret et al., 2003, p. 65). By including close- and open-ended questions, cognizance has been taken of the criticism that language attitude research relies predominantly on rating scales.

Ryan et al. (1988, p. 1075) argue that in some language attitude studies the selection of rating scales is very much done in a haphazard manner, without taking into consideration the language and evaluative dimension the listeners use in everyday life. In this study, the items utilised in, for example, the language variety scale, acknowledge the “language and judgmental dimensions utilized by the *listeners* themselves in everyday social life” (Ryan et al., 1988, p. 119).

To further enhance the reliability of the measuring instruments in the questionnaire, standardised rating scales have been utilised, where possible (cf. Babbie, 2001, p. 812; Babbie & Mouton, 2002, p. 122). Furthermore, the balanced-scale technique was used in the questionnaire to enhance reliability (Maes et al., 1996, p. 207), namely to counteract response sets by the participants. With regard to the Likert scales, the items were not only positively formulated, but also negatively. With regard to the semantic-differential scales, the adjectives had different random orderings, with half of the positive adjectives on the left and half of the negative adjectives on the right (cf.

Carranza & Ryan, 1975, pp. 91-92; Giles & Sassoon, 1983, p. 308; Maes et al., 1996, pp. 207-8; Ryan & Carranza, 1975, p. 858).

To enhance construct validity (i.e. “the extent to which a scale, (...) or list of items measure the relevant construct and not something else” (Mouton, 2002, p. 128)), multiple-item scales were used for each variable to determine the degree to which these measures were consistent. To determine the internal reliability among multiple indicators for the same construct, the Cronbach’s alpha test was used. In obvious and straightforward items (such as sex of the source), single-item measures were used.

Babbie and Mouton (2002, p. 124) argue that researchers should also look at their participants “as sources of agreement on the most useful meanings and measurements of the concepts they study”. To enhance the extent to which the items used in the scales measured what was intended, the questionnaire was pilot tested by means of the think-aloud technique. Ellsworth and Gonzalez (2003, p. 27) argue that pilot testing is very much under-emphasised in discussions of research methods.

The rating scales were pre-tested among the participants and, where needed, alternative lexical items suggested by the participants were included in the study.

The first think-aloud was conducted among four Sepedi learners. The learners were required to read the questionnaire aloud and to verbalise their thoughts when they encountered problems. The learners were then asked to suggest improvements for the problematic items. The problems that were encountered were intelligibility problems. (See Appendix I for a detailed discussion of the problems that the Sepedi learners encountered and their suggested improvements. The intelligibility problems the participants encountered with the scales measuring standardness and formality were discussed in 3.4.2 and are not reported again in Appendix I.)

The questionnaire was revised on the basis of the improvements suggested above, and a second (and last) think-aloud was conducted among four Afrikaans learners. Only a few improvements were suggested (see Appendix J for these suggested improvements).

(For an example of the complete questionnaire used in the experimental study, see Appendix K.)

### 3.5.6 Other questionnaire design issues

The following design issues were addressed:

- (a) In this study, preference is given to the 5-point scale (as opposed to a 7-point, 8-point or 9-point scale). The selection of a 5-point scale was informed by the following:
- In most speaker evaluation studies, 5-point and 7-point scales have been used (Garrett et al., 2003, p. 41). Many researchers also prefer the 5-point or 7-point scale because “they allow respondents to indicate shades of gray in their opinions, but do not provide so many categories that people feel overwhelmed by choices” (Perloff, 2003, p. 104). In this study, preference is given to the 5-point scale.
  - The 5-point scale is an uneven scale with a neutral value of 3. In even scales, the participant has to make a positive or negative judgement, with no room for a neutral value (Maes et al., 1996, p. 206).
  - In a 5-point scale, the difference among the various values (1–5) is quite clear and obvious, while in a 7-point, 8-point or 9-point scale, the difference among the values becomes very subtle and difficult to distinguish. The values on a 5-point scale are easy to explain:

The following values were allocated to the 5-point Likert scales:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

For the semantic differential scale, the following values were allocated to the 5-point bipolar adjectival scales:

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much
1	2	3	4	5

- (b) The questionnaire included instructions on how to complete the different rating scales. For each of the two rating scales, examples were provided on how to complete the scales, for example:

You will get the following kinds of questions:

**The first kind of question you will be asked looks like this:**

*I find the text interesting.*

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

If you find the text very much **un**interesting, you will tick (✓) *strongly disagree*.  
If you find the text somewhat **un**interesting, you will tick *disagree*.  
If you find the text neither **un**interesting nor *interesting*, you will tick *neutral*.  
If you find the text somewhat *interesting*, you will tick *agree*.  
If you find the text very much *interesting*, you will tick *strongly agree*.

## The second kind of question you will be asked looks like this:

*I find the text:*

	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	
interesting						uninteresting

(First block) (Second block) (Middle block) (Fourth block) (Last block)

If you find the text very much *interesting*, you will tick (✓) the first block from the left.

If you find the text somewhat *interesting*, you will tick the second block from the left.

If you find the text neither *interesting* nor *uninteresting* you will tick the middle block.

If you find the text somewhat *uninteresting*, you will tick the fourth block from the left.

If you find the text very much *uninteresting*, you will tick the last block from the left.

**Please note that in some cases the positive item (for example *interesting*) appears on the right-hand side, while the negative item (for example *uninteresting*) appears on the left-hand side. For example:**

*I find the writer:*

	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	
uninteresting						interesting

(First block) (Second block) (Middle block) (Fourth block) (Last block)

If you find the writer very much *uninteresting*, you will tick (✓) the first block from the left.

If you find the writer somewhat *uninteresting*, you will tick the second block from the left.

If you find the writer neither *interesting* nor *uninteresting* you will tick the middle block.

If you find the writer somewhat *interesting*, you will tick the fourth block from the left.

If you find the writer very much *interesting*, you will tick the last block from the left.

- (c) The order of the semantic bipolar scale was reversed for part of the questionnaire. This was to counter ordering and fatigue effects (Garrett et al., 2003, p. 52).
- (d) The questionnaire was only conducted in English, for obvious practical reasons. English is for the Afrikaans and Sepedi participants their second language at school. In the case of the Sepedi participants, it is also the language of learning and teaching. Given that for some of the participants English is their first language, the questionnaire was pilot

tested among the Afrikaans and Sepedi participants to identify and provide suitable alternatives for intelligibility problems. The selection of English as the language of the experiment is motivated by the fact that the translation of the scale items into Afrikaans and Sepedi could have caused problems in the sense that the meaning of some of the original items could have been lost in translation. To control for the level of language difficulty of the questionnaire, a 5-point scale was included.

## **Summary**

In this chapter, it was indicated how participants were sampled and how the experiment was set up. Specific attention was given to how the stimulus texts were constructed. The selection of the measuring instruments (a combination of Likert-type scales, semantic differential scales, and close- and open-ended questions) was then explained. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the reliability and validity of the measuring instrument, followed by other design issues (such as the reason for selecting a 5-point scale and the use of English as language of choice for the questionnaire). In the next chapter, the findings of the experiment are discussed.



## CHAPTER 4: Findings of experimental research

### Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the experimental studies are reported. Firstly, the internal reliabilities for those scales where multiple items were used, are reported. This is followed by the results of the multivariate analysis of variance tests (MANOVAs) pertaining to the hypotheses, text manipulations and the control variables. These MANOVAs have been conducted for each of the four different language groups (i.e. Coloured Afrikaans, White Afrikaans, Sepedi and English groups). Thirdly, the results of the interaction analyses, with independent variables *language variety* and *language group*, are then highlighted. Finally, the relations between the factors in the message effect model are explored by way of correlation analyses and regression analysis.

### 4.1 Determining internal reliabilities

The internal reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha) for the multi-item scales were as follows:

Table 4.1 Reliabilities for multi-item scales as per language group

	Coloured Afrikaans	White Afrikaans	English	Sepedi
<b>Manipulation checks</b>				
Standardness/Formality	.65	.78	.86	.71
<b>Language perceptions</b>				
Language variety similarity	.80	.86	.90	.72
Violation of language expectations	.60	.57	.72	.37
<b>Source's similarity</b>				
Attitudinal similarity	.70	.79	.82	.79
Value similarity	.71	.54	.71	.62
Background similarity	.67	.65	.70	.68
Source's in-group identification	.74	.81	.79	.74
<b>Affective effects</b>				
Pleasure	.65	.75	.73	.70
Arousal	.31	.59	.58	.29
Language attention	.79	.87	.85	.68
Awareness of group identity	.42	.64	.46	.63
<b>Persuasion-related source characteristics</b>				
Source expertise	.82	.88	.87	.74
Source trustworthiness	.72	.73	.70	.75
Social attractiveness	.74	.87	.76	.77
<b>Message acceptance</b>	.85	.95	.91	.76
<b>Background variables</b>				
Attitude towards behaviour	.72	.85	.90	.75
Normative beliefs	.67	.79	.80	.71
Behavioural control	.64	.74	.73	.74
Receiver's in-group identity	.79	.77	.85	.75
<b>Accommodation indicators</b>				
External pressure	.55	.72	.75	.33
<b>Comprehensibility</b>				
Text comprehension	.40	-.03	.72	.40
Language comprehension	.72	.80	.84	.72
<b>Perceived vitality</b>				
Afrikaans	.68	.62	.76	.67
English	.66	.58	.29	.78
Sepedi	.61	.66	.64	.69

Items that produced a negative correlation with the other items in the scale were omitted (see Appendix L).

The scale was considered to be of an adequate reliability, if Cronbach's alpha was .65 or higher. Multi-item scales with low reliabilities (i.e. Cronbach's  $\alpha < .65$ ) have been entered as separate items in the MANOVAs.

## **4.2 Manipulation checks and tests of hypotheses**

MANOVAs have been conducted to determine the effect of language variety on language perceptions, perceived source-receiver similarities, affective effects and persuasion-related source characteristic. To determine the effect of language variety on acceptance of the message's claim, univariate analyses have been conducted. The testing of the hypotheses is discussed per language group. To perform *post hoc* comparisons, Pairwise Comparisons were used.

In the case of the nominal scale measuring the perceptions of the source as teenager or adult, the Chi-square test was used. In the analyses the minimum score is 1, and the maximum 5.

### **4.2.1 Coloured Afrikaans**

The results for Coloured Afrikaans were as follows:

#### **4.2.1.1 *Language perceptions***

It was hypothesised that the authentic slang version would be perceived as more similar to participants' own communication style than the loveLife variety and Standard Afrikaans would be (i.e. hypothesis 1b). It was also hypothesised that participants would perceive the use of authentic slang as a more positive violation of language expectations than the loveLife variety (i.e. hypothesis 1a).

Furthermore, a check was done whether the slang varieties would be considered less standard/formal than Standard Afrikaans, whether the writers of the non-standard varieties were perceived as making more of an effort and as being under more external pressure to perform the language behaviour compared to the writer of the standard variety, and lastly whether Standard Afrikaans was perceived as more appropriate for use in brochures than the non-standard varieties.

Table 4.2 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on standardness/formality, similarity in language use, violation of language expectations, external pressure on writer, effort by writer and appropriateness of language use as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 29)	Authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang (n = 50)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 27)
Standardness/formality	2.18 (0.15)	1.59 (0.12)	2.88 (0.16)
Similar language use	3.16 (0.16)	4.08 (0.12)	3.82 (0.17)
Language expectations			
Expect language	3.31 (0.30)	2.68 (0.23)	3.52 (0.31)
Not be surprised to find language	2.69 (0.28)	2.30 (0.21)	2.93 (0.29)
External pressure on writer			
Told by boss	2.97 (0.22)	3.10 (0.17)	2.74 (0.23)
Under pressure	1.97 (0.20)	2.26 (0.15)	2.19 (0.20)
Effort by writer	3.83 (0.20)	3.88 (0.15)	3.81 (0.21)
Appropriate language use	4.28 (0.24)	3.68 (0.19)	4.48 (0.25)

As predicted, there was a main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .486$ ,  $F(16,192) = 5.22$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .30$ ). Subsequent univariate analyses revealed significant effects for perceived language standardness/formality ( $F(2,103) = 22.05$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .30$ ), similar language use ( $F(2,103) = 10.25$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .17$ ) and language appropriateness ( $F(2,103) = 3.92$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .07$ ). There was a trend towards an effect of language variety on violation of language expectations ( $F(2,103) = 2.79$ ,  $p = .07$ ,  $\eta^2 = .05$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that in the case of perceived language standardness/formality, the standard variety was considered more standard/formal than the loveLife and authentic slang varieties, whereas the loveLife variety was considered more standard/formal than the authentic slang variety.

In the case of the perceived similarity in language use, hypothesis 1b was partially supported in that authentic slang *and* Standard Afrikaans were seen as more similar than the loveLife variety.

With regard to the appropriateness of the language variety in the brochure, the authentic slang was considered less appropriate for use in brochures than Standard Afrikaans. There was a trend ( $p = .05$ ) to also perceive authentic slang as less appropriate for use in brochures than the loveLife variety.

Hypothesis 1a regarding the violation of language expectations was not supported, but there was a trend to perceive authentic slang as more of a violation of language expectations than the standard variety. In determining whether this trend for violation could be regarded as positive or negative, the responses to the close-ended question *Do you like the language used in the text?* were analysed

Table 4.3      Frequency of participants' (dis)liking of the variety as function of the loveLife variety, authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans

	loveLife variety (n = 29)	Authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang (n = 50)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 27)
Like the variety	23	41	24
Dislike the variety	3	6	0
Do not know	3	3	3

There was no significant effect of language variety ( $\chi^2(4) = 4.00, p = .41$ ). When comparing participants' responses to the question whether (or not) they would like the non-standard varieties, it is evident that Coloured Afrikaans participants indicated a clear liking for all the varieties. Given the trend for authentic slang to be perceived as more of a violation of language expectations, it could be concluded that authentic slang would have the potential to be considered a positive violation of participants' language expectations.

To determine why the Coloured Afrikaans group liked these varieties, coding for frequency (conducted by the researcher) was used for the responses to the question *Do you like the language used in the text? Give one reason why you say so.* The analysis revealed the following most frequent reasons for liking the

language variety:

loveLife variety

- Easy to understand (28%)
- Relate to language (21%)

Authentic slang

- The way we speak (54%)
- Easy to understand (24%)

Standard Afrikaans

- Easy to understand (56%)
- Similar language use (11%)

#### 4.2.1.2 *Perceptions of source-receiver similarities*

It was hypothesised that authentic teenager slang will result in the writer being perceived more as an in-group member, and as more similar in attitude, value and background than in the case of the loveLife variety and Standard Afrikaans (i.e. hypothesis 2).

Table 4.4 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on writer's in-group identification, similar attitude, value and background as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 29)	Authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang (n = 50)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 27)
In-group identification	3.85 (0.12)	4.04 (0.09)	4.03 (0.12)
Similar attitude	2.97 (0.17)	3.70 (0.13)	3.46 (0.17)
Similar values	2.86 (0.22)	3.70 (0.17)	3.67 (0.23)
Similar background	2.67 (0.14)	3.28 (0.10)	3.15 (0.14)

As predicted, there was a main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .851$ ,  $F(8,200) = 2.10$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .08$ ). Subsequent univariate analyses revealed

significant effects for similar attitude ( $F(2,103) = 6.08, p < .01, \eta^2 = .11$ ), similar values ( $F(2,103) = 5.13, p < .01, \eta^2 = .09$ ) and similar background ( $F(2,103) = 6.58, p < .01, \eta^2 = .11$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that participants considered the writer of authentic slang and Standard Afrikaans as more similar in attitude, value and background than the writer of the loveLife variety. Hypothesis 2 was only partially supported.

Participants' perception of the source as someone who identified with the teenager group, does not imply that they viewed the source as also being a teenager. To check whether participants perceived the source as a teenager, a 1-item bipolar scale (*adult-teenager*) was included. The Chi-square test revealed that there was no significant effect of language variety ( $\chi^2(4) = 5.10, p = .20$ ).

#### 4.2.1.3 *Affective effects*

It was hypothesised that the authentic slang version will evoke more feelings of pleasure, arousal, and language attention, and would make teenager identities more salient compared to the Standard Afrikaans and loveLife variety versions (i.e. hypothesis 3).

Table 4.5 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on participants' feelings of pleasure, arousal, language attention and the salience of teenager identities as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 29)	Authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang (n = 50)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 27)
Pleasure	3.77 (0.14)	3.98 (0.11)	4.02 (0.15)
Arousal			
Active	3.35 (0.24)	3.72 (0.19)	3.78 (0.25)
Wide-awake	4.17 (0.21)	4.04 (0.16)	4.26 (0.22)
Excited	2.62 (0.30)	2.90 (0.23)	2.59 (0.31)
Full of energy	3.90 (0.20)	3.86 (0.15)	3.93 (0.21)
Stimulated	2.38 (0.26)	2.52 (0.20)	2.15 (0.27)
Language attention	4.14 (0.15)	4.15 (0.12)	4.21 (0.16)
Salience of teenager identity			
Feel like a teenager	3.93 (0.17)	4.34 (0.13)	4.37 (0.18)
Aware of being a teenager	3.97 (0.17)	4.42 (0.13)	4.59 (0.18)

Hypothesis 3 was not supported. There was no main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .874$ ,  $F(18,190) < 1$ ,  $p = .77$ ).

In determining why participants found the text versions pleasant/enjoyable, coding for frequency was conducted on the responses to the question: *Did you enjoy reading the text? Give one reason why you say so.* The most frequent reasons were:

#### loveLife variety

- Learned something (62%)
- Interesting (17%)

#### Authentic slang

- Learned something (42%)
- Interesting (30%)



## Standard Afrikaans

- Learned something (32%)
- Interesting (22%)

Coloured Afrikaans participants tended to enjoy the texts mostly because of their educational value.

### 4.2.1.4 Persuasion-related source characteristics

It was hypothesised that the participants will perceive the writer of the authentic slang version as more socially attractive and trustworthy than the writer of the loveLife variety and Standard Afrikaans (i.e. hypothesis 4a). Furthermore, it was hypothesised that the writer of the standard variety will be perceived as more of an expert than the writer of the loveLife variety and of the authentic slang variety (i.e. hypothesis 4b).

Table 4.6 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on the perceived social attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise of the writer as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 29)	Authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang (n = 50)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 27)
Writer's social attractiveness	3.49 (0.17)	3.69 (0.13)	3.82 (0.17)
Writer's trustworthiness	3.89 (0.13)	4.00 (0.10)	4.15 (0.14)
Writer's expertise	4.05 (0.14)	4.25 (0.10)	4.25 (0.14)

Hypotheses 4a and 4b were not supported. There was no main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .964$ ,  $F(6,202) < 1$ ,  $p = .71$ ).

The responses to the question *If your friend asks you who the writer of the text is, how will you describe the writer? Give two characteristics* attested to the above finding of the source as an expert. The two most frequent source descriptions listed in all three language variety conditions were:

- Knowledgeable and experienced (33% to 41%)
- Caring (34% to 44%)

In determining the most frequent reasons why participants were socially attracted to the writer, the participants' responses to the question *Would you regard the writer as a friend? Give one reason why you say so* were coded for frequency. The following reasons were listed frequently:

#### loveLife variety

- Writer gives good advice (28%)
- Writer has similar viewpoint (14%)

#### Authentic slang

- Writer gives good advice (24%)
- Writer is caring (20%)

#### Standard Afrikaans

- Writer gives good advice (33%)
- Writer is caring (7%)
- Writer is honest (7%)

From this it seems that participants were socially attracted to the writer because of competence-related traits.

#### 4.2.1.5 *Perceived acceptance of the message's claim*

It was hypothesised that participants who read the authentic slang and Standard Afrikaans versions would be more inclined to accept the claim made in the message than those who read the loveLife variety (i.e. hypothesis 5).

Table 4.7 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on the perceived acceptance of the message's claim as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 29)	Authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang (n = 50)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 27)
Message acceptance	4.41 (0.12)	4.50 (0.09)	4.75 (0.13)

Hypothesis 5 was not supported. There was no main effect of language variety ( $F(2,103) = 2.09, p = .13$ ).

#### 4.2.2 White Afrikaans

The results for White Afrikaans were as follows:

##### 4.2.2.1 *Language perceptions*

It was hypothesised that the authentic slang version would be perceived as more similar to participants' own communication style than the loveLife variety and Standard Afrikaans versions would (i.e. hypothesis 1b), and that participants would perceive the use of authentic slang as a more positive violation of language expectations than the loveLife variety (i.e. hypothesis 1a).

It was also checked whether the slang varieties would be considered less standard/formal than Standard Afrikaans, whether the writers of the non-standard varieties would be perceived as making more of an effort and as being under more external pressure to perform the language behaviour compared to the writer of Standard Afrikaans, and whether Standard Afrikaans would be perceived as more appropriate for use in brochures than the non-standard varieties.

Table 4.8 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on standardness/formality, similarity in language use, violation of language expectations, external pressure on writer, effort by writer and appropriateness of language use as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic White Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 46)	Authentic White Afrikaans slang (n = 55)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 48)
Standardness/formality	2.23 (0.14)	1.20 (0.13)	3.21 (0.13)
Similar language use	2.79 (0.15)	2.77 (0.14)	2.88 (0.15)
Language expectations			
Expect language	2.96 (0.21)	2.69 (0.19)	3.65 (0.20)
Not be surprised to find language	2.54 (0.20)	2.24 (0.18)	3.27 (0.19)
External pressure on writer	2.89 (0.15)	2.66 (0.13)	2.80 (0.14)
Effort by writer	3.15 (0.17)	3.31 (0.16)	3.19 (0.17)
Appropriate language use	3.22 (0.20)	3.49 (0.18)	3.83 (0.20)

As predicted, there was a main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .695$ ,  $F(14,280) = 3.98$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .17$ ). Separate univariate analyses revealed significant effects for perceived language standardness/formality ( $F(2,146) = 24.14$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .25$ ) and violation of language expectations ( $F(2,146) = 6.26$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .08$ ). There was a trend towards an effect of language variety on appropriateness of language use ( $F(2,146) = 2.41$ ,  $p = .09$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that in the case of perceived language standardness/formality, the standard variety was considered more standard/formal than the loveLife and authentic slang varieties.

Hypothesis 1b was not supported. Participants tended to view (all) three language varieties as not very similar to their communication style.

With regard to the appropriateness of the language variety in the brochure, there was a trend to perceive the standard variety as more appropriate for use in the brochure than the loveLife variety.

In the case of the violation of language expectations, the non-standard

varieties (authentic slang and the loveLife variety) were considered more of a violation of participants' language expectations than Standard Afrikaans. In determining whether this violation could be regarded as positive or negative, the responses to the close-ended question *Do you like the language used in the text?* were coded for frequency.

Table 4.9      Frequency of participants' (dis)liking of the variety as function of the loveLife variety, authentic White Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans

	loveLife variety (n = 46)	Authentic White Afrikaans slang (n = 55)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 47)
Like the variety	21	21	28
Dislike the variety	15	22	14
Do not know	10	12	5

No significant effect of language variety was found ( $\chi^2(4) = 5.51, p = .24$ ). When comparing participants' responses to the question whether (or not) they would like the non-standard varieties, it was apparent that White Afrikaans participants did not perceive the authentic slang version as a more positive violation of their language expectations compared to the loveLife variety. Hypothesis 1a was therefore not supported. The large number of participants (more than 20%) who were unsure whether they would like the non-standard varieties, was interesting.

In determining the reasons why the White Afrikaans group tended to show a disliking for the non-standard varieties, participants' responses to the question why they don't like the variety, were coded for frequency. The most frequent reason given for disliking the varieties was as follows:

loveLife variety:

- Inappropriate language use (11%)

Authentic slang:

- Inappropriate language use (24%)

As participants in the non-standard variety conditions pointed out:

- there's "too much slang"
- it "makes you sound stupid"
- it is "unprofessional", "not normal" and "not appropriate"
- there is "no need to speak like that"
- "the language should be standard/normal"
- it "sounds like you don't care"
- the writer "tries too hard to sound hip"

For the Standard Afrikaans group, no frequent reason was found why participants would dislike the standard variety. On the contrary, 30% of the participants indicated that they liked Standard Afrikaans because it was easy to understand.

#### 4.2.2.2 *Perceptions of source-receiver similarities*

Hypothesis 2 predicts that authentic teenager slang will result in the writer being perceived more as an in-group member, as more similar in attitude, value and background, than the writer of the loveLife variety and Standard Afrikaans would. This hypothesis was not supported (Wilks'  $\lambda = .934$ ,  $F(10,284) < 1$ ,  $p = .46$ ).

Table 4.10 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on writer's in-group identification, similar attitude, value and background as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic White Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 46)	Authentic White Afrikaans slang (n = 55)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 48)
In-group identification	3.54 (0.11)	3.53 (0.10)	3.41 (0.11)
Similar attitude	2.98 (0.15)	2.91 (0.13)	3.19 (0.14)
Similar values			
Principles like mine	3.57 (0.18)	3.38 (0.17)	3.73 (0.18)
Sexual attitudes like mine	3.50 (0.19)	3.40 (0.17)	3.33 (0.18)
Similar background	2.98 (0.10)	2.82 (0.09)	2.98 (0.10)

The Chi-square test conducted on the *adult-teenager* bipolar scale revealed that there was no significant effect of language variety ( $\chi^2(4) = 6.41, p = .17$ ).

#### 4.2.2.3 *Affective effects*

The hypothesis that the authentic slang version will evoke more feelings of pleasure, arousal, and attention for the language, as well as making teenager identities more salient compared to the Standard Afrikaans and loveLife variety versions (i.e. hypothesis 3) was not supported (Wilks'  $\lambda = .822, F(18,276) = 1.57, p = .07$ ):

Table 4.11 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on participants' feelings of pleasure, arousal, language attention and the salience of teenager identities as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic White Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 46)	Authentic White Afrikaans slang (n = 55)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 48)
Pleasure	3.36 (0.12)	3.25 (0.11)	3.47 (0.12)
Arousal			
Active	3.17 (0.18)	2.96 (0.17)	3.23 (0.18)
Wide-awake	3.09 (0.21)	3.22 (0.19)	2.58 (0.20)
Excited	2.85 (0.19)	2.56 (0.18)	2.94 (0.19)
Full of energy	2.98 (0.19)	3.22 (0.17)	3.10 (0.18)
Stimulated	2.44 (0.17)	2.75 (0.15)	2.71 (0.16)
Language attention	3.13 (0.15)	3.38 (0.14)	3.27 (0.15)
Salience of teenager identity			
Feel like a teenager	3.65 (0.17)	3.36 (0.15)	3.73 (0.17)
Aware of being a teenager	3.72 (0.17)	3.80 (0.16)	3.50 (0.17)

Participants' responses to the question why they would enjoy the language variety, revealed the following:

loveLife variety

- Interesting (17%)
- Use of slang (11%)

Authentic slang

- Interesting (20%)
- Learn new things (13%)

Standard Afrikaans

- Interesting (17%)
- Learned something (15%)



White Afrikaans participants tended to enjoy all three language varieties mainly because of their entertainment and educational value. It is however not clear from participants' responses which aspect of the text they found "interesting".

4.2.2.4 *Persuasion-related source characteristics*

Hypothesis 4 predicts that the participants will perceive the writer of the authentic slang version as more socially attractive and trustworthy than the writer of the loveLife variety and of the Standard Afrikaans (i.e. hypothesis 4a), and that the writer of Standard Afrikaans will be perceived as more of an expert than the writer of the loveLife variety and of authentic slang (i.e. hypothesis 4b). Both these hypotheses were not supported (Wilks'  $\lambda = .983$ ,  $F(6,288) < 1$ ,  $p = .87$ ):

Table 4.12 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on the perceived social attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise of the writer as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic White Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 46)	Authentic White Afrikaans slang (n = 55)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 48)
Writer's social attractiveness	2.96 (0.15)	2.90 (0.13)	2.92 (0.14)
Writer's trustworthiness	3.45 (0.11)	3.51 (0.11)	3.50 (0.11)
Writer's expertise	3.46 (0.15)	3.51 (0.13)	3.65 (0.14)

In coding participants' responses to the question on source descriptions, the following two descriptions emerged in all the language variety groups:

- Knowledgeable and experienced (26% to 33%)
- Caring (20% to 23%)

These source descriptions correspond to those listed by the Coloured Afrikaans participants.

In coding for frequency of the reasons why participants were socially attracted to the writer, the following reasons were the most frequent:

#### loveLife variety

- Writer gives good advice (7%)
- Similar viewpoint (7%)
- Use of slang (7%)

#### Authentic slang

- Writer gives good advice (9%)
- Writer is caring (4%)

#### Standard Afrikaans

- Writer gives good advice (6%)
- Similar values (6%)

From participants' responses it seems that the knowledgeability and similarity of the writer could be an important factor for the writer's social attractiveness. White Afrikaans participants, however, tended to have a more neutral stance about the writer's social attractiveness (the means varied from 2.90 to 2.96, with 3 as the mid-point on a 5-point scale). This was confirmed in these participants' responses to the close-ended question *Would you regard the writer as a friend?* No less than 43% of White Afrikaans participants (in all the language variety groups) indicated that they did not know whether they would want to befriend the writer. The most frequent reason listed was that they did not know the writer, and was therefore unsure whether they would want to befriend the writer. White Afrikaans participants also listed the unfamiliarity of the writer ("don't know him") as the most common reason for not being socially attracted to the writer. White Afrikaans participants' unfamiliarity with the writer could be the result of a weak identification with the writer.

#### 4.2.2.5 *Perceived acceptance of the message's claim*

The hypothesis that participants who read the authentic slang and Standard Afrikaans versions will be more inclined to accept the claim made in the message than those who read the loveLife variety (i.e. hypothesis 5), was not supported ( $F(2,146) < 1, p = .42$ ):

Table 4.13 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on the perceived acceptance of the message's claim as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic White Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 46)	Authentic White Afrikaans slang (n = 55)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 48)
Message acceptance	4.27 (0.13)	4.49 (0.12)	4.35 (0.12)

### 4.2.3 English

The results for English were as follows:

#### 4.2.3.1 *Language perceptions*

As for the other language groups, it was hypothesised that the authentic slang version would be perceived as more similar to participants' own communication style compared to the loveLife and standard varieties (i.e. hypothesis 1b), and that participants would perceive the use of authentic slang as a more positive violation of language expectations than the loveLife variety (i.e. hypothesis 1a).

It was further checked whether the slang varieties would be considered less standard/formal than Standard English, whether the writers of the non-standard varieties would be perceived as making more of an effort and as being under more external pressure to perform the language behaviour, compared to the writer of the standard variety, and whether Standard English would be perceived as more appropriate for use in brochures than the non-standard varieties.

Table 4.14 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on standardness/formality, similarity in language use, violation of language expectations, external pressure on writer, effort by writer and appropriateness of language use as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic English slang and Standard English (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 52)	Authentic English slang (n = 55)	Standard English (n = 54)
Standardness/formality	1.87 (0.12)	1.70 (0.11)	3.17 (0.12)
Similar language use	2.65 (0.14)	3.02 (0.14)	2.69 (0.14)
Language expected	2.53 (0.15)	2.20 (0.15)	3.33 (0.15)
External pressure on writer	3.05 (0.15)	2.91 (0.14)	2.57 (0.15)
Effort by writer	3.37 (0.16)	3.38 (0.16)	3.22 (0.16)
Appropriate language use	3.15 (0.18)	3.16 (0.17)	3.50 (0.18)

As predicted, there was a main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .548$ ,  $F(12,306) = 8.95$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .26$ ). Separate univariate analyses revealed significant effects for perceived language standardness/formality ( $F(2,158) = 48.93$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .38$ ) and violation of language expectations ( $F(2,158) = 14.91$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .16$ ). There was a trend towards an effect of language variety on the perceived external pressure of the writer in performing the language behaviour ( $F(2,158) = 2.76$ ,  $p = .07$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that in the case of perceived language standardness/formality, the standard variety was considered more standard/formal than the loveLife and authentic slang varieties. Participants also tended to perceive the writer of the loveLife text as being under more external pressure to perform the language behaviour, compared to the writer of the Standard English text.

Hypothesis 1b (i.e. the perceived similarity in language use) was not supported. Participants tended to view (all) three language varieties as not very similar to their communication style.

As far as the violation of language expectations is concerned, the non-standard varieties (authentic slang and the loveLife variety) were considered more of a violation of language expectations than Standard English. In

determining whether this violation could be regarded as positive or negative, the responses to the close-ended question *Do you like the language used in the text?* were coded for frequency.

Table 4.15      Frequency of participants’ (dis)liking of the variety as function of the loveLife variety, authentic English slang and Standard English

	loveLife variety (n = 53)	Authentic English slang (n = 55)	Standard English (n = 54)
Like the variety	19	23	28
Dislike the variety	21	18	5
Do not know	13	14	21

There was a significant effect of language variety ( $\chi^2 (4) = 14.00, p < .01$ ). English participants indicated a greater disliking for the non-standard varieties than the standard variety. Similar to the White Afrikaans participants, the English participants also did not perceive the authentic slang as a more positive violation than the loveLife variety. Instead, the non-standard varieties were both perceived as a negative violation of their language expectations. Hypothesis 1a was therefore not supported.

In determining the reasons why English participants showed a disliking for the non-standard varieties, participants’ responses as to why they did not like that variety corresponded with those of the White Afrikaans participants. The most frequent reasons for disliking the non-standard varieties were as follows:

loveLife variety

- Inappropriate language use (17%)
- Do not use the language (15%)

Authentic slang

- Inappropriate language use (18%)
- Do not use the language (7%)

In the non-standard variety groups, participants’ responses included, inter alia, that:

- there is “too much slang”
- they “prefer better English”
- the variety is “not appropriate for pamphlets”
- the variety is “not formal enough for such a serious topic”
- it “sounds gangsta like”
- it “is informal and message will not be taken seriously”

The most frequent reasons listed as to why participants liked Standard English were that it was easy to understand (28%), they could relate to it (11%), and it was appropriate (11%).

4.2.3.2      *Perceptions of source-receiver similarities*

The hypothesis that authentic teenager slang will result in the writer thereof being perceived as more of an in-group member, as more similar in attitude, value and background, compared to the loveLife variety and Standard English (i.e. hypothesis 2), was not supported (Wilks’  $\lambda = .962$ ,  $F(8,312) < 1$ ,  $p = .64$ ):

Table 4.16      Mean scores (and Standard Error) on writer’s in-group identification, similar attitude, value and background as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic English slang and Standard English (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 53)	Authentic English slang (n = 55)	Standard English (n = 54)
In-group identification	3.10 (0.10)	3.31 (0.10)	3.12 (0.10)
Similar attitude	2.97 (0.13)	2.91 (0.13)	2.76 (0.13)
Similar values	3.64 (0.15)	3.58 (0.15)	3.50 (0.15)
Similar background	3.05 (0.09)	3.05 (0.09)	2.87 (0.09)

The Chi-square test conducted on the *adult-teenager* bipolar scale revealed that

there was no significant effect of language variety ( $\chi^2(4) = 1.44, p = .84$ ).

4.2.3.3 *Affective effects*

Hypothesis 3 predicts that the authentic slang version will evoke more feelings of pleasure, arousal, and attention for the language, and will make teenager identities more salient, compared to Standard English and the loveLife variety. Hypothesis 3 was not supported (Wilks'  $\lambda = .880, F(18,296) = 1.09, p = .36$ ):

Table 4.17 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on participants' feelings of pleasure, arousal, language attention and the salience of teenager identities as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic English slang and Standard English (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 52)	Authentic English slang (n = 54)	Standard English (n = 53)
Pleasure	3.26 (0.10)	3.13 (0.09)	3.15 (0.10)
Arousal			
Active	2.89 (0.14)	2.72 (0.13)	2.94 (0.13)
Wide-awake	2.60 (0.17)	2.89 (0.16)	2.93 (0.16)
Excited	2.19 (0.14)	2.39 (0.14)	2.40 (0.14)
Full of energy	2.85 (0.14)	2.82 (0.14)	3.00 (0.14)
Stimulated	2.69 (0.13)	2.48 (0.13)	2.42 (0.13)
Language attention	3.05 (0.12)	3.37 (0.12)	3.18 (0.12)
Salience of teenager identity			
Feel like a teenager	3.62 (0.14)	3.65 (0.14)	3.55 (0.14)
Aware of being a teenager	3.62 (0.13)	3.82 (0.12)	3.57 (0.13)

Similar to the White Afrikaans participants, the English participants' responses to the question on text enjoyment revealed the following two most frequent reasons:

- loveLife variety
- Interesting (13%)
- Learned something (11%)

### Authentic slang

- Interesting (25%)
- Learned something (11%)

### Standard English

- Interesting (11%)
- Learned something (9%)

Similar to the White Afrikaans participants, the English participants also tended to enjoy all three language varieties because of the entertainment and, to a lesser extent, the educational value of the texts.

#### 4.2.3.4 *Persuasion-related source characteristics*

Hypothesis 4a predicts that the participants will perceive the writer of the authentic slang version as more socially attractive and trustworthy than the writers of the loveLife and standard variety versions. Furthermore, it was hypothesised that the writer of Standard English will be perceived as more of an expert compared to the writer of the loveLife variety and the authentic slang variety (i.e. hypothesis 4b).

Table 4.18 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on the perceived social attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise of the writer as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic English slang and Standard English (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 53)	Authentic English slang (n = 55)	Standard English (n = 54)
Writer's social attractiveness	2.74 (0.12)	3.03 (0.12)	2.90 (0.12)
Writer's trustworthiness	3.48 (0.09)	3.42 (0.09)	3.60 (0.09)
Writer's expertise	3.66 (0.12)	3.34 (0.12)	3.71 (0.12)

Hypotheses 4a and 4b were thus not supported. There was no main effect of language variety; however, there was a trend towards an effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .926$ ,  $F(6,314) = 2.06$ ,  $p = .06$ ). Separate univariate analyses



revealed a trend towards an effect of language variety on the writer's expertise ( $F(2,159) = 3.04, p = .05$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that participants tended to view the writer of Standard English and (to a lesser extent the writer of the loveLife variety) as more competent than the writer of the authentic slang text.

Similarly to the Coloured Afrikaans and White Afrikaans participants, the English participants listed the following two source descriptions most frequently in all the language variety groups:

- Knowledgeable and experienced (26% to 39%)
- Caring (26% to 35%)

Similar to the White Afrikaans participants, the English participants listed the following reasons most frequently as to why participants would find the writer socially attractive:

#### loveLife variety

- Similar views (8%)
- Writer gives good advice (4%)

#### Authentic slang

- Similar morals (4%)
- Writer gives good advice (4%)
- Writer is caring (4%)

#### Standard English

- Similar views (7%)
- Writer gives good advice (6%)

From participants' responses it seems that the knowledgeability and similarity of the writer could be an important factor for the writer's social attractiveness. Similar to the White Afrikaans participants, the English participants also tended to have a more neutral stance about the writer's social attractiveness (the means varied from 2.74 to 3.03, with 3 the mid-point on a 5-point scale). The most frequent reason listed for participants being unsure whether they would want to befriend the writer, was that they did not know the writer.

English participants also listed the unfamiliarity of the writer (“don’t know him”) as the most common reason for not being socially attracted to the writer. English participants’ uncertainty to befriend the writer could be the result of their weak identification with the writer.

4.2.3.5 *Perceived acceptance of the message’s claim*

Hypothesis 5 (i.e. that participants who read the authentic slang and Standard English versions will be more inclined to accept the claim made in the message than those who read the loveLife variety), was not supported ( $F(2,159) = 1.19$ ,  $p = .31$ ):

Table 4.19      Mean scores (and Standard Error) on the perceived acceptance of the message’s claim as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic English slang and Standard English (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 53)	Authentic English slang (n = 55)	Standard English (n = 54)
Message acceptance	4.43 (0.10)	4.45 (0.10)	4.26 (0.10)

4.2.4 *Sepedi*

The results for Sepedi were as follows:

4.2.4.1 *Language perceptions*

Hypothesis 1b predicts that the authentic slang version would be perceived as more similar to participants’ own communication style than the loveLife and standard varieties would. Hypothesis 1a predicts that participants would perceive the use of authentic slang as a more positive violation of language expectations than the loveLife variety.

Furthermore, it was checked whether the slang varieties would be considered less standard/formal than Standard Sepedi, whether the writers of the non-standard varieties were perceived as making more of an effort and as being under more external pressure to perform the language behaviour, compared to the writer of the standard variety, and whether Standard Sepedi

was perceived as more appropriate for use in brochures than the non-standard varieties.

Table 4.20 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on standardness/formality, similarity in language use, violation of language expectations, external pressure on writer, effort by writer and appropriateness of language use as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic Sepedi slang and Standard Sepedi (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 91)	Authentic Sepedi slang (n = 68)	Standard Sepedi (n = 73)
Standardness/formality	2.88 (0.11)	1.88 (0.13)	3.37 (0.12)
Similar language use	3.23 (0.10)	3.60 (0.11)	3.57 (0.11)
Language expectations			
Expect language	3.65 (0.17)	3.00 (0.20)	3.95 (0.19)
Not be surprised to find language	3.19 (0.19)	2.71 (0.22)	2.88 (0.21)
External pressure on writer			
Told by boss	2.47 (0.13)	2.78 (0.15)	2.75 (0.14)
Under pressure	2.35 (0.12)	2.71 (0.14)	2.29 (0.14)
Effort by writer	3.54 (0.12)	3.47 (0.13)	3.55 (0.13)
Appropriate language use	4.21 (0.15)	3.71 (0.17)	4.19 (0.17)

As predicted, there was a main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .674$ ,  $F(16,444) = 6.06$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .18$ ). Subsequent univariate analyses revealed significant effects for perceived language standardness/formality ( $F(2,229) = 37.46$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .25$ ), similar language use ( $F(2,229) = 4.16$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .04$ ) and violation of language expectations ( $F(2,229) = 6.26$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .05$ ). There was a trend towards an effect of language variety on language appropriateness ( $F(2,229) = 2.87$ ,  $p = .06$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that in the case of perceived language standardness/formality, the standard variety was considered more standard/formal than the loveLife and authentic slang varieties, whereas the loveLife variety was considered more standard/formal than the authentic slang version.

Hypothesis 1b was partially supported in that authentic slang *and* the standard variety were seen as more similar to participants’ communication style than the loveLife variety was.

With regard to the appropriateness of the language variety in the brochure, there was a trend to perceive authentic slang as less appropriate for use in brochures than the loveLife variety and Standard Sepedi. As far as the violation of language expectations was concerned (i.e. hypothesis 1a), the authentic slang version was perceived as more of a violation of language expectations than Standard Sepedi and the loveLife variety.

In determining whether the violation of language expectations could be regarded as positive or negative, participants’ responses to the close-ended question *Do you like the language used in the text?* were coded for frequency.

Table 4.21      Frequency of participants’ (dis)liking of the variety as function of the loveLife variety, authentic Sepedi slang and Standard Sepedi

	loveLife variety (n = 92)	Authentic Sepedi slang (n = 70)	Standard Sepedi (n = 77)
Like the variety	72	51	71
Dislike the variety	15	16	3
Do not know	4	3	3

There was a significant effect of language variety ( $\chi^2(4) = 11.54, p < .05$ ). Although Sepedi participants indicated a greater liking for the standard variety than for the non-standard varieties, when comparing participants’ responses to the question whether they would like the non-standard varieties (or not), it is evident that Sepedi participants indicated a clear liking for both the non-standard varieties. Given that participants perceived authentic slang as more of a violation of their language expectations than the loveLife and standard varieties, it is concluded that participants perceived authentic slang as a more positive violation of their language expectations than the loveLife variety was. Hypothesis 1a (i.e. that participants will perceive authentic slang as a more positive violation of their language expectations than the loveLife variety) was

therefore supported. Sepedi participants liked the language varieties for the following reasons:

loveLife variety

- Easy to understand (43%)
- Relate to language (14%)

Authentic slang

- Similar language use (29%)
- Easy to understand (30%)

Standard Sepedi

- Easy to understand (49%)
- Home language (21%)

4.2.4.2 Perceptions of source-receiver similarities

Hypothesis 2 (i.e. that authentic teenager slang will result in the writer being perceived more as an in-group member, as more similar in attitude, value and background compared to the loveLife variety and Standard Sepedi) was not supported (Wilks'  $\lambda = .960$ ,  $F(10,464) < 1$ ,  $p = .48$ ).

Table 4.22 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on writer's in-group identification, similar attitude, value and background as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic Sepedi slang and Standard Sepedi (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 92)	Authentic Sepedi slang (n = 71)	Standard Sepedi (n = 76)
In-group identification	3.94 (0.08)	3.87 (0.09)	3.79 (0.09)
Similar attitude	3.38 (0.13)	3.04 (0.14)	3.24 (0.14)
Similar values			
Principles like mine	3.33 (0.16)	3.35 (0.18)	3.22 (0.17)
Sexual attitudes like mine	3.28 (0.17)	2.97 (0.19)	3.25 (0.18)
Similar background	3.03 (0.10)	3.02 (0.11)	3.09 (0.11)

The Chi-square test was conducted on the 1-item *adult-teenager* bipolar scale to check whether participants' perception of the writer as someone who identifies with teenagers, implies that they also perceive the writer as a teenager. The Chi-square test revealed that there was no significant effect of language variety ( $\chi^2(4) = 7.63, p = .11$ ).

#### 4.2.4.3 *Affective effects*

Hypothesis 3 (i.e. that the authentic slang version will evoke more feelings of pleasure, arousal, and attention for the language, as well as make teenager identities more salient than the standard and loveLife varieties would), was not supported (Wilks'  $\lambda = .915, F(18,432) = 1.09, p = .36$ ).

Table 4.23 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on participants' feelings of pleasure, arousal, language attention and the salience of teenager identities as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic Sepedi slang and Standard Sepedi (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 91)	Authentic Sepedi slang (n = 66)	Standard Sepedi (n = 70)
Pleasure	3.79 (0.10)	3.69 (0.12)	4.04 (0.12)
Arousal			
Active	3.97 (0.15)	3.76 (0.17)	4.14 (0.17)
Wide-awake	4.17 (0.14)	4.14 (0.16)	4.03 (0.16)
Excited	3.13 (0.18)	3.38 (0.21)	3.11 (0.20)
Full of energy	3.91 (0.14)	3.99 (0.17)	4.06 (0.16)
Stimulated	2.51 (0.16)	2.50 (0.19)	2.13 (0.18)
Language attention	4.25 (0.08)	4.02 (0.10)	4.31 (0.10)
Salience of teenager identity			
Feel like a teenager	3.97 (0.11)	3.92 (0.13)	4.10 (0.13)
Aware of being a teenager	4.22 (0.11)	3.96 (0.13)	4.23 (0.12)

Similar to the Coloured Afrikaans participants, Sepedi participants listed the following two reasons most frequently as to why they found the text enjoyable:

#### loveLife variety

- Writer gives good advice (62%)
- Interesting (12%)

#### Authentic slang

- Writer gives good advice (47%)
- Interesting (17%)

#### Standard Sepedi

- Writer gives good advice (70%)
- Interesting (8%)

Similar to the Coloured Afrikaans participants, Sepedi participants tended to enjoy all three text versions mostly because of their educational value.

#### 4.2.4.4 *Persuasion-related source characteristics*

Hypothesis 4a predicts that the participants will perceive the writer of the authentic slang version as more socially attractive and trustworthy than the writers of the loveLife and standard variety versions. Furthermore, it was hypothesised that the writer of Standard Sepedi will be perceived as more of an expert than the writer of the loveLife variety and of the authentic slang variety (i.e. hypothesis 4b).

Table 4.24 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on the perceived social attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise of the writer as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic Sepedi slang and Standard Sepedi (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 92)	Authentic Sepedi slang (n = 71)	Standard Sepedi (n = 76)
Writer's social attractiveness	3.73 (0.10)	3.68 (0.11)	4.09 (0.11)
Writer's trustworthiness	4.35 (0.08)	4.10 (0.09)	4.37 (0.08)
Writer's expertise	4.25 (0.08)	4.19 (0.09)	4.40 (0.09)

As predicted, there was a main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .935$ ,  $F(6,468) = 2.66$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .03$ ). Separate univariate analyses revealed a significant effect for the writer's perceived social attractiveness ( $F(2,236) = 4.51$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .04$ ). There was a trend towards an effect of language variety on the writer's trustworthiness ( $F(2,236) = 3.03$ ,  $p = .05$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that in the case of the writer's perceived social attractiveness, participants perceived the writer of Standard Sepedi as socially more attractive compared to the writers of the non-standard varieties. In the case of the writer's trustworthiness, the writer of the authentic slang was perceived as less trustworthy than the writers of the standard and loveLife varieties. Hypotheses 4a and 4b were therefore not supported.

Similar to the other language groups, the two most frequent source descriptions listed in all three language variety conditions were:

- Knowledgeable and experienced (34% to 42%)
- Caring (26% to 35%)

In determining the most frequent reasons given for participants being socially attracted to the writer, the following two reasons emerged:

#### loveLife variety

- Writer gives good advice (40%)
- Writer is caring (11%)

#### Authentic slang

- Writer gives good advice (31%)
- Writer is caring (6%)
- Similar language use (6%)

#### Standard Sepedi

- Writer gives good advice (60%)
- Writer is honest (4%)

It is apparent that participants, and more so those in the Standard Sepedi group, were socially attracted to the writer because of the writer's expertise.



#### 4.2.4.5 *Perceived acceptance of the message's claim*

Hypothesis 5 (i.e. that participants who read the authentic slang and Standard Sepedi versions will be more inclined to accept the claim made in the message than those who read the loveLife variety) was not supported ( $F(2,237) < 1, p = .64$ ).

Table 4.25 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on the perceived acceptance of the message's claim as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic Sepedi slang and Standard Sepedi (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 92)	Authentic Sepedi slang (n = 71)	Standard Sepedi (n = 77)
Message acceptance	4.40 (0.07)	4.32 (0.08)	4.40 (0.07)

#### 4.2.5 *Summary of results*

In this section, a summary of the results pertaining to the hypotheses is provided. The hypotheses are provided first, followed by a summarising table of the results indicating which hypotheses were supported (or not) in the four language groups. The hypotheses are:

##### **Language perceptions**

- H1a: The use of authentic teenager slang will result in a more positive violation of the expected language behaviour than the loveLife variety would.
- H1b: Participants are more likely to perceive authentic teenager slang as more similar to their communication style than they would the loveLife variety and the standard variety.

##### **Effect on perceived source-receiver similarities**

- H2: Authentic teenager slang will result in the writer being perceived more as an in-group member, and as more similar in attitude, value and background than the loveLife variety and standard variety.

## Affective effects

H3: Authentic slang will evoke more feelings of pleasure and arousal, result in greater perceived attention, and make teenager identities more salient than the loveLife variety and the standard variety would.

## Effect on persuasion-related source characteristics

H4a: Authentic slang will result in greater social attractiveness and trustworthiness than the standard variety and loveLife variety would.

H4b: The standard variety will produce higher ratings of source expertise than authentic slang and the loveLife variety would.

## Acceptance of the message's claim

H5: Authentic slang and the standard variety will result in greater acceptance of the message's claim than the loveLife variety would.

To summarise the results:

Table 4.26: Summary of hypotheses supported (or not) in the four language groups (Trends for significance are indicated with a (T))

	Coloured Afrikaans	White Afrikaans	English	Sepedi
H1a	not supported (T)	not supported	not supported	supported
H1b	partially supported <sup>1</sup>	not supported	not supported	partially supported <sup>1</sup>
H2	partially supported <sup>2</sup>	not supported	not supported	not supported
H3	not supported	not supported	not supported	not supported
H4a	not supported	not supported	not supported	not supported <sup>3</sup>
H4b	not supported	not supported	not supported (T)	not supported
H5	not supported	not supported	not supported	not supported

<sup>1</sup> Authentic slang *and* standard variety perceived to be more similar to participants' communication style than the loveLife variety.

<sup>2</sup> Writer of authentic slang *and* Standard Afrikaans perceived to be more similar in attitude, value and background than writer of loveLife variety.

<sup>3</sup> Writer of Standard Sepedi perceived to be more socially attractive than writers of non-standard varieties. Also a trend to view writer of authentic slang as less trustworthy than writer of Standard Sepedi and of the loveLife variety.

### **4.3 Checking control variables**

Some control variables, such as the standardness/formality of the language variety, the attribution of the writer's accommodative act due to effort or external pressure, and the appropriateness of the language variety, were discussed in 4.2 under the section "*Perception of language use*". In this section, the results of the following control variables are discussed according to language group:

- background variables
- comprehensibility variables
- the variable pertaining to the sex of the source

#### ***4.3.1 Coloured Afrikaans***

The results for Coloured Afrikaans were as follows:

##### ***4.3.1.1 Checking background variables***

It was expected that language variety would have an effect on participants' attitude towards the intended behaviour and their normative beliefs, but not on their perceived control to perform the intended behaviour. Furthermore, it was expected that language variety would have no effect on participants' perception of themselves as belonging to the group of teenagers (i.e. their identification with the in-group).

Table 4.27 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on participants' attitude towards sleeping around, normative beliefs, behavioural control and in-group identity as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 29)	Authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang (n = 50)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 27)
Attitude towards sleeping around <sup>1</sup>	4.75 (0.13)	4.60 (0.10)	4.72 (0.13)
Normative beliefs <sup>2</sup>	4.36 (0.15)	4.47 (0.12)	4.74 (0.16)
Behavioural control			
Behaviour is easy	4.48 (0.22)	4.28 (0.17)	4.56 (0.23)
Behaviour is possible	4.52 (0.25)	4.00 (0.19)	4.30 (0.26)
Identification with in-group	4.02 (0.11)	4.23 (0.08)	4.07 (0.11)

<sup>1</sup> A higher score indicates a negative attitude towards sleeping around, i.e. sleeping around is seen as a bad thing, while a lower score indicates a positive attitude towards sleeping around.

<sup>2</sup> A higher score indicates that participants are more inclined to comply with what important others think.

No differences were found between the groups in respect of these background variables. There was no main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .895$ ,  $F(10,198) = 1.13$ ,  $p = .34$ ). Contrary to expectations, language variety did not have any effect on participants' attitude towards the intended behaviour and their normative beliefs. As expected, language variety did not have any effect on participants' perceived control to perform the intended behaviour, nor on their perception of themselves as belonging to the group of teenagers.

#### 4.3.1.2 *Checking comprehensibility*

It was expected that language variety would have no effect on perceived and actual text comprehension, nor on the perceived comprehensibility of the language.

Table 4.28 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on the perceived comprehensibility of the text and language as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 29)	Authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang (n = 50)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 27)
Text comprehension			
Easy to understand	4.31 (0.14)	4.58 (0.11)	4.82 (0.15)
Not difficult to understand	4.28 (0.16)	4.30 (0.12)	4.59 (0.17)
Language comprehension	4.44 (0.14)	4.47 (0.11)	4.68 (0.14)

As expected, there were no differences between the groups in respect of these comprehensibility variables. There was no main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .929$ ,  $F(6,202) = 1.27$ ,  $p = .27$ ).

With regard to actual text comprehension, the Kruskal-Wallis test revealed no significant effect of language variety ( $H(2) = .52$ ,  $p = .77$ ).

#### 4.3.1.3 *Checking sex of the source*

It was expected that language variety would have no effect on participants' perception of the sex of the source. The Chi-square test revealed no significant effect of language variety ( $\chi^2(4) = 2.91$ ,  $p = .57$ ).

### 4.3.2 *White Afrikaans*

The results for White Afrikaans were as follows:

#### 4.3.2.1 *Checking background variables*

It was expected that language variety would have an effect on participants' attitude towards the intended behaviour and their normative beliefs, but not on their perceived control to perform the intended behaviour or their perception of themselves as belonging to the group of teenagers (i.e. their identification with the in-group).

Table 4.29 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on participants' attitude towards sleeping around, normative beliefs, behavioural control and in-group identity as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic White Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 45)	Authentic White Afrikaans slang (n = 55)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 48)
Attitude towards sleeping around <sup>1</sup>	4.11 (0.14)	4.39 (0.13)	4.42 (0.14)
Normative beliefs <sup>2</sup>	3.70 (0.16)	4.16 (0.14)	4.06 (0.15)
Behavioural control	4.12 (0.18)	4.04 (0.16)	4.08 (0.17)
Identification with in-group	3.38 (0.10)	3.54 (0.09)	3.48 (0.10)

<sup>1</sup> A higher score indicates a negative attitude towards sleeping around, i.e. sleeping around is seen as a bad thing, while a lower score indicates a positive attitude towards sleeping around.

<sup>2</sup> A higher score indicates that participants are more inclined to comply with what important others think.

Contrary to expectations, language variety did not have any effect on participants' attitude towards the intended behaviour and their normative beliefs. There was no main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .917$ ,  $F(8,284) = 1.58$ ,  $p = .13$ ).

As expected, language variety did not have any effect on participants' perceived control to perform the intended behaviour, nor on their perception of themselves as belonging to the group of teenagers.

#### 4.3.2.2 *Checking comprehensibility*

It was expected that language variety would have no effect on perceived and actual text comprehension, nor on perceived language comprehension.

Table 4.30 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on perceived text and language comprehension as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic White Afrikaans slang and Standard Afrikaans (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 46)	Authentic White Afrikaans slang (n = 55)	Standard Afrikaans (n = 48)
Text comprehension			
Easy to understand	3.96 (0.17)	4.00 (0.16)	4.19 (0.17)
Not difficult to understand	3.33 (0.23)	3.35 (0.21)	3.00 (0.23)
Language comprehension	3.92 (0.13)	4.18 (0.12)	4.24 (0.13)

As expected, there were no differences between the groups in respect of these comprehensibility variables. There was no main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .963$ ,  $F(6,288) < 1$ ,  $p = .48$ ).

With regard to actual text comprehension, the Kruskal-Wallis test revealed no significant effect of language variety ( $H(2) = .63$ ,  $p = .73$ ).

#### 4.3.2.3 *Checking sex of the source*

As expected, language variety had no effect on participants' perception of the sex of the source. The Chi-square test revealed no significant effect of language variety ( $\chi^2(4) = 4.06$ ,  $p = .40$ ).

### 4.3.3 *English*

The results for English were as follows:

#### 4.3.3.1 *Checking background variables*

It was expected that language variety would have an effect on participants' attitude towards the intended behaviour and their normative beliefs, but not on their perceived control to perform the intended behaviour or their perception of themselves as belonging to the group of teenagers (i.e. their identification with the in-group).

Table 4.31 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on participants' attitude towards sleeping around, normative beliefs, behavioural control and in-group identity as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic English slang and Standard English (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 53)	Authentic English slang (n = 55)	Standard English (n = 54)
Attitude towards sleeping around <sup>1</sup>	4.49 (0.12)	4.38 (0.12)	4.27 (0.12)
Normative beliefs <sup>2</sup>	4.38 (0.11)	4.49 (0.11)	4.21 (0.11)
Behavioural control	4.42 (0.13)	4.33 (0.13)	4.17 (0.13)
Identification with in-group	4.14 (0.08)	4.24 (0.08)	4.19 (0.08)

<sup>1</sup> A higher score indicates a negative attitude towards sleeping around, i.e. sleeping around is seen as a bad thing, while a lower score indicates a positive attitude towards sleeping around.

<sup>2</sup> A higher score indicates that participants are more inclined to comply with what important others think

No differences were found between the groups in respect of these background variables. There was no main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .960$ ,  $F(8,312) < 1$ ,  $p = .61$ ).

Contrary to expectations, language variety did not have any effect on participants' attitude towards the intended behaviour and their normative beliefs. As expected, language variety did not have any effect on participants' perceived control to perform the intended behaviour or their perception of themselves as belonging to the group of teenagers.

#### 4.3.3.2 *Checking comprehensibility*

It was expected that language variety would have no effect on perceived and actual text comprehension, nor on perceived language comprehension.



Table 4.32 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on perceived text and language comprehension as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic English slang and Standard English (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 53)	Authentic English slang (n = 55)	Standard English (n = 54)
Text comprehension	3.89 (0.10)	4.21 (0.10)	4.27 (0.10)
Language comprehension	3.96 (0.12)	4.09 (0.12)	4.40 (0.12)

Contrary to expectations, there was a main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .929$ ,  $F(4,316) = 2.97$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .04$ ). Separate univariate analyses revealed significant effects for perceived text comprehension ( $F(2,159) = 4.10$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .05$ ) and perceived language comprehension ( $F(2,159) = 3.54$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .04$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that in the case of both the perceived comprehensibility of the text and the language, participants perceived the text and language of the standard variety easier to comprehend, compared to the text and language of the loveLife variety.

With regard to actual text comprehension, the Kruskal-Wallis test revealed no significant effect of language variety ( $H(2) = .23$ ,  $p = .89$ ).

#### 4.3.3.3 *Checking sex of the source*

Contrary to expectations, language variety had a significant effect on participants' perception of the sex of the source. The Chi-square test revealed a significant effect of language variety ( $\chi^2(4) = 9.85$ ,  $p = .04$ ). Participants who read the authentic slang text perceived the writer more as female, compared to those who read the Standard English text.

#### 4.3.4 *Sepedi*

The results for Sepedi were as follows:

##### 4.3.4.1 *Checking background variables*

It was expected that language variety would have an effect on participants' attitude towards the intended behaviour and their normative beliefs, but not on

their perceived control to perform the intended behaviour or their perception of themselves as belonging to the group of teenagers (i.e. their identification with the in-group).

Table 4.33 Mean scores (and Standard Error) on participants' attitude towards sleeping around, normative beliefs, behavioural control and in-group identity as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic Sepedi slang and Standard Sepedi (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety (n = 92)	Authentic Sepedi slang (n = 70)	Standard Sepedi (n = 77)
Attitude towards sleeping around <sup>1</sup>	4.51 (0.10)	4.61 (0.12)	4.46 (0.11)
Normative beliefs <sup>2</sup>	4.39 (0.08)	4.40 (0.09)	4.52 (0.08)
Behavioural control	3.81 (0.15)	4.09 (0.17)	4.14 (0.16)
Identification with in-group	3.90 (0.07)	3.97 (0.07)	3.92 (0.07)

<sup>1</sup> A higher score indicates a negative attitude towards sleeping around, i.e. sleeping around is seen as a bad thing, while a lower score indicates a positive attitude towards sleeping around

<sup>2</sup> A higher score indicates that participants are more inclined to comply with what important others think.

Contrary to expectations, language variety did not have any effect on participants' attitude towards the intended behaviour and their normative beliefs. There was no main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .974$ ,  $F(8,466) < 1$ ,  $p = .63$ ).

As expected, language variety did not have any effect on participants' perceived control to perform the intended behaviour or their perception of themselves as belonging to the group of teenagers.

#### 4.3.4.2 *Checking comprehensibility*

It was expected that language variety would have no effect on perceived and actual text comprehension, nor on the perceived comprehensibility of the language.

Table 4.34      Mean scores (and Standard Error) on the perceived comprehensibility of the text and language as a function of the loveLife variety, authentic Sepedi slang and Standard Sepedi (minimum = 1, maximum = 5)

	loveLife variety  (n = 92)	Authentic Sepedi slang (n = 71)	Standard Sepedi (n = 77)
Text comprehension			
Easy to understand	4.35 (0.10)	4.32 (0.11)	4.44 (0.11)
Not difficult to understand	4.07 (0.12)	4.18 (0.13)	4.22 (0.13)
Language comprehension	4.37 (0.10)	4.12 (0.12)	4.50 (0.11)

As expected, there was no main effect of language variety (Wilks'  $\lambda = .972$ ,  $F(6,470) = 1.14$ ,  $p = .34$ ).

With regard to actual text comprehension, the Kruskal-Wallis test revealed no significant effect of language variety ( $H(2) = 3.22$ ,  $p = .20$ ).

4.3.4.3      *Checking sex of the source*

As expected, language variety did not have any effect on participants' perception of the sex of the source ( $\chi^2(4) = 2.43$ ,  $p = .66$ ).

**4.3.5 Summary of results**

In this section, a summary of the results pertaining to the effect of language variety on the various control variables is provided for the different language groups. Only those control variables that recorded a main effect are reported:

Table 4.35: Summary of main effects for the various control variables  
(L = loveLife, S = standard variety, A = authentic slang,  
> = more than, n.s. = not significant)

	Coloured Afrikaans	White Afrikaans	English	Sepedi
Standard/formal	S > L, A L > A	S > L, A	S > L, A	S > L, A L > A
Appropriate language	S > A <sup>1</sup>	n.s. <sup>2</sup>	n.s.	n.s. <sup>1, 2</sup>
Language easier to comprehend	n.s.	n.s.	S > L	n.s.
Text easier to comprehend	n.s.	n.s.	S > L	n.s.
Writer as female	n.s.	n.s.	A > S	n.s.

<sup>1</sup>There was a trend to perceive authentic slang as less appropriate for use in brochures than the loveLife variety.

<sup>2</sup>There was a trend to perceive the standard variety as more appropriate for use in brochures than the loveLife variety.

#### 4.4 Comparison of the language groups

In this section, the effect of language group on the perceived vitality of the language and the level of questionnaire difficulty is first reported, followed by the interaction analyses.

Hoeken and Korzilius (2003, pp. 298-301) argue that participants from different cultures have differences in response style: some cultures are more likely to use the extremes on an answering scale than participants from other cultures, who may tend to avoid the extreme ends of a scale. In this study, it was checked whether language group would have any effect on the use of extremes on an answering scale. There was a main effect of language group ( $F(3,653) = 78.85, p < .001, \eta^2 = .27$ ). Pairwise comparisons revealed that Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants used the end points of the scale more than the White Afrikaans and English participants. Additionally, Sepedi participants also used the extremes of the scale more than the Coloured Afrikaans participants, while the White Afrikaans participants used the extremes of the scale more compared to the English participants. To counteract the effect of the use of the scale extremes, the scores had been standardised. Hoeken and Korzilius (2003, pp. 299-301) argue that one must compare the analysis of the raw data with the analysis of the standardised data,

to determine whether the difference in effect is real or merely the result of differences in the use of scale extremes. If the difference in effect is caused by using the scale's extremes, this effect will disappear in the standardised scores. In my comparison of the raw data with the standardised data, the difference in effect was seen as a genuine effect, i.e. the difference in effect reappeared in the analysis of the standardised scores. Only the scores from the raw data are reported here.

#### ***4.4.1 Checking control variables***

The results were:

##### ***4.4.1.1 Perceived vitality of language***

It was expected that participants would perceive Afrikaans as a high-vitality language. Contrary to expectations, a main effect of language group was found (Wilks'  $\lambda = .600$ ,  $F(9,1560,176) = 40.50$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .16$ ). Subsequent univariate analyses revealed a significant effect for the perceived vitality of Afrikaans ( $F(3,643) > 20.04$ ,  $p's < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 > .09$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that Coloured Afrikaans and White Afrikaans participants perceived Afrikaans as of higher vitality than the English and Sepedi participants. English participants also perceived Afrikaans as of higher vitality compared to the Sepedi participants.

In the case of the perceived vitality of English, it was expected that all the participants would perceive English as a high-vitality language. There was, however, a main effect of language group (Wilks'  $\lambda = .916$ ,  $F(9,1562,610) = 6.41$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .03$ ). Univariate analyses revealed a significant effect for the perceived vitality of English ( $F(3,644) > 6.76$ ,  $p's < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 > .03$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that English, Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants perceived English as of higher vitality compared to the White Afrikaans participants.

In the case of the perceived vitality of Sepedi, it was expected that all the participants would perceive Sepedi as a low-vitality language. There was, however, a main effect of language group (Wilks'  $\lambda = .616$ ,  $F(9,1560,176) = 38.14$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .15$ ). Univariate analyses revealed a significant effect for the perceived vitality of Sepedi ( $F(3,643) > 67.28$ ,  $p's < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 > .24$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that Sepedi participants perceived Sepedi as of higher

vitality compared to the Coloured Afrikaans, White Afrikaans and English participants.

#### 4.4.1.2 *Perceived questionnaire difficulty*

No difference was expected between the language groups with respect to questionnaire difficulty. As expected, there was no main effect of language group ( $F(3,649) = 1.77, p = .15$ ).

### 4.4.2 *Determining interaction effects*

The independent variables in the interaction analyses were *language variety* (with levels loveLife slang, authentic slang and the standard variety) and *language group* (Coloured Afrikaans, White Afrikaans, English and Sepedi). Given that the focus is on the comparisons of the language groups, only the main effects of language group and the interaction effects are reported below.

With regard to the multi-item scales, only those with adequate reliability (i.e. an alpha reliability of .65 or higher) were included in the analyses. MANOVAs were conducted for perceived source-receiver-similarities, affective effects and persuasion-related source characteristics, while univariate analyses were conducted for language perception, the perceived acceptance of the message's claim and perceived language comprehension.

#### 4.4.2.1 *Language perceptions*

For similar language use, there was a main effect of language group ( $F(3,645) = 31.25, p < .001, \eta^2 = .13$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that in the case of perceived similar language use, Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants perceived the language varieties as more similar to their communication style than the English and White Afrikaans participants.

There was a trend towards an interaction effect of language group and language variety ( $F(6,645) = 2.02, p = .06$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants tended to perceive authentic slang and the standard variety more similar in language use, compared to the English and White Afrikaans participants.

#### 4.4.2.2 *Perceptions of source-receiver similarities*

For the source-receiver similarity group (i.e. the *writer's perceived in-group identification, similarity in attitude and background*), a main effect of language group was found (Wilks'  $\lambda = .838$ ,  $F(9,1565,044) = 13.09$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .06$ ). Separate univariate analyses revealed significant effects for the writer's in-group identification ( $F(3,645) = 37.56$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .15$ ) and similar attitude ( $F(3,645) = 5.78$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .03$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that in the case of the writer's in-group identification, Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants perceived the writer as someone who identifies more with teenagers, compared to the White Afrikaans and English participants. White Afrikaans participants also perceived the writer as someone who identifies more with teenagers compared to the English participants. In the case of source-receiver attitudinal similarities, Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants perceived the writer as more similar in attitude compared to the English participants. An additional effect was found in that Coloured Afrikaans participants also viewed the writer more similar in attitude compared to the White Afrikaans participants.

There was a trend towards a multivariate interaction effect (Wilks'  $\lambda = .960$ ,  $F(18,1819,164) = 1.47$ ,  $p = .09$ ). Univariate analyses revealed significant interaction effects for the writer's attitudinal similarity ( $F(6,645) = 2.62$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .02$ ) and background similarity ( $F(6,645) = 2.47$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .02$ ). Coloured Afrikaans participants tended to perceive the writers of the authentic slang and standard variety texts as more similar in attitude and background compared to the White Afrikaans, English and Sepedi participants.

#### 4.4.2.3 *Affective effects*

For the affective effects group (i.e. the *participant's feeling of pleasure and language attention*) there was a main effect of language group (Wilks'  $\lambda = .755$ ,  $F(6,1286) = 32.26$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .13$ ). Subsequent univariate analyses revealed significant effects for the participant's feelings of pleasure ( $F(3,644) = 25.77$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .11$ ) and attention for the language ( $F(3,644) = 63.92$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .23$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that in the case of pleasure and attention for the language, Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants felt more pleasure after they read the text and were more attracted to the language than White Afrikaans and English participants were.

Language group and language variety did not interact (Wilks'  $\lambda = .973$ ,  $F(12,1286) = 1.46$ ,  $p = .13$ ).

#### 4.4.2.4 *Persuasion-related source characteristics*

For the source characteristics group (i.e. *the writer's social attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise*) there was a main effect of language group (Wilks'  $\lambda = .740$ ,  $F(9,1562,610) = 22.89$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .10$ ). Univariate analyses revealed significant effects for the writer's social attractiveness ( $F(3,644) = 49.46$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .19$ ), trustworthiness ( $F(3,644) = 54.73$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .20$ ) and expertise ( $F(3,644) = 37.78$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .15$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants perceived the writer as more socially attractive, trustworthy and more of an expert than White Afrikaans and English participants did. An additional effect was found in that Sepedi participants also perceived the writer as more trustworthy than the Coloured Afrikaans participants did.

Language group and language variety did not interact (Wilks'  $\lambda = .961$ ,  $F(18,1816,335) = 1.42$ ,  $p = .11$ ).

#### 4.4.2.5 *Perceived acceptance of the message's claim*

For acceptance of the message's claim, no main effect of language group was found ( $F(3,645) = 1.78$ ,  $p = .15$ ), nor an interaction effect ( $F(6,645) = 1.48$ ,  $p = .18$ ).

#### 4.4.2.6 *Perceived comprehensibility of the language*

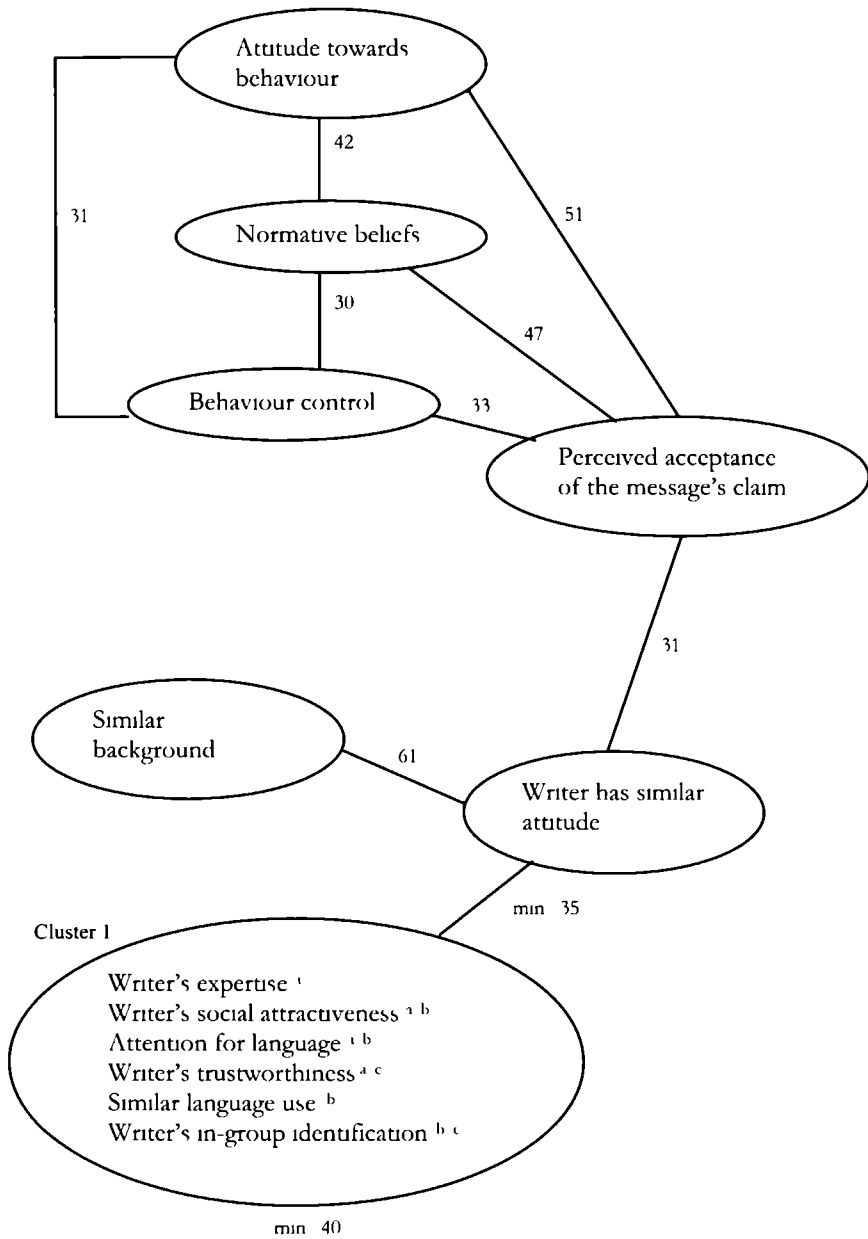
For the perceived comprehensibility of language, a main effect of language group was found ( $F(3,645) = 5.42$ ,  $p = .001$ ), but no interaction effect ( $F(6,645) = 1.08$ ,  $p = .37$ ). Planned comparisons revealed that Coloured Afrikaans participants perceived the language as easier to comprehend than White Afrikaans and English participants did.

### 4.5 **Exploration of the message effect model**

In Chapter 2, a message effect model for language variety was provided, predicting that the perceived acceptance of the message's claim would be related to the writer's social attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise. To determine the strengths of these and other relationships, correlation analyses (using Pearson correlation) were performed. Only those multi-item scales with



an alpha reliability of .65 or higher (in all the language groups) have been entered into the correlation model. For the factor *perceived acceptance of the message's claim*, only those factors with a correlation of .30 and higher were included in the model. For the factor *the writer has a similar attitude*, only those factors with a correlation of .35 and higher were included in the model. The correlations were as follows:



**Figure 4.1** Determining strong correlations

It was expected that acceptance of the message's claim, which pertains to a certain behaviour, or rather *not* to perform a certain behaviour, would be correlated to the following factors as determined by the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991): *attitude towards the behaviour*, *normative beliefs about the behaviour* and *perceived behavioural control*. As expected, the correlation analyses found that message acceptance correlates with those Theory of Planned Behavior factors.

The multitude of correlations in cluster 1 made it difficult to illustrate the strength of these relationships graphically. Superscripts (a, b and c) have been used in cluster 1 to indicate the various correlations – similar superscripts indicate a strong correlation ( $> .40$ ) among the items. The minimum correlation was  $.40$ . For an exact description of the strength of these correlations in cluster 1 and their relation with the factor *writer has similar attitude*, see Appendix M.

The factors in cluster 1 with a correlation of  $.36$  and higher alongside the factor *similar background* were entered into the stepwise regression model to determine the most important predictors of the factor *the writer has similar attitude*. The analysis showed that the following determinants performed well in explaining the variance in the writer's similarity in attitude ( $R^2 = .451$ ): similar background ( $\beta = .49$ ), attention for language ( $\beta = .12$ ), writer's social attractiveness ( $\beta = .11$ ), similar language use ( $\beta = .08$ ), and the writer's expertise ( $\beta = .08$ ). The trustworthiness of the writer was not found to be a significant predictor of the writer's similarity in attitude.

## Summary

In this chapter, the effect of language variety on the hypotheses-related and control variables was indicated per language group. The results of the MANOVAs, Kruskal-Wallis and Chi-square tests were discussed within the context of the proposed hypotheses and the control variables. Thereafter a comparison of the language groups followed, whereby the main effects of language group and the interaction effects of language group and language variety were reported. Lastly, the message effect model was explored by way of correlation analyses and stepwise regression analysis. In the next chapter, the research questions are discussed in detail.



## CHAPTER 5: General discussion and conclusions

### Introduction

In this chapter, the research questions that were introduced in Chapter 1 are discussed. This is followed by a discussion of the limitations of the study. The chapter concludes with some heuristics for the use of teenager slang in South African print-based HIV messages.

### 5.1 Discussion of research questions

The research questions are:

- RQ1: What effect do different varieties of teenager slang have on acceptance of the message's claim?
- RQ2: Do different language groups differ with respect to their perception of the use of teenager slang in the print media, the source perceptions that are evoked and acceptance of the message's claim?
- RQ3: Along which route can teenager slang influence acceptance of the message's claim?

The persuasive effect of teenager slang (i.e. RQ1) is discussed in 5.1.1 below. How the different language groups perceived the teenager slang, their source perceptions and their acceptance of the claim made in the message (i.e. RQ2) are discussed in 5.1.2. This is followed by a discussion of the relations as expressed in the message effect model (i.e. RQ3) in 5.1.3.

#### ***5.1.1 Effect of the different varieties of teenager slang on acceptance of the message's claim***

In this section, RQ1 is examined in the context of the hypotheses proffered for this study.

In this study, the validity of Airhihenbuwa's (1995, p. 41) claim was assessed, namely that non-standard varieties, particularly those associated with young people, could be a critical tool for persuasive communication in that the use of such vernacular languages could provide a relatively positive and non-threatening way of communicating with teens and enhance the reception of HIV/AIDS prevention messages by the members of the groups at greatest risk. To that end, the effectiveness of the use of slang in a HIV/AIDS

prevention message was compared to the use of the standard variety. Not one, but two slang versions of the message were compared to the standard variety. One version was the English variety (with its more American-oriented slang character) that was developed and used by the loveLife organisation. The other slang version was an authentic slang version that was developed by having young people express the same message using their own slang. In this way, a more complete view of the effectiveness of slang could be obtained. In addition, a comparison was made between the standard variety on the one hand, and the loveLife and authentic slang versions on the other, by means of four experiments for the four different language groups. These four separate experiments also provided an opportunity for a comparison of the four language groups with regard to how the different teenager participants perceive the loveLife slang, authentic slang and the standard variety, their effects on source perceptions, and acceptance of the message's claim.

In Chapter 2, it is argued that the persuasive effects of the standard and non-standard varieties are routed differently. The standard variety is more likely to influence perceptions of the source's expertise, which in turn could influence message acceptance. The non-standard varieties, on the other hand, could influence message acceptance either through a positive violation of language expectations or through the source's perceived social attractiveness and/or trustworthiness. The source's social attractiveness, in turn, could be influenced by receivers' affective responses or perceptions of source-receiver similarities.

#### *5.1.1.1 Effect of the standard variety on the writer's expertise*

The prediction that the standard variety would increase the perception of the source's expertise (i.e. hypothesis 4b) was not supported.

Participants' evaluation of the writer's expertise was seemingly based on content-related cues. In participants' descriptions of the writer, the writer's knowledgeability and/or experience was listed most frequently in all the language variety groups. The evaluation of the writer's expertise was based on the merits of the arguments presented in the message. This supports Kelman's (1972, pp. 38-39) argument that credible sources operate through a process of what he calls 'internalisation', i.e. that the perceived image of the source as credible (e.g. as an expert) is supported by factual matters.

#### 5.1.1.2 *Effect of non-standard varieties on violation of language expectations*

It was predicted that the authentic slang variety would be considered as more of a positive violation of language expectations than the loveLife variety would (i.e. hypothesis 1a).

As predicted, the Sepedi participants considered the authentic slang as more of a positive violation than the loveLife variety. Interestingly, the Sepedi participants did not perceive the loveLife variety as more of a violation compared to the standard variety. Sepedi participants apparently perceive the use of (even non-standard) English in the print media as normative language behaviour.

Although the Coloured Afrikaans participants did not consider the non-standard varieties as a violation of their language expectations, authentic slang seems to have the potential to be perceived as a positive violation. Laanstra (2005) also found in her study where she compared two HIV/AIDS health information texts, one written in a “funky style” (i.e. a non-standard, slang variety) and one in a “non-funky” style (i.e. a standard variety), that the Coloured Afrikaans students liked the “funky” style more than the “non-funky” style version.

Even though Coloured Afrikaans participants indicated that they found authentic slang less appropriate for use in written brochures than the standard variety (and the loveLife variety), it did not translate into the salience of situational norms and a disliking of the use of authentic slang in the print media. The social desirability effect could not be excluded though, i.e. participants could have given answers to the question pertaining to the appropriateness of the use of slang in the print media which they believed the researcher would expect.

The White Afrikaans and the English participants considered the non-standard varieties as a violation of their language expectations, but they did not perceive the authentic slang version as a more positive violation compared to the loveLife variety. In fact, they seemed to consider these non-standard varieties both as negative violations.

White Afrikaans and English participants’ responses to the open-ended question whether they liked the language or not, indicated that they disliked the non-standard varieties because they perceived the language use as inappropriate. This finding seems to be in contradiction with the findings of the 1-item, bipolar scale on the appropriateness of the variety for the print

media: Participants did not rate authentic slang (or the loveLife variety) as more inappropriate for use in the print media compared to the standard variety. To understand this seemingly contradictory finding, a distinction should have been made between (a) inappropriate language use for the print media, and (b) inappropriate language use for a particular topic/issue. While the items of the bipolar rating scale focused on the (in)appropriateness of a particular variety in the print media, the responses provided by White Afrikaans and English participants why they disliked authentic slang (and the loveLife variety) pointed more towards the inappropriateness of the non-standard varieties for the topic under discussion (cf. the statements of participants in 4.2.2.1 and 4.2.3.1). Laanstra (2005) also found in her study that White Afrikaans students liked the “non-funky” style (i.e. the standard variety) more than the “funky” style version (i.e. the non-standard variety).

The White Afrikaans and English participants’ unfavourable perception of the non-standard varieties could be attributed to the salience of situational norms. Gallois et al. (1988, p. 171) argue that in situations perceived as formal and status-oriented, situational norms are more salient and applied more strictly, and deviations from the norm are more negatively evaluated. From White Afrikaans and English participants’ responses it seems that the seriousness of the issue (i.e. “sleeping around”) could have contributed to participants’ downgrading of the authentic slang, in particular, resulting in a negative violation of their language expectations.

#### *5.1.1.3 Effect of non-standard varieties on affective responses and source perceptions*

The prediction that authentic slang would be considered as more of a true reflection of participants’ communication style compared to the loveLife or the standard variety (i.e. hypothesis 1b), was only (partially) supported in the Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi groups. These two groups perceived authentic slang (and the standard variety) as more similar to their linguistic style than the loveLife variety. White Afrikaans and English participants did not perceive the authentic slang versions similar to their communication style, despite the fact that different participants from the population were involved in the construction of these slang versions and the pre-testing of these versions. The salience of situational norms could have been an important factor why participants perceived the authentic slang version (along with the loveLife variety) unfavourably. As discussed earlier, White Afrikaans and English



participants apparently considered these non-standard varieties as inappropriate for a serious issue such as “sleeping around”. Interestingly, however, is the fact that White Afrikaans and English participants also did not perceive the standard variety as similar to the way they speak. In fact, the scores on the similar language scale for both the non-standard and standard varieties were at or below the scale’s neutral midpoint, suggesting that neither one of the language varieties resembles the way in which White Afrikaans nor English participants speak among themselves. Given the discussion above that the salience of situational norms could have contributed to the dissimilarity of, in particular, the authentic slang version, it is not clear why participants also perceived the standard variety as dissimilar. Although White Afrikaans and English participants indicated that they did not perceive the standard variety as similar to their linguistic style, it does not imply an overall disliking of the standard variety. In the case of the English participants, a greater disliking for the non-standard varieties was clear, while large numbers of the White Afrikaans participants also seemed to be uncertain whether or not they would like the non-standard varieties. From White Afrikaans and English participants’ responses as to why they liked the standard variety, it became apparent that intelligibility and appropriateness factors played a major role in their liking the standard variety.

Given that the manipulations of authentic slang were not successful in the White Afrikaans and English groups, one would not expect an effect of authentic slang on affective responses and source perceptions. However, for the Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants, a difference in effect between the authentic slang and the loveLife variety could be expected for affective responses and source perceptions, given that the manipulations of authentic slang were perceived as successful in these two groups. Therefore, the predictions regarding the effect of authentic slang on participants’ affective responses and source perceptions are only examined in the Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi groups.

#### (i) Affective responses

The prediction that authentic slang would evoke more feelings of pleasure and arousal, enhance greater attention for the language and make teenager identities more salient, than the loveLife variety and the standard variety would (i.e. hypothesis 3), was not supported. These affective responses by the Coloured

Afrikaans and Sepedi participants could have been influenced more by issue-relevant cues than linguistically relevant cues. Participants' overall positive affective responses (i.e. their higher levels of pleasure, arousal, attention for the language and salience of social identity) could also be attributed to the nature of the topic ("sleeping around"). Participants' responses as to why they enjoyed the texts attest to the apparent salience of issue-relevant cues in shaping participants' affective responses. Both Coloured and Sepedi participants indicated that they enjoyed the texts because of their educational value, suggesting that affective responses could have been based on content-related cues.

(ii) Source perceptions

The prediction that the writer of authentic slang would be considered more of an in-group member, and as more similar in attitude, value and background compared to the loveLife and the standard variety (i.e. hypothesis 2), was only partially supported in the Coloured Afrikaans group. Coloured Afrikaans participants perceived the writer of the authentic slang version (and the standard variety) as more similar in background, attitude and value than the writer of the loveLife variety. When comparing the Coloured Afrikaans group to the Sepedi group, interaction analyses revealed that Coloured Afrikaans participants tend to perceive the writer of the authentic slang (and standard variety) versions as more similar in attitude, value and background compared to the Sepedi participants.

Sepedi participants did not perceive the writer of the authentic slang version as more similar in background, value and attitude compared to the writer of the loveLife variety. Why then did authentic Sepedi slang, which was also seen as more similar to the participants' communication style than the loveLife variety, not result in more membership-group and attitudinal similarities for the writer of the authentic Sepedi slang version? From the responses given to the question on liking the language variety, Sepedi participants tended to like authentic slang equally for both affective and cognitive reasons: Identification with authentic slang did not seem to be the overall dominant factor for liking the variety; the intelligibility factor was equally dominant. The lack of the dominance of affective factors for liking authentic slang could have negatively impacted on the perception of the source as being similar in other domains and as being socially attractive. The presence

of situational norms could also not be excluded. The Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) posits that when an accommodative act violates a salient situational norm, the accommodation will not be perceived favourably. Sepedi participants probably do not perceive authentic Sepedi slang as appropriate for use in persuasive messages of a more serious nature (such as “sleeping around”).

Coloured Afrikaans participants, on the other hand, viewed authentic slang more as an affective construct: According to the responses to the question on why they liked authentic slang, it became apparent that authentic slang mirrors the way they speak. Coloured Afrikaans participants’ similarity with authentic Coloured slang was based on affective grounds: They saw authentic slang affectionately as their “own” (cf. the responses to the question why they liked the variety in 4.2.1.1). It is therefore also not surprising that authentic Coloured slang evoked overall feelings of source-receiver-similarities, such as background, value and attitudinal similarities.

In the Coloured Afrikaans group, it was not only the writer of the authentic slang version that evoked perceptions of enhanced membership-group and attitudinal similarities, but also the writer of the standard variety versions. Coloured Afrikaans participants, who also perceived Standard Afrikaans as more similar to the way they speak compared to the loveLife variety, also viewed the writer of Standard Afrikaans as more similar in background, attitude and value compared to the writer of the loveLife variety. The responses given to the question on why they liked Standard Afrikaans revealed that Coloured Afrikaans participants perceived Standard Afrikaans more as a cognitive construct: They liked the variety because it was easy to understand (cf. also Saal & Fredericks, 2005, p. 265). It is not clear how such a similarity in language use, which is apparently based on intelligibility factors, could elicit such “global feelings” of source-receiver similarities.

Both the Coloured Afrikaans and the Sepedi groups of participants did not consider the writer of authentic slang as more of an in-group member compared to the writer of the loveLife variety. The fact that the writer was perceived as an in-group member does not imply that the writer was considered to be a teenager. From participants’ responses to the question as to how they would describe the writer, it became apparent that they considered the writer to be knowledgeable and experienced, and caring. It seems that participants rather based their evaluation of the in-group status of the writer on

content-related cues: They apparently considered the writer to be a knowledgeable and experienced adult who knows how to relate to teenagers.

Furthermore, it was predicted that the writer of the authentic slang version would be considered as more socially attractive and trustworthy, compared to the writers of the loveLife variety and standard variety versions (i.e. hypothesis 4a). Given that Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants perceived authentic slang as more similar to their communication style, it is expected that these participants would be more socially attracted to, and trust the writer of authentic slang more compared to the writer of the loveLife variety. This could be even more so in the case of the Coloured Afrikaans participants, who also viewed the writer of authentic slang as more similar in background, value and attitude than the writer of the loveLife variety. Contrary to expectations, authentic slang did not have any effect on the perceived social attractiveness and trustworthiness of the writer. The outcome that authentic slang did not have any effect on the social attractiveness of the writer could be attributed to the influence that perceptions of the writer's expertise apparently had on the writer's social attractiveness. Responses given to the question on why participants would want to befriend the writer indicated that the writer's knowledgeability was an important factor for determining the writer's social attractiveness. The fact that no differences were found for the writer's expertise, which was apparently based on content-related cues, could possibly explain why the writer of the authentic slang version was not perceived as more socially attractive compared to the writer of the loveLife variety. The correlation analyses attest to this strong relation between the perceived social attractiveness of the writer and the writer's expertise.

The apparent strong relationship that exists between social attractiveness and trustworthiness, as expressed in the message effect model in 2.6, could probably explain why authentic slang also did not have any effect on the writer's perceived trustworthiness. In the case of the Sepedi participants, the salience of situational norms should not be disregarded. Sepedi participants showed a greater liking for Standard Sepedi than for the non-standard varieties. This outcome could point to the perception of authentic Sepedi slang as inappropriate for use in persuasive messages of a more serious nature. The CAT posits that, although the speaker and receiver's linguistic style could match, the social attractiveness of the speaker could be negatively influenced if the linguistic style is not perceived as appropriate by both the speaker and the

receiver. It is not surprising that Sepedi participants perceived the writer of the Standard Sepedi text as more socially attractive (and tended to trust the writer more), compared to the writer of the authentic Sepedi slang text.

#### 5.1.1.4 *Effect of authentic slang on message acceptance*

It was predicted that authentic slang and the standard variety would effect greater message acceptance than the loveLife variety would (i.e. hypothesis 5). This prediction was based on the following premises:

- (a) Authentic slang would be considered as a positive violation.
- (b) Authentic slang would be perceived as similar to the linguistic style of the participants which, in turn, would enhance the source's social attractiveness and trustworthiness.
- (c) The standard variety would enhance the perceived expertise of the source.

The outcome of the discussion above indicates the following:

- The standard variety did not have any effect on the source's perceived expertise.
- White Afrikaans and English participants perceived the non-standard varieties as a negative violation of their language expectations.
- White Afrikaans and English participants did not perceive authentic slang as resembling their linguistic style.

One would therefore not expect to find any effect of the standard variety on message acceptance, neither any effect of authentic White Afrikaans slang and authentic English slang on message acceptance.

Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants considered authentic slang as resembling their linguistic style, but authentic slang did not have any effect on the source's social attractiveness or trustworthiness. One would therefore not expect authentic Coloured slang and authentic Sepedi slang to have any effect on message acceptance via the route of the source's social attractiveness or trustworthiness. However, in the discussion above, it was indicated that Sepedi participants were more socially attracted to the writer of the Standard Sepedi version, compared to the writer of the authentic slang version. An effect of

Standard Sepedi on message acceptance, via the source's social attractiveness, could therefore be expected.

It was only in the case of the Sepedi participants that a positive violation of language expectations was obtained: They considered the authentic slang as more of a positive violation than the loveLife variety. (In the case of the Coloured Afrikaans participants, there was a strong trend to perceive the authentic slang as a positive violation.) One could therefore expect an effect of authentic Sepedi slang on message acceptance, given that authentic slang was perceived as a positive violation of their language expectations.

However, no effect on message acceptance was found for any of the language varieties in the different language groups. It seems, as O'Keefe (2002, p. 194) points out, that the pro-attitudinal nature of the persuasive message could have influenced participants' acceptance of the claim made in the message. Participants' acceptance of the claim made in the message was merely a reinforcement/confirmation of an existing attitude towards sleeping around.

Does the above therefore imply that the claim made by Airhihenbuwa (1995), namely that slang could be a persuasive tool, is refuted? Put differently: Does this mean that teenager language varieties, with which the receiver identifies, do not have the potential at all to positively influence acceptance of the message's claim?

It has been argued that issue-relevant cues could have played a critical role in minimising the effect of the teenager slang varieties (in particular, authentic slang) on affective responses and source perceptions (in particular, the source's social attractiveness and trustworthiness). Teenager slang, if seen as similar, could therefore in all likelihood have a positive affect on acceptance of the message's claim, provided that the persuasive message or issue is one which the receiver feels neutral about or perceives as counter-attitudinal. Given different persuasive messages, for teenager slang to have an effect on acceptance of the message's claim, as envisaged by Airhihenbuwa (1995), the following should also be kept in mind:

- The teenager slang should be perceived by the target group more as an affective construct: They should perceive the intended teenager slang as something that they strongly identify with (i.e. as their "own").
- The teenager slang, with which the target group identifies, should *not* be perceived as a negative violation of situational norms, i.e. the

teenager slang should not be perceived as inappropriate for the persuasive message.

To summarise: With regard to RQ1 (i.e. *What effect do different varieties of teenager slang have on acceptance of the message's claim?*), this study found no effect of the different teenager varieties (i.e. the English variety with its more American-oriented slang character used by the loveLife organisation and the authentic slang version developed by the young people themselves) on message acceptance. The premise of this study was that for teenager slang to have an effect on message acceptance, it needed to be perceived as similar to the receiver's linguistic style or as a positive violation of receivers' language expectations. It was only the Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants who considered the authentic slang varieties similar to their linguistic style, while the Sepedi participants also viewed the authentic slang as a positive violation of their language expectations – but even for these groups, no effect on message acceptance was found. It was argued that the pro-attitudinal character of the message could have influenced participants' acceptance of the message's claim. Furthermore, the fact that the perceived similarity with the authentic slang in the Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi groups did not have any effect on the source's social attractiveness (and trustworthiness), could also have been a contributing factor as to why authentic slang did not have any effect on message acceptance. It was argued that, given different persuasive messages (for example, on an issue that the receiver feels neutral about), teenager slang, if seen as similar and not as a negative violation of situational norms, has the potential to positively influence the receiver's acceptance of the message's claim.

### ***5.1.2 Comparison of the four language groups***

In the discussion above, the persuasive effect of teenager slang on message acceptance was examined per language group. In this section, the focus is a comparative look at the four language groups: *Do the different language groups differ with respect to their perceptions of the use of teenager slang, evaluative profiles of the source and acceptance of the message's claim?* (i.e. RQ 2)

When comparing the different language groups and the effect of their authentic slang versions on language and source perceptions, it seems that Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants are more likely to upgrade

authentic slang, compared to the White Afrikaans and English participants. Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants were more likely to perceive authentic slang as a positive violation of their language expectations, while White Afrikaans and English participants tended to perceive the teenager varieties as a negative violation of their language language expectations. The interaction analyses revealed that Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants were more likely to perceive authentic slang and the standard variety as resembling their linguistic style, compared to the White Afrikaans and English participants. Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants were more likely to accommodate linguistic styles compared to White Afrikaans and English participants (cf. 4.4.2.1). Niedzielski and Giles (1996, p. 338), for example, argue that linguistic style accommodation could be culture-oriented. They argue that collectivistic cultures are more likely to accommodate than individualistic cultures. If one assumes that White Afrikaans and English participants are from a more individualistic culture, while Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants are from more collectivistic cultures, linguistic style accommodation would then apparently be a greater likelihood in the Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi groups. Further research is obviously needed to examine these assumptions.

When comparing the Coloured Afrikaans participants to the Sepedi participants, interaction analyses revealed that Coloured Afrikaans participants tended to perceive the writer of the authentic slang (and the standard variety) version as more similar in attitude, value and background. When the results of the correlation analyses are taken into account, where a moderate relation (i.e. correlations between .30 and .40) was obtained between attitudinal similarity and message acceptance, it would seem that authentic Coloured slang could play a critical role as persuasive tool, given different persuasive messages. It was argued that Coloured Afrikaans participants view authentic Coloured slang as an affective construct (i.e. they see it as their “own”), while Standard Afrikaans is viewed as a cognitive construct (i.e. it is easy to understand). In support of this, Perloff (2003, p. 169) also argues that “when people must make personal and emotional decisions” a similar source would probably be more influential. Similar sources will have more influence on the affective domain (the likes and dislikes (values)) of the receiver, because receivers might choose to adopt the characteristics, norms, attitudes and behaviours of the people they view as similar (Hass, 1981, p. 144). Authentic Coloured slang



would seem to be more effective when serious, personal and emotional issues are addressed, given its affective nature.

To summarise: With regard to RQ2 (i.e. *Do different language groups differ with respect to their perception of the use of teenager slang in the print media, the source perceptions that are evoked and acceptance of the message's claim?*), the prime difference among the language groups points to their perception of the use of teenager slang in the print media and their perception of the writer. In this study, White Afrikaans and English participants tended to perceive the use of the teenager slang varieties (i.e. both the loveLife and the authentic slang versions) as a negative violation of their language expectations, while Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants tended to perceive authentic slang (not the loveLife variety) as a positive violation of their language expectations. Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants were also more likely to consider authentic slang as more similar to their linguistic style, compared to the White Afrikaans and English participants.

Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants were also more likely to perceive the writer as an in-group member, as socially attractive, trustworthy and as an expert, compared to the White Afrikaans and English participants. Overall, Coloured Afrikaans and Sepedi participants seem more likely to upgrade the writer and accommodate linguistic styles, compared to the White Afrikaans and English participants. Laanstra (2005) also found a similar evaluative pattern for Coloured and White Afrikaans students: Coloured Afrikaans students evaluated the writer more positively, and perceived the text as more attractive and persuasive than the White Afrikaans students.

### ***5.1.3 An explorative examination of the message effect model***

In this study, an attempt was made not only to determine the persuasive effect of teenager slang on acceptance of the message's claim (i.e. RQ1), but also to provide insight into *how* teenager slang could influence message acceptance. The relevant research question is therefore: *Along which route can teenager slang influence acceptance of the message's claim?* (i.e. RQ3)

It has been argued that, although authentic slang did not have any effect on acceptance of the message's claim in the experiments reported in this study, it does have the potential to positively affect acceptance of the message's claim, given different persuasive messages and given that the authentic slang is seen as similar. Furthermore, it was argued that the pro-attitudinal character of the

message could override the effect of similar language use (in this case, authentic slang) on acceptance of the claim made in the message, while similar language use could have a more positive influence on message acceptance in persuasive messages that are perceived to be more neutral or counter-attitudinal.

How then could slang, if seen as similar, influence acceptance of the message's claim? (i.e. RQ3)

In Chapter 2, a message effect model was proposed on basis of the literature. In Chapter 4, correlation analyses were conducted to determine the strengths of the different relations. The correlation analyses only provide an explorative examination of the strengths of the relationships among the various factors; therefore, the discussion below should not be regarded as an exhaustive examination of the relations as expressed in the message effect model. Several multi-item scales with low reliability could not be included in the correlations.

The message effect model in 2.6 predicted that the source's expertise, trustworthiness and social attractiveness all have the potential to directly influence acceptance of the message's claim. This prediction was not supported. Strong relations (i.e. correlations of .40 or higher) were found between participants' attitude towards the behaviour, normative beliefs and message acceptance. A moderate correlation (i.e. correlations between .30 and .40) was obtained between attitudinal similarity and acceptance of the message's claim. It is hardly surprising that attitude towards the behaviour and attitudinal similarity were good predictors of message acceptance, given that attitudinal similarity would imply a similar attitude towards the behaviour (i.e. sleeping around). The fact that only a weak correlation (i.e. correlations of .30 or less) was obtained between these two factors could indicate that these two factors are independent predictors and that they measure different concepts.

The message effect model predicts that attitudinal similarity would only be related to acceptance of the message's claim through the source's social attractiveness, whereas in the correlations a moderate relation was obtained between attitudinal similarity and message acceptance. Of importance for this study, is the role that attitudinal similarity could play in influencing acceptance of the message's claim.

The model predicts that similarity in language use could have a direct influence on social attractiveness and the source's trustworthiness. Some

support for this prediction was found in that a strong relation was obtained between perceived similar language use and social attractiveness, but not between perceived similar language use and the source's trustworthiness. As predicted, a strong correlation was found between the source's social attractiveness and the source's trustworthiness.

Also as predicted, similarity in language use strongly correlated with perceived attention for the language, with the latter also strongly related to social attractiveness. For feelings of pleasure, weak relations were obtained.

It was predicted that perceived similarity in language use would result in experiencing other membership-group similarities (such as background similarities and the in-group identification of the source). A weak correlation was obtained, unexpectedly, between similarity in language use and background similarity. As predicted, a strong correlation was obtained between background similarity and attitudinal similarities. A strong relation was also obtained between similarity in language use and the in-group identification of the source; with the latter only a moderate correlation was obtained with attitudinal similarities.

As predicted, a strong correlation was found between attitudinal similarities and social attractiveness.

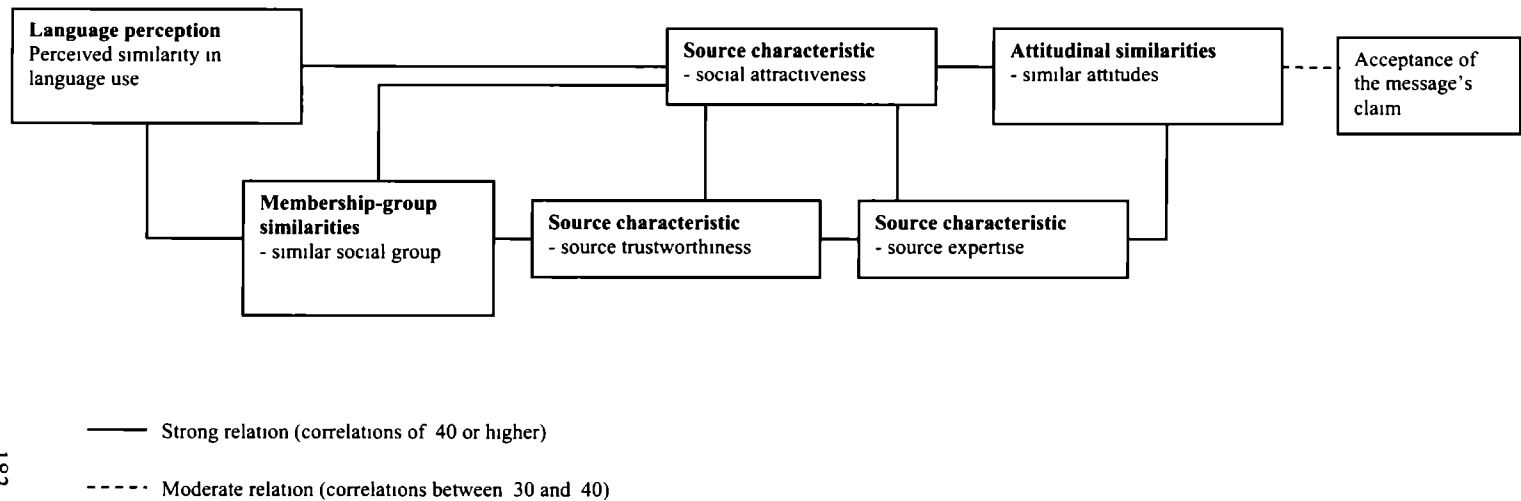
From the correlation analyses, it seems that a message effect model for language variety should take cognizance of the following:

- The role that attitudinal similarity could play in acceptance of the message's claim should not be underestimated.
- It is not only the source's social attractiveness that strongly relates to attitudinal similarities, but also source expertise. Source trustworthiness seems to relate only indirectly to attitudinal similarities via the source's social attractiveness and/or the source's expertise.
- Social attractiveness, in this study, was strongly interrelated with source expertise and source trustworthiness. Besides the strong correlations of social attractiveness with perceived similar language use, language attention, trustworthiness and attitudinal similarity, it also strongly correlated with source expertise. This relation between social attractiveness and expertise was also evident in participants' responses to the question as to why they would want to befriend the

writer. All participants indicated that the writer's knowledgeability/expertise influenced their perception of the writer's social attractiveness. A strong relation was also obtained between the source's expertise and trustworthiness.

- Similar language use seems to relate to source trustworthiness (and source expertise) only indirectly via the source's social attractiveness.
- Perceived similarity in language use seems rather to relate to the in-group identification of the source, than to background similarity. But the perceived in-group membership of the source seems to relate indirectly with attitudinal similarities through either the source's social attractiveness or through source trustworthiness, which in turn strongly correlates with source expertise.
- The causal relations between social attractiveness, source expertise and attitudinal similarity needs to be revisited again. Studies have only examined the effect of attitudinal similarity on social attractiveness (cf. O'Keefe, 2002, pp. 200-201), but whether (and how) the source's social attractiveness (and source expertise) could influence evaluations of attitudinal similarity, is an open question and one for further investigation.
- Not much is known about the relation between language attention and dimensions such as perceived similarity in language use, the perceived in-group status of the writer, the writer's social attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise. Further research is needed here. The receiver's attention for the language is probably not so much attention for the language (or the message) itself, but rather attention for the source of the message (cf. Gass & Seiter, 2004, p. 56).
- The effect of language variety on acceptance of the message's claim is always the result of a complex process, and never the result of "a singular, static phenomenon" (Cargile et al., 1994, p. 215).

The above discussion attempts to provide an answer to RQ3 (i.e. *Along which route can teenager slang influence acceptance of the message's claim?*). To summarise the discussion above graphically, teenager slang, if seen as similar, could relate to acceptance of the message's claim in the following ways:



**Figure 5.1** Adapted message effect model for teenager slang (in the print media)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The lines in this model should not be interpreted as representing causal relations. These lines merely indicate the relation between the various factors. In this model, the affective factor *language attention* has not been included. This factor strongly correlates directly with each factor in the model above, and the multitude of relations made it impossible to demonstrate graphically.

## 5.2 Limitations of the study

Participants perceived the stimulus text as pro-attitudinal; consequently, no comparison could be drawn between pro-attitudinal versus counter-attitudinal messages. As has been discussed in 5.1.1, pro-attitudinal messages could influence the effect of source factors on persuasion (cf. also O’Keefe, 2002, p. 194). The persuasive effect of source-related factors in messages with a counter-attitudinal character (particularly in document-mediated communications) still needs further investigation.

Furthermore, variation in the message topic also needs to be explored further. In this study, only one message topic was introduced, namely “sleeping around”. This study found that in some speech communities (such as the White Afrikaans and English speech communities), the “seriousness” of the topic necessitates the use of a particular language variety (i.e. the standard variety). From this study, it seems that the prevalence and non-stigmatisation of non-standard varieties in a particular speech community could be important indicators in determining the salience of situational norms. However, to predict what situational norms are applicable in which situation and how strictly they will be applied, is something else (Gallois et al., 1988, p. 172). Further research exploring the interaction between topic variation (i.e. serious versus light-hearted topics), language variety and speech community in South Africa could help in understanding how different speech communities perceive the appropriateness of the standard vs. non-standard varieties.

The interaction between language variety and visual images was not examined in this study, but it is an area that needs to be researched. O’Keefe (2002, pp. 195-196) is of the opinion that very few studies vary the timing of source identification. In this study, the identification of the source was not made known. The language variety served as cue to make inferences about the identity of the source (i.e. the identity of the source was constructed by the receiver him- or herself, and was only constructed after reading the text). By contrasting the timing of the source identity (e.g. by complementing the language variety with visual images of the source upfront vs. the language variety as the only cue to determine source identity), its effect on source perceptions and the persuasiveness of the message could provide for a better understanding of how receivers’ evaluative profile of the source is shaped by factors such as language variety and visual images. In this study, it became evident that the non-standard varieties did not succeed in creating the image of

a teenager. All the participants perceived the writer of the non-standard varieties as an adult trying very hard to sound “hip” and “cool”. The question that arises then is: What difference could the introduction of visual images (of teenagers) make to receivers’ evaluative profiles of the source?

In this study, a message effect model for language variety was developed that still needs to be extended to different contexts, message topics, and speech communities. The persuasive effect of language varieties, in particular, has been under-researched. Furthermore, very little is known about the relation of dimensions such as the source’s social attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise, and attention for the language (and source) with attitudinal similarity. Given the complex nature of the social attractiveness dimension, i.e. that social attractiveness may be achieved by quite different routes, it necessitates further investigation.

On the research design side, this study conducted the questionnaire in English only. Although participants indicated that they did not have any difficulties with the questionnaire, the English-only approach could be seen as one of the limitations of this study. However, the fact that Cronbach’s alpha reliabilities for the different multi-item scales were not always higher for the English group than for the other language groups, seems to indicate that the use of English in the questionnaire may have been not much of an influential factor. With regard to sampling, more female participants were included in the Coloured Afrikaans group compared to the other groups.

### **5.3 Guidelines for designing print-based HIV messages**

As should be obvious from the discussion in 5.1.1, the decision whether or not to use teenager slang in the print media is not a straightforward one. The general assumption that teenagers use a teenager slang variety, and that use of a teenager slang would be an effective persuasive strategy, is one that should be carefully considered by document designers.

The question arises: For whom and when should teenager slang be used in the print media?

Teenager slang, the nature of the topic of persuasive messages, and language group seem to interact with one another. With this in mind, document designers should take the following into consideration when deciding on the use of teenager slang in the print media:

- (a) The notion of a universal “teenager slang” for all teenagers in South Africa is one that should *not* be entertained when considering using teenager slang in the print media. Even within some teenager groups (in particular the White Afrikaans and English teenager groups) there seem to be differences with regard to a more common teenager slang variety.
- (b) White Afrikaans and English teenagers would in all likelihood view the use of teenager slang for serious topics (such as “sleeping around”) as situationally inappropriate. There seems to be a strong sense of normative language behaviour prevalent among White Afrikaans and English speaking teenagers. Situational norms are apparently more salient and applied more strictly among White Afrikaans and English teenagers, and violations of the expected language behaviour are more likely to be perceived negatively. As a general heuristic, it would seem that the standard variety would be the variety of choice for topics of a more serious nature for White Afrikaans and English teenagers. In these groups the standard variety does not only have the potential to be more favourably perceived than the non-standard varieties, but also downplays the negative influence of situational norms (cf. also Laanstra, 2005, p. 63; Saal, 2008, p. 145).
- (c) For Coloured Afrikaans teenagers, the use of an authentic teenager slang variety could enhance persuasive outcomes. The fact that situational norms are apparently less salient and that the slang variety is seemingly less stigmatised, could enhance the effectiveness of authentic slang for use in the print media when directed at Coloured Afrikaans teenagers. Coloured Afrikaans teenagers are also more likely to perceive authentic slang as a positive violation of their language expectations. These teenagers are apparently more likely to perceive the writer of an authentic slang as similar to them, and, as Perloff (2003, p. 169) points out, similar sources are more influential when receivers must make personal and emotional decisions. An authentic slang, with which Coloured Afrikaans teenagers are more likely to identify, seems to be the variety of choice for issues of a more serious, personal and emotional nature.
- (d) For Sepedi teenagers, teenager slang does not seem the variety of choice for persuasive messages of a more serious nature. Standard



Sepedi seems to be more favourably perceived when dealing with topics of a more serious nature, than teenager slang varieties. Furthermore, Sepedi teenagers tend to be more socially attracted to and to trust the writer of Standard Sepedi more than the writers of the teenager varieties when the issue at hand is perceived as more serious in nature. It is an open question whether an authentic slang, which Sepedi teenagers are more likely to identify with, would be the preferred choice in topics of a less serious nature (i.e. topics with a more light-hearted tone).

- (e) When opting to use teenager slang (which seems more likely for the Coloured Afrikaans teenagers), it is best to include the teenagers themselves to construct an authentic slang variety, rather than using a teenager slang that is based on assumptions and stereotypes of what the writer believes the teenager variety looks like.

The above guidelines are an attempt to provide document designers with an indication of what can be expected when opting to use teenager slang in the print media for the language groups under discussion. These guidelines do not replace proper pre-testing, but they could give an indication on how to direct the use of language varieties in print-based persuasive messages when targeting Coloured Afrikaans, White Afrikaans, English and Sepedi teenagers in South Africa.



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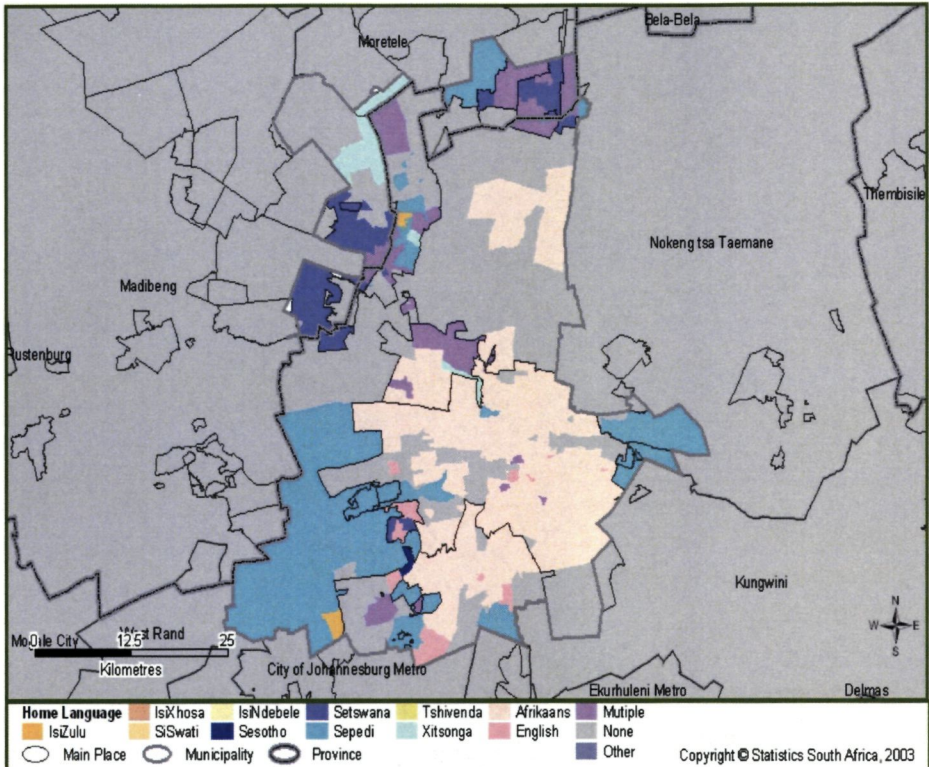
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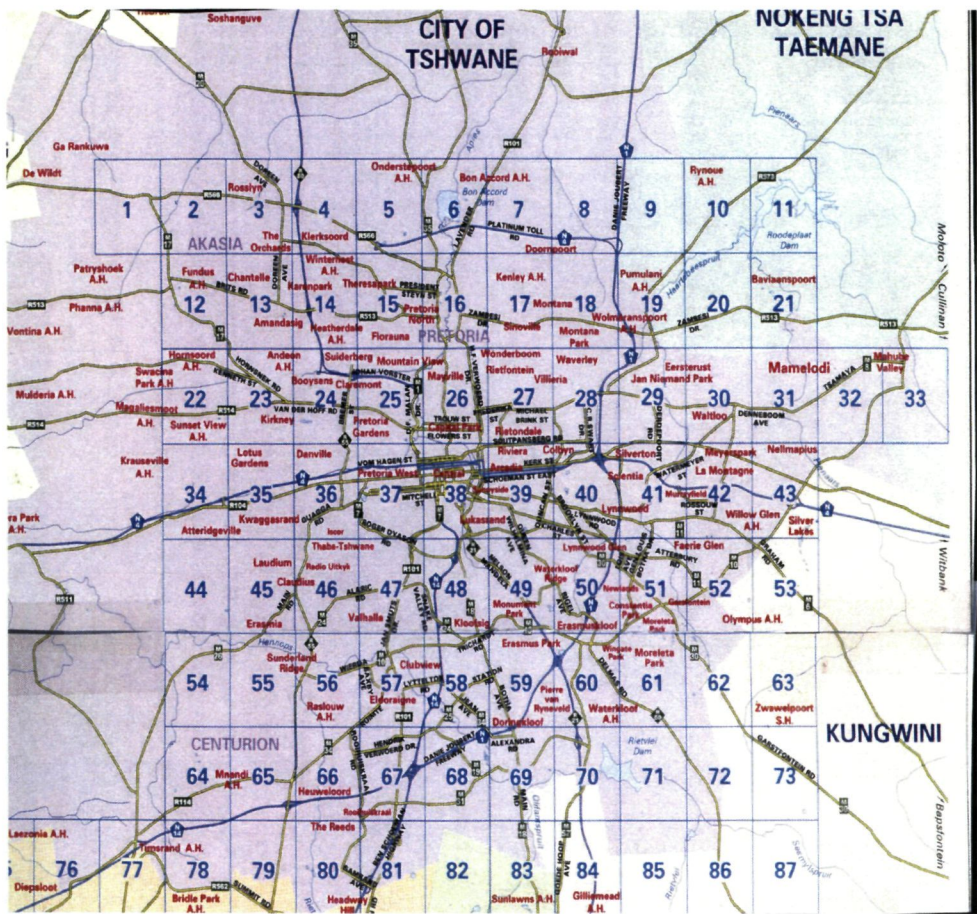
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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Digital map of home language distribution in the Tshwane municipality (Chapter 3)



Appendix B: Tshwane street map (Chapter 3)



## **Appendix C: High schools in blocks 29, 41 and 42 (Chapter 3)**

The following high schools (with the exclusion of educational and training centres, and special schools) are in these blocks (based on the school list of the Gauteng Department of Education):

- ×Prosperitus Secondary School (excluded on the basis that it is a public as well as technical school)
- ✓Eersterust Secondary School
- ✓Silverton High School
- ×Cornerstone College Secondary (excluded on the basis that it is a college school)
- ×St Alban College (excluded on the basis that it is a college school)
- ×Willowridge High School (excluded on the basis that it is an English medium school)
- ✓Die Wilgers High School
- ×FH Odendaal High School (randomly excluded)

## **Appendix D: High schools in Atteridgeville (Chapter 3)**

- ×Bokgoni Technical Secondary (excluded on the basis that it is a technical school)
- ×Holy Trinity High (Catholic Secondary) (excluded on the basis that it is a religious-oriented school)
- ✓Hofmeyr Secondary
- ✓Saulridge Secondary
- ✓Phelindaba Secondary
- ×David Hellen Peta Secondary (randomly excluded)
- ×Dr WF Nkomo Secondary (randomly excluded)



**Appendix E: An example of the original loveLife text used as primary stimulus text (Chapter 3)**

***The loveLife variety***

**Getting around**

Why have one guy or gal when you can have many? It's about quantity, right? WRONG. The days of the playa are over.

Some of us lurv to score. We mean sleeping with a hot new babe or guy every night, or trying to be a bigger playa than the rest of the crowd. But these games could land us in a pit of problems. You know that it will probably kill you as your chance of catching HIV/Aids skyrockets. Having one love is heaps better than being a playa.

## Appendix F: Examples of the Standard Afrikaans and Standard Sepedi texts (Chapter 3)

### *Standard Afrikaans*

#### **Rondslaap**

Hoekom slegs een kêrel of meisie hê as jy baie kan hê. Dit gaan mos oor getalle, nie waar nie? VERKEERD. Die dae van rondslaap is verby.

Sommige van ons hou daarvan om rond te slaap. Ons bedoel daarmee om elke aand met 'n ander seksueel aantreklike meisie of seun te slaap of om meer seksmaats te hê as die res van die groep. Maar hierdie speletjies kan vir ons ernstige probleme veroorsaak. Jy weet dit kan jou lewe kos, want jou kans om MIV/Vigs te kry skiet die hoogte in. Om een verhouding te hê, is baie beter as om verskillende seksmaats te hê.

### *Standard Sepedi*

#### **Go robalana le yo mongwe le yo mongwe**

Ke ka lebaka la eng o swanetše go ba le lesogana le letee goba lekgarebe le letee mola o kgona go ba le a mantši? Naa ke ka lebaka la bontši? O a dumela? PHOŠO Matšatši a go robalana le mang goba mang a fetile.

Ba bangwe ba rena ba rata go robalana le mang kapa mang Re ra gore go robalana le lekgarebe goba lesogana le le kganyogegago le lefsa bošego bjo bongwe le bjo bongwe goba go leka go robala le masogana goba makgarebe a mantši go feta sehlopha ka moka. Fela dipapadi tše di ka re tlišetša mathata a mašoro. O a tseba gore mohlomongwe di ka go bolaya ka gobane mabaka a gago go hwetša HIV/AIDS a godimodimo. Go ba le moratuwa yo motee fela go kaone kudu le go ba le barobalani ba bantši.

## Appendix G: Examples of the three standard variety texts used to elicit authentic slang (Chapter 3)

### *Standard English*

#### Sleeping around

Why have one boy- or girlfriend when you can have many? It is about quantity, you agree? WRONG. The days of sleeping around are over.

Some of us love to sleep around. We mean sleeping with a new sexually attractive girl or boy every night, or trying to have more sex partners than the rest of the group. But these games could cause us serious problems. You know that it will probably kill you as your chance of getting HIV/AIDS is sky-high. Having one relationship is far better than being with different sex partners.

### *Standard Afrikaans*

#### Rondslaap

Hoekom slegs een kêrel of meisie hê as jy baie kan hê. Dit gaan mos oor getalle, nie waar nie? VERKEERD. Die dae van rondslaap is verby

Sommige van ons hou daarvan om rond te slaap. Ons bedoel daarmee om elke aand met 'n ander seksueel aantreklike meisie of seun te slaap of om meer seksmaats te hê as die res van die groep. Maar hierdie speletjies kan vir ons ernstige probleme veroorsaak. Jy weet dit kan jou lewe kos, want jou kans om MIV/Vigs te kry skiet die hoogte in. Om een verhouding te hê, is baie beter as om verskillende seksmaats te hê.

**Go robalana le yo mongwe le yo mongwe**

Ke ka lebaka la eng o swanetše go ba le lesogana le letee goba lekgarebe le letee mola o kgona go ba le a mantši? Naa ke ka lebaka la bontši? O a dumela? PHOŠO. Matšatši a go robalana le mang goba mang a fetile.

Ba bangwe ba rena ba rata go robalana le mang kapa mang. Re ra gore go robalana le lekgarebe goba lesogana le le kganyogegago le lefsa bošego bjo bongwe le bjo bongwe goba go leka go robala le masogana goba makgarebe a mantši go feta sehlopha ka moka. Fela dipapadi tše di ka re tlišetša mathata a mašoro. O a tseba gore mohlomongwe di ka go bolaya ka gobane mabaka a gago go hwetša HIV/AIDS a godimodimo. Go ba le moratiwa yo motee fela go kaone kudu le go ba le barobalani ba bantši.

***Authentic Coloured Afrikaans slang text***

**Rondbak**

Hoekom slegs een ou of dol hê as jy 'n gang kan hê. Dit gaan mos oor nommers, of hoe? WRONG. Die dae van rondbak is kla.

Sommige van ons like rondbak. Ons meen om elke aand met 'n different ntcha dol of ou te bak of om meer bakkers te hê as die res van die gang. Maar hierdie games kan vir ons serious problems gee. Jy weet dit kan jou sat maak, want jou kans om die Groot Siekte te kry is sky-high. Om een relationship te hê, is ntchaer as om different bakkers te hê.

***Authentic White Afrikaans slang text***

**Rondraps**

Hoekom slegs een ou of chick hê as jy baie kan hê. Dit gaan mos oor hoeveel, of hoe? WRONG. Die dae van rondraps is klaar.

Sommige van ons like om rond te raps. Ons meen om elke aand met 'n ander sexy chick of ou te raps of om meer sex partners te hê as die res van die gang. Maar hierdie games kan vir ons serious problems gee. Jy weet dit kan jou lewe vat, want jou kans om Aids te kry is baie hoog. Om een relationship te hê, is cooler as om baie sex partners te hê.

***Authentic Sepedi slang text***

**Go gidla le baie mense**

Ke ka lebaka la eng o swanetše go ba le leauthi le letee or tšheri e tee mola o kgona go ba le ba babaie. Naa ke ka lebaka la bobaie? O a frostana? MISTAKE. Matsatši a go gidla le baie mense a stšhaile.

Ba bangwe ba rena ba frostana go gidla le baie mense. Re ra gore go gidla le tšheri or leauthi le le dumegago le lefsa bošego bjo bongwe le bjo bongwe goba go try go gidla le maaauthi or ditšheri tše baie go feta group ka moka. Fela medlalo ye e ka re tlišetša diprobleme tše blind. O a tseba gore mohlomongwe di ka go sata ka gobane direason tša go krey a Z3 di toptop. Go ba le regte e one go betere thata le go ba le bagidlani ba babaie.

### ***Authentic English slang text***

#### **Screwing around**

Why have one guy or chick when you can have many? It's about numbers, right. NAH. The days of screwing around are finished.

Some of us dig screwing around. We mean screwing with a hot new chick or guy every night, or trying to have more sex buddies than the rest of the gang. But these flings could cause us hectic issues. You know that it will probably get you six feet under as your chance of getting Aids is flippin high. Having one lover is way cooler than getting with many sex buddies.

## Appendix I: Results of the pretesting of the questionnaire among Sepedi learners (Chapter 3)

The following intelligibility problems were experienced with the original items (the problematic items are in bold):

### (i) *Items relating to language perceptions*

Violation of language expectations

Original item	Suggested improvement
<b>is what I expected it to be – is not what I expected it to be</b>	is what I expected for pamphlets on HIV/AIDS – is not what I expected for pamphlets on HIV/AIDS
<b>surprising – not surprising</b>	surprising for pamphlets on HIV/AIDS – not surprising for pamphlets on HIV/AIDS

### (ii) *Items relating to perceived source-receiver similarities*

Attitudinal, value and background similarities

Original item	Suggested improvement
<i>Attitude</i> <b>unlike</b> me – like me	not like me – like me
<i>Value</i> morals like mine – morals <b>unlike</b> mine sexual attitudes <b>unlike</b> mine – sexual attitudes like mine	morals like mine – morals different from mine sexual attitudes different from mine – sexual attitudes like mine
<i>Background</i> <b>economic</b> situation different from mine – <b>economic</b> situation like mine to be of an <b>inferior</b> social status to mine – to be of a <b>superior</b> social status to mine	financial situation different from mine – financial situation like mine to be of a lower social status to mine – to be of a higher social status to mine

The learners read the item “unlike” as “like” and could not see the difference between “like” and “unlike”. For this reason all the items with “unlike” were replaced by “different” or “not like me”.

#### Source's in-group identification

Original item	Suggested improvement
The writer is a person who feels strong <b>ties</b> with teenagers.	The writer is a person who has a strong relationship with teenagers.

#### (iii) *Items relating to affective effects*

Feelings of pleasure and arousal, attention for the language, and awareness of group identity

Original item	Suggested improvement
<i>Pleasure</i> hopeful – <b>despairing</b>	hopeful – without hope
<i>Arousal</i> <b>aroused</b> – unaroused <b>jittery</b> – dull	active – not active full of energy – without energy
<i>Attention</i> <b>stimulating</b> – boring personal – <b>impersonal</b> inviting – <b>detached</b>	enjoyable – boring personal – not personal inviting – uninviting
<i>Awareness of group identity</i> The text on HIV/AIDS made me <b>conscious</b> of being a teenager.	The text on HIV/AIDS made me aware of being a teenager.



(iv) *Items relating to persuasion-related source characteristics*

Source trustworthiness

Original item	Suggested improvement
<b>sympathetic – unsympathetic</b>  sinful – <b>virtuous</b>	evokes feelings of sympathy – does not evoke feelings of sympathy sinful – has high moral standards

When the word “feeling” was included the learners understood the items better.

(v) *Items relating to background variables*

Normative beliefs and participants’ identification with the in-group

Original item	Suggested improvement
<i>Normative beliefs</i> Most people whose opinions I <b>value</b> would <b>approve</b> my not sleeping around.	Most people whose opinions are important to me say that I should not sleep around.
<i>Participants’ identification with in-group</i> I am a person who feels strong <b>ties</b> with teenagers	I am a person who has a strong relationship with teenagers

(vi) *Items relating to accommodation indicators*

External pressure

Original item	Suggested improvement
The writer was <b>instructed</b> by his or her <b>immediate superiors</b> to use this kind of language.	The writer was told by his or her boss to use this kind of language.

(vii) *Items relating to appropriateness of language variety*

Original item	Suggested improvement
<b>inappropriate</b> for written <b>brochures</b> on HIV/AIDS – <b>appropriate</b> for written <b>brochures</b> on HIV/AIDS	wrong for pamphlets on HIV/AIDS – right for pamphlets on HIV/AIDS

The term “brochure” was not familiar to the learners, and was replaced by the more familiar term “pamphlets”.

The problems encountered with the standard/non-standard and formality scales were discussed in 3.5.2.

## Appendix J: Results of the pretesting of the revised questionnaire among Afrikaans learners (Chapter 3)

(The problematic items are in bold.)

### (i) Items relating to language perceptions

#### Violation of language expectations

Original item	Suggested improvement
<b>The language is:</b>	If someone would give me a pamphlet on HIV/AIDS I would:
<b>what I expected for pamphlets on HIV/AIDS – is not what I expected for pamphlets on HIV/AIDS</b>	expect to find the language that was used in the text in the pamphlet – not expect to find the language that was used in the text in the pamphlet
<b>surprising for pamphlets on HIV/AIDS – not surprising for pamphlets on HIV/AIDS</b>	be surprised if I find the language that was used in the text in the pamphlet– not be surprised if I find the language that was used in the text in the pamphlet

The learners interpreted the original items of the language expectancy scale as how they would like to see the language usage in HIV/AIDS pamphlets. The scale intends to measure participants' current expected language behaviour for HIV/AIDS pamphlets. The context-based improved items provide the participants with a more familiar situation (i.e. exposure to a current pamphlet). The real-life scenario makes it easier for the participants to indicate the language behaviour they would expect to find in a current pamphlet.

(ii) *Items relating to perceived source-receiver similarities*

Value similarity

Original item	Suggested improvement
has <b>morals</b> like mine – has <b>morals</b> different from mine	has principles like mine – has principles different from mine

(iii) *Items relating to persuasion-related source characteristics*

Perceived source expertise and trustworthiness

Original item	Suggested improvement
<i>Source expertise</i> expert – <b>inexpert</b> <b>competent</b> – <b>incompetent</b>	expert – not an expert capable – not capable
<i>Source trustworthiness</i> <b>evokes</b> feelings of sympathy – does not <b>evoke</b> feelings of sympathy	brings about feelings of sympathy – does not bring about feelings of sympathy

Learners interpreted “competent” as “competitive” and the item was therefore replaced with the more familiar “capable”. Learners also experienced problems with the prefix *in-* denoting the meaning “not”. It was replaced by the item “not”.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Number of questionnaire:

1	2	3	4

Afrikaans:  
English:  
Sepedi:

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

5

I/L:  
S/I 1:  
S/I 2:  
St/I:

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

6

## QUESTIONNAIRE ON HIV/AIDS TEXT

This questionnaire is designed to get information about your **opinion** about the writer of an HIV/AIDS text. We hope that you will answer these questions frankly and honestly. People have different opinions, so please keep in mind that we are interested in your **opinion, there are no “wrong” answers**. Also remember that your answers are completely anonymous.

This questionnaire requires approximately 40 minutes to complete.

The questionnaire consists of 4 sections:

Section A requires some personal information.

Section B requires your opinion after reading the text.

Section C consists of questions that deal with group identities, personal beliefs and language status.

Section D consists of various open-ended questions.

### Instructions

1. Please read each question carefully, and answer the questions to the best of your knowledge. Take as much time as you need. Please work from front to back of the questionnaire, and do not go back to previous sections.
2. Be sure to follow directions given for answering sets of questions. Please answer all questions; **do not skip any questions**.

Thanking you

**SECTION A: Personal information**

Now, we would like some information about you. Please answer the following questions about you. ***Do not write in the right-hand column, it is for official use only.***

1. How old are you? .....

**Place a tick (✓) in the appropriate block.**

2. What is your sex?

Male..... ☐

Female..... ☐

3. Which language do you speak at home?

Afrikaans ..... ☐

English..... ☐

Sepedi (Northern Sotho)..... ☐

Sesotho (Southern Sotho).... ☐

IsiZulu..... ☐

IsiXhosa..... ☐

IsiNdebele..... ☐

Setswana..... ☐

SiSwati..... ☐

Tshivenda..... ☐

Xitsonga..... ☐

Other..... ☐ Specify .....

4. What is your second language at school?

Afrikaans ..... ☐

English..... ☐

Sepedi (Northern Sotho)..... ☐

Sesotho (Southern Sotho).... ☐

IsiZulu..... ☐

IsiXhosa..... ☐

IsiNdebele..... ☐

Setswana..... ☐

SiSwati..... ☐

Tshivenda..... ☐

Xitsonga..... ☐

Other..... ☐ Specify .....

**Official use**

--	--

7

8

--

9

--	--

10

11

--	--

12

13

5. What is your religion?

Christian faith..... ☐

Muslim ..... ☐

Other:..... ☐ Specify: .....



14



**SECTION B: GIVE YOUR OPINION AFTER READING THE TEXT ON  
HIV/AIDS (on page 5)**

**Instructions**

1. You will get the following kinds of questions:

**The first kind of question you will be asked looks like this:**

*I find the text interesting.*

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

If you find the text very much **uninteresting**, you will tick (✓) *strongly disagree*.

If you find the text somewhat **uninteresting**, you will tick *disagree*.

If you find the text neither **uninteresting** nor *interesting*, you will tick *neutral*.

If you find the text somewhat *interesting*, you will tick *agree*.

If you find the text very much *interesting*, you will tick *strongly agree*.

**The second kind of question you will be asked looks like this:**

*I find the text:*

	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	
interesting						uninteresting

(First block) (Second block) (Middle block) (Fourth block) (Last block)

If you find the text very much *interesting*, you will tick (✓) the first block from the left.

If you find the text somewhat *interesting*, you will tick the second block from the left.

If you find the text neither *interesting* nor *uninteresting* you will tick the middle block.

If you find the text somewhat *uninteresting*, you will tick the fourth block from the left.

If you find the text very much *uninteresting*, you will tick the last block from the left.

**Please note that in some cases the positive item (for example *interesting*) appears on the right-hand side, while the negative item (for example *uninteresting*) appears on the left-hand side. For example:**

*I find the writer:*

	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	
uninteresting						interesting

(First block) (Second block) (Middle block) (Fourth block) (Last block)

If you find the writer very much *uninteresting*, you will tick (✓) the first block from the left.

If you find the writer somewhat *uninteresting*, you will tick the second block from the left.

If you find the writer neither *interesting* nor *uninteresting* you will tick the middle block.

If you find the writer somewhat *interesting*, you will tick the fourth block from the left.

If you find the writer very much *interesting*, you will tick the last block from the left.

2. If you have ticked a block but want to change it, just cross it out with an X, and tick another block, for example:

*While reading the text on HIV/AIDS I felt like a teenager.*

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
✗		✓		

3. Please tick the block which best reflects your opinion of the writer.  
 4. Now read the text below on HIV/AIDS **only once** and then answer the questions on the following pages.

### TEXT on HIV/AIDS

#### **Rondbak**

Hoekom slegs een dol of ou hê as jy 'n gang kan hê. Dit gaan mos oor nommers, of hoe? **WRONG**. Die dae van rondbak is kla.

Sommige van ons like rondbak. Ons meen om elke aand met 'n different ntcha dol of ou te bak of om meer bakkers te hê as die res van die gang. Maar hierdie games kan vir ons serious problems gee. Jy weet dit kan jou sat maak, want jou kans om die Groot Siekte te kry is sky-high. Om een relationship te hê, is ntchaer as om different bakkers te hê.

[Please turn page and begin answering the questions]

**Be sure to answer all items - do not omit any. Never tick (✓) more than one block at a time.**

After reading the text, how do you feel right now, at this very moment?

happy	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	unhappy	<input type="text"/>
							15
annoyed	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	pleased	<input type="text"/>
							16
satisfied	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	unsatisfied	<input type="text"/>
							17
hopeful	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	without hope	<input type="text"/>
							18
relaxed	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	bored	<input type="text"/>
							19
active	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	not active	<input type="text"/>
							20
sleepy	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	wide-awake	<input type="text"/>
							21
excited	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	calm	<input type="text"/>
							22
full of energy	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	without energy	<input type="text"/>
							23
stimulated	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	relaxed	<input type="text"/>
							24

While reading the text on HIV/AIDS I felt like a teenager

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

25

The text on HIV/AIDS made me aware of being a teenager

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

26

The writer's language use is like mine when I talk to my friends

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

27

When talking to my friends, I talk like the writer

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

28

When I talk to my friends, I would use words similar to that of the writer

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

29

When talking to my friends, my language use is different to that of the writer

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

30

I would use the same words when talking to a friend

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

31

The writer and I could never have a personal friendship with each other

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

32

I think the writer could be a friend of mine

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

33

I would like to have a friendly chat with the writer.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

34

The writer would fit into my circle of friends.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

35

The writer was told by his or her boss to use this kind of language.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

36

The writer was under pressure to use this kind of language.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

37

The writer made an effort to speak the language I use among friends.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

38

I support the position taken by the writer, namely not to sleep around.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

39

The writer is right when saying not to sleep around.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

40

I am in favour of the position taken by the writer, namely not to sleep around.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

41

I plan to do what the writer advises, namely not to sleep around.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

42

I will make an effort to do what the writer advises, namely not to sleep around.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

43

I intend to do what the writer advises, namely not to sleep around.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

44

The writer is a person who identifies with teenagers.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

45

The writer is a person who has a strong relationship with teenagers.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

46

The writer is a person who is glad to belong to the group of teenagers.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

47

The writer is a person who sees himself or herself as belonging to teenagers.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

48

I find it easy to understand what the writer was trying to tell me.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

49

I find it difficult to understand what the writer was trying to tell me.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

50

I find the writer:

does not  
think  
like me

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

does think  
like me

51

behaves  
like me

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

does not  
behave like  
me

52

similar  
to me

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

different to  
me

53

not like  
me

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

like me

54

I find the writer:

has  
principles  
like mine

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

has  
principles  
different  
from mine

55

has sexual  
attitudes  
different  
from mine

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

has sexual  
attitudes  
like mine

56

I find the writer:

from a  
social class  
similar to  
mine

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

from a  
social class  
different  
from mine

57

has a  
financial  
situation  
different  
from mine

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

has a  
financial  
situation  
like mine

58



I find the writer:

has a  
background  
different  
from mine

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

has a  
background  
similar to  
mine

59

culturally  
similar

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

culturally  
different

60

has a social  
status like  
mine

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

has a social  
status  
different  
from mine

61

to be of a  
lower  
social  
status to  
mine

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

to be of a  
higher  
social  
status to  
mine

62

I find the writer:

unintelligent

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

intelligent

63

untrained

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

trained

64

an expert

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

not an  
expert

65

capable

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

not  
capable

66

stupid

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

bright

67

informed

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

uninformed

68

I find the writer:

brings  
about  
feelings of  
sympathy

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

does not  
bring  
about  
feelings of  
sympathy

69

trustworthy

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

untrustworthy

70

of low  
character

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

of high  
character

71

sinful

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

has high  
moral  
standards

72

selfish

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

unselfish

73

honest

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

dishonest

74

I find the writer:

to be an  
adult

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

to be a  
teenager

75

to be male

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

to be female

76

to be from  
an upper  
social class

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

to be from a  
lower social  
class

77

I find the language in the text:

attracts my attention	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	does not attract my attention	<input type="text"/>
							78
uninteresting	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	interesting	<input type="text"/>
							79
creates a sense of distance	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	creates a sense of involvement	<input type="text"/>
							80
enjoyable	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	boring	<input type="text"/>
							81
personal	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	not personal	<input type="text"/>
							82
inviting	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	uninviting	<input type="text"/>
							83

I find the language in the text:

simple	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	complicated	<input type="text"/>
							84
clear	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	unclear	<input type="text"/>
							85
difficult	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much	easy	<input type="text"/>
							86

I find the language in the text:

slang  
language

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

standard  
language

  
87

is used by  
teenagers  
on the  
playground

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

is used by  
teachers  
in the  
classroom

  
88

is wrong  
for  
pamphlets  
on  
HIV/AIDS

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

is right for  
pamphlets on  
HIV/AIDS

  
89

I find the language in the text:

is used by  
news  
readers

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

is used by  
teenagers

  
90

formal

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

casual

  
91

If someone would give me a pamphlet on HIV/AIDS I would:

expect to  
find the  
language  
that was  
used in the  
text in the  
pamphlet

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

not expect  
to find the  
language  
that was  
used in the  
text in the  
pamphlet

  
92

be  
surprised if  
I find the  
language  
that was  
used in the  
text in the  
pamphlet

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

not be  
surprised if I  
find the  
language  
that was  
used in the  
text in the  
pamphlet

  
93

**Please tick (✓) only one block per question.**

What is the writer's view on sleeping around?

- Sleeping around is a good thing. ☐
- Sleeping around is good as long as you use a condom. ☐
- Sleeping around is not a good thing. ☐

94

According to the writer, by sleeping around you can

- get many different partners ☐
- become very popular ☐
- get killed by AIDS ☐

95

The writer advises the reader to

- have more sex partners than the rest of the group ☐
- sleep every night with a new boy or girl ☐
- have onle lover rather than being with different sex partners ☐

96

According to the writer, you can get HIV/AIDS by

- using a condom ☐
- having sex with only one partner ☐
- having sex with different partners ☐

97

## SECTION C: QUESTIONS ABOUT PERSONAL BELIEFS, GROUP IDENTITIES, AND LANGUAGE STATUS

The following questions do not relate to the text on HIV/AIDS, but focus on group identities, personal beliefs, and language status.

I am a person who considers teenagers important.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

98

I am a person who identifies with teenagers.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

99

I am a person who has a strong relationship with teenagers.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

100

I am a person who is glad to belong to the group of teenagers.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

101

I am a person who sees myself as belonging to teenagers.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

102

I am a person who makes excuses for belonging to teenagers.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

103

I am a person who tries to hide belonging to the group of teenagers.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

104

I am a person who feels held back by teenagers.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

105

I am a person who is annoyed to say I am a member of the group of teenagers

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

106

I am a person who criticises teenagers

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

107

Most people who are important to me think that I should not sleep around

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

108

It is expected of me not to sleep around

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

109

Most people whose opinions are important to me say that I should not sleep around

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

110

I find sleeping around:

good

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

bad

111

negative

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

positive

112

wise

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

foolish

113

For me **not** to sleep around is:

easy

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

difficult

114

possible

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

impossible

115

not up to me

Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Very much

up to me

116



Please rate the following languages on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 having the value “not at all” and 5 the value “extremely high”. 1 represents the most negative end of the scale and 5 the most positive end of the scale. Please make sure that you answer each question by circling the position on every item.

How important are the following languages in South Africa?

*Afrikaans*

not at all      1      2      3      4      5      extremely high

117

*English*

not at all      1      2      3      4      5      extremely high

118

*Sebedi (Northern Sotho)*

not at all      1      2      3      4      5      extremely high

119

How important are the following languages internationally?

*Afrikaans*

not at all      1      2      3      4      5      extremely high

120

*English*

not at all      1      2      3      4      5      extremely high

121

*Sebedi (Northern Sotho)*

not at all      1      2      3      4      5      extremely high

122

How important are the following languages in South African schools?

*Afrikaans*

not at all      1      2      3      4      5      extremely high

123

*English*

not at all      1      2      3      4      5      extremely high

124

*Sebedi (Northern Sotho)*

not at all      1      2      3      4      5      extremely high

125

**Please rate the understanding of the questionnaire on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 having the value “no difficulties” and 5 “many difficulties”.**

Did you have difficulties in understanding the questions in the questionnaire?

no difficulties      1      2      3      4      5      many difficulties

126

**SECTION D: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS**

The following questions relate to the text on HIV/AIDS. Please complete the following questions in the space provided.

1. If your friend asks you who the writer of the text is, how will you describe the writer? Give two characteristics. List each characteristic on a separate line.

(i) .....  
(ii) .....

2. Would you regard the writer as friend?

Yes: ☐  
No: ☐  
Don't know: ☐

Give one reason why you say so.

.....

3. Do you like the language used in the text?

Yes: ☐  
No: ☐  
Don't know: ☐

Give one reason why you say so.

.....

4. Did you enjoy reading the text?

Yes: ☐  
No: ☐  
Don't know: ☐

Give one reason why you say so.

.....

Thank you for filling in the questionnaire honestly.

Your participation has made a major contribution to make HIV/AIDS brochures more effective. We believe that, as a result of this study, we will be better able to construct HIV/AIDS prevention messages in the near future.

Again, thank you for your time. The preliminary results should be available in 2007. If you would like to know the results, please feel free to contact the researcher, Elvis Saal, at 083 376 1769. We appreciate your input.

## **Appendix L: Items that produced a negative correlation with other items in the scale (Chapter 4)**

The following items produced a negative correlation with the other items in the scales:

### **Language perception**

- In all the language groups, the language similarity item *When talking to my friends, my language use is different to that of the writer*, correlated negatively with the other 4 items in the scale. For this reason the item has been omitted.

### **Source-receiver similarities**

- In all the language groups, the background similarity item (I find the writer) *to be of a lower social status to mine – to be of a higher social status to mine*, correlated negatively with the other items in the scale, and has been omitted.

### **Persuasion-related source characteristics**

- For the social attractiveness scale, the item *The writer and I could never have a personal friendship with each other*, produced a negative correlation with the other 3 items, and has been omitted in all the language groups.

### **Affective effects**

- The attention item (I find the language) *personal – not personal*, has been omitted in all the language groups.

### **Background variables**

- The behavioural control item (For me not to sleep around is) *not up to me – up to me*, has been omitted in all the language groups.
- The normative beliefs item *It is expected of me not to sleep around*, has been omitted only in the Coloured Afrikaans group.
- The attitude towards the intended behaviour scale item (I find sleeping around) *negative – positive*, has been omitted in the Sepedi group.

## Appendix M: Exact correlations (Chapter 4)

	Writer has similar back-ground	Writer's social attrac-tive-ness	Atten-tion for language	Writer's expertise	Writer's trust-worthi-ness	Similar language use	Writer's in-group identi-fication	Writer has similar attitude
Writer has similar background	1	.38	.30	.36	.33	.30	.25	.61
Writer's social attractiveness	.38	1	.59	.50	.55	.51	.43	.43
Attention for language	.30	.59	1	.59	.61	.48	.43	.41
Writer's expertise	.36	.50	.59	1	.72	.37	.38	.40
Writer's trustworthi-ness	.33	.55	.61	.72	1	.33	.41	.37
Similar language use	.30	.51	.48	.37	.33	1	.40	.36
Writer's in-group identi-fication	.25	.43	.43	.38	.41	.40	1	.35
Writer has similar attitude	.61	.43	.41	.40	.37	.36	.35	1

# SAMENVATTING

Tienerslang in de loveLife-campagne (loveLife-variëteit)	Tienerslang van middelbare school-leerlingen (authentiek slang)	Standaard Engels
<p><b>Getting around</b></p> <p>Why have one guy or gal when you can have many? It's about quantity, right? <b>WRONG.</b> The days of the playa are over.</p> <p>Some of us lurv to score. We mean sleeping with a hot new babe or guy every night, or trying to be a bigger playa than the rest of the crowd. But these games could land us in a pit of problems. You know that it will probably kill you as your chance of catching HIV/Aids skyrockets. Having one love is heaps better than being a playa.</p>	<p><b>Screwing around</b></p> <p>Why have one guy or chick when you can have many? It's about numbers, right. <b>NAH.</b> The days of screwing around are finished.</p> <p>Some of us dig screwing around. We mean screwing with a hot new chick or guy every night, or trying to have more sex buddies than the rest of the gang. But these flings could cause us hectic issues. You know that it will probably get you six feet under as your chance of getting Aids is flippin high. Having one lover is way cooler than getting with many sex buddies.</p>	<p><b>Sleeping around</b></p> <p>Why have one boy- or girlfriend when you can have many? It is about quantity, you agree? <b>WRONG.</b> The days of sleeping around are over.</p> <p>Some of us love to sleep around. We mean sleeping with a new sexually attractive girl or boy every night, or trying to have more sex partners than the rest of the group. But these games could cause us serious problems. You know that it will probably kill you as your chance of getting HIV/AIDS is sky-high. Having one relationship is far better than being with different sex partners.</p>

De bovenstaande tekstfragmenten demonstreren een belangrijke vraag waar documentontwerpers mee geconfronteerd worden wanneer ze informatie over HIV/AIDS toegankelijk proberen te maken voor tieners. Welke taalvariëteit moeten ze kiezen om de kans op acceptatie van de boodschap te vergroten? Zijn uitdrukkingen zoals “the days of screwing around are finished” (authentiek tienerslang) of “the days of the playa are over” (loveLife-

tienvariëteit) effectiever in het vergroten van de acceptatie van de boodschap dan “the days of sleeping around are over” (standaardvariëteit)? Airhihenbuwa (1995, p. 41) claimt dat het gebruik van een taal waar jonge mensen zich mee associëren de effectiviteit van HIV/AIDS-communicatie kan verbeteren. Aan de andere kant zijn er mensen die denken dat het gebruik van tienerslang in HIV-berichten ineffectief is en alleen maar “mooier maakt wat het juist zou moeten voorkomen” (*The Sunday Telegraph*, 20 juli 2008).

Onderzoek op het gebied van taal en overtuiging biedt weinig aanknopingspunten om deze discussie te beslechten. Er is nauwelijks aandacht besteed aan de invloed van het gebruik van een niet-standaard taalvariëteit (zoals tienerslang) op overtuigingskracht. Toch worden er in schriftelijke HIV-communicatie vaak variëteiten van tienerslang gebruikt. Dat gebeurt bijvoorbeeld in loveLife-campagnes in Zuid-Afrika. Daar wordt een Engelse tienerslangvariëteit gebruikt in schriftelijke boodschappen gericht op een linguïstisch heterogene groep van adolescenten.

In dit onderzoek werd een poging gedaan om het effect van tienerslang op de acceptatie van een boodschap over HIV/AIDS boodschap te onderzoeken in vier verschillende taalgroepen. Daarnaast werd onderzocht langs welke routes tienerslang effect zou kunnen sorteren; daartoe werd een model ontwikkeld voor de mogelijke werking van tienerslang in schriftelijke HIV-communicatie.

In Hoofdstuk 1 wordt de doelstelling van dit onderzoek uiteengezet, gevolgd door de onderzoeksvragen. De doelstelling van het onderzoek is tweeledig. In de eerste plaats wordt getracht een bijdrage te leveren aan de kennis over de invloed van de vorm van de boodschap op de overtuigingskracht. Slater (2006, p.149) merkt op dat er in de literatuur relatief veel aandacht is voor de vraag naar wat de inhoud van een boodschap zou moeten vormen, terwijl er maar weinig aandacht is voor de vraag hoe die inhoud het best verpakt kan worden. Met dit onderzoek wordt geprobeerd een antwoord op die vraag te formuleren waar het de mogelijke invloed van slang op overtuigingskracht betreft. In de tweede plaats is dit onderzoek erop gericht inzicht te verschaffen in de mate waarin de invloed van slang op de overtuigingskracht bepaald wordt door de authenticiteit van de slangvariëteit. In de campagneboodschappen van loveLife wordt gebruik gemaakt van een soort “universeel” Engels tienerslang. Dit tienerslang zou alle Zuid-Afrikaanse tieners aan moeten spreken. In Zuid-



Afrika worden echter elf officiële talen gesproken, elk met zijn eigen tienervariëteit. Dit roept de vraag op of de door loveLife gehanteerde variëteit door tieners met verschillende moedertalen als een authentieke variëteit wordt ervaren. Getracht wordt inzicht te verschaffen in het belang van de authenticiteit van slang voor de percepties en overtuigingskracht van HIV/AIDS boodschappen.

Volgens loveLife wordt in de boodschappen van deze organisatie een taal gebruikt “that young people relate to and understand” (loveLife, 2003, p. 3), wat de overtuigingskracht van die boodschappen zou verhogen. Deze aanname, dat tienerslang een effectief middel kan zijn wanneer er gecommuniceerd wordt met tieners, resulteerde in de eerste onderzoeksvraag.

OV1: Welk effect hebben verschillende variëteiten van tienerslang op de acceptatie van de boodschap?

De deelname van jongeren uit verschillende taalgroepen in dit onderzoek maakte de volgende onderzoeksvraag mogelijk.

OV2: Verschillen de diverse taalgroepen wat betreft hun perceptie van het gebruik van tienerslang in gedrukte media, hun perceptie van de bron en hun acceptatie van de boodschap?

Om te kunnen begrijpen *hoe* tienerslang invloed kan uitoefenen op de acceptatie van de boodschap werd de volgende onderzoeksvraag opgenomen, gericht op de ontwikkeling van een boodschap-effect model voor tienerslang.

OV3: Langs welke route kan tienerslang de acceptatie van de boodschap beïnvloeden?

In hoofdstuk 2 wordt het theoretisch kader van het onderzoek beschreven. Eerst wordt het concept slang geoperationaliseerd; daarna volgt een bespreking van de routes waarlangs taalvariëteiten de acceptatie van een boodschap kunnen beïnvloeden.

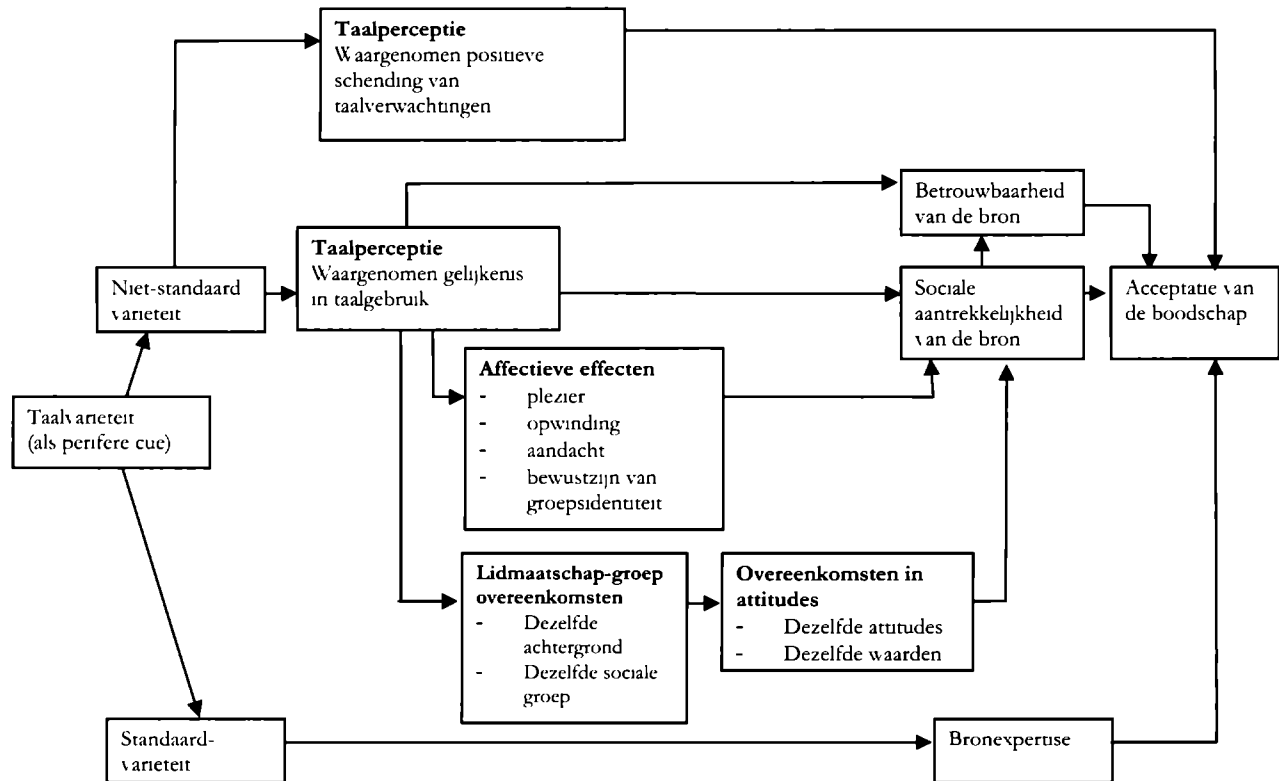
Het concept *slang* is zelden gedefinieerd op een voor linguïsten bevredigende manier (zie Dumas & Lighter, 1978, p. 5). Voor sommigen is slang primair een sociologisch construct (de focus ligt dan op de wijze waarop

slang wordt gebruikt om bestaande sociale normen te trotseren), terwijl anderen slang in de eerste plaats zien als een linguïstisch construct (slang wordt dan gezien als iets “onder” de standaardtaal). In dit onderzoek wordt slang beschouwd als een sociolinguïstisch construct: een onderscheidend vocabulaire waarmee een sociale identiteit wordt weergegeven. Slang wordt hier gezien als een gradueel verschijnsel: aan de ene kant van het continuüm vinden we de “echte” slangwoorden die groepsspecifiek zijn, en aan de andere kant van het continuüm zijn er de meer algemene informele woorden die niet groepsspecifiek zijn en die breder gebruikt worden. Om slangwoorden in schriftelijke HIV-boodschappen te identificeren werd een taxonomie van het slanglexicon ontwikkeld waarbij onderscheid wordt gemaakt tussen woorden die in het woordenboek expliciet als slang, spreektaal of informeel worden gecategoriseerd, en woorden waarvan de slangbetekenis niet in woordenboeken is opgenomen. Tot de tweede soort slangwoorden werden gerekend modewoorden [bijvoorbeeld bestaande woorden/uitdrukkingen met nieuwe betekenissen, zoals *player* (“someone who sleeps around”) en spellingsvarianten van een bestaand woord, zoals *gal* (“girl”)], afkortingen, zoals *the big A* (“Aids”), afleidingen uit populaire cultuur, zoals *nah* (“No” – afkomstig uit de Borat-film), en leenwoorden uit andere talen, zoals *stukkie* (“vriendin”).

Slang is voornamelijk een gesproken variëteit, maar er zijn ook allerlei voorbeelden van het gebruik van tienerslang in de gedrukte media zoals kranten en tijdschriften. Tienerslang wordt ook regelmatig gebruikt in tienerboeken. Met tienerslang kan worden geprobeerd om groeplidmaatschap tot uitdrukking te brengen, aan te geven dat de bron “een van ons” is, een gelijke (een *peer*). Het laten figureren van *peers* (*peer educators*) in HIV/AIDS-preventiecampagnes is vrij wijdverbreid, en het succes is wisselend. In dit onderzoek worden de effecten in schriftelijke communicatie onderzocht van de suggestie met talige cues dat de bron een *peer* is.

In het tweede deel van Hoofdstuk 2 wordt een model gepresenteerd voor de routes waarlangs tienervariëteiten de acceptatie van de boodschap kunnen beïnvloeden. In het model in Figuur 1 worden twee mogelijke routes afgebeeld: een waarin een positieve schending van taalverwachtingen de acceptatie van de boodschap beïnvloedt (de route helemaal bovenlangs), en een waarin de taalvariëteit gepercipieerde kenmerken van de bron beïnvloedt, kenmerken die op hun beurt de acceptatie van de boodschap kunnen vergroten (de route

daaronder). Het boodschap-effect model voor tienerslang zoals voorgesteld in Hoofdstuk 2 ziet eruit als volgt:



**Figuur 1:** Model voor de mogelijke effecten van tienerslang in gedrukte media

Voor de bespreking van de route die betrekking heeft op de schending van taalverwachtingen is gebruik gemaakt van het *Language Expectancy Model* (LEM); daarmee kan het effect van niet-standaard variëteiten op berichtacceptatie worden verklaard en voorspeld. Het LEM stelt dat taal een door regels geleid systeem is waarin verwachtingen en normen worden ontwikkeld over wat gepast taalgedrag in bepaalde contexten is. Een positieve schending van deze verwachtingen zou de overtuigingskracht vergroten, terwijl een negatieve schending die overtuigingskracht zou verkleinen. Zo kunnen in een formele context (zoals die van de gedrukte media) uitdrukkingen als “the days of screwing around are finished” een schending van taalverwachtingen vormen. Lezers die een dergelijke uitdrukking als verrassend maar ongepast in de gegeven context zien, ervaren een negatieve schending van hun taalverwachtingen; deze schending zou de kans verkleinen dat ze zich laten overtuigen. Lezers die dit taalgebruik daarentegen als een aangename verrassing ervaren, zouden juist gemakkelijker overtuigd raken bij het gebruik van deze variëteit.

In de tweede route spelen bronkenmerken een cruciale rol in het overtuigingsproces. Om te voorspellen onder welke condities bronkenmerken de kans op acceptatie van de boodschap beïnvloeden, is gebruik gemaakt van het *Elaboration Likelihood Model* (ELM). Volgens het ELM kunnen taalvariëteiten als perifere cues werken, waarbij ze vooral effect sorteren bij een lage motivatie en/of capaciteit van de ontvanger om zich op de hoogte te stellen van argumenten die relevant zijn voor het onderwerp in kwestie. Afwijkende taalvariëteiten, zeker in schriftelijke communicatie, sporen de lezer aan om zich een beeld te vormen van de bron. In de literatuur over het overtuigingsproces worden twee dominante bronkenmerken genoemd: geloofwaardigheid van de bron (op haar beurt bepaald door deskundigheid en betrouwbaarheid) en sociale aantrekkelijkheid van de bron (de mate waarin de bron aardig wordt gevonden). Terwijl het effect van geloofwaardigheid van de bron op overtuigingskracht al veel is bestudeerd, geldt dit veel minder voor sociale aantrekkelijkheid. De weinige onderzoeken op dit terrein suggereren sterk dat een aantrekkelijke bron de potentie heeft om persuasieve uitkomsten op een positieve manier te beïnvloeden.

Zoals gezegd kunnen taalvariëteiten werken als een perifere cue doordat er bepaalde bronpercepties mee worden opgeroepen. Onderzoek naar sprekerevaluaties door ontvangers laten zien dat sprekers van de

standaardvariëteit in het algemeen als deskundiger worden gezien, terwijl sprekers van niet-standaard variëteiten in het algemeen als betrouwbaarder en sociaal aantrekkelijker worden beschouwd. Maar volgens de *Communication Accommodation Theory* (CAT) is het eerder de waargenomen gelijkenis in taalgebruik tussen zender en ontvanger die leidt tot een verhoogde aantrekkelijkheid van de spreker. Daarbij is noodzakelijk dat de ontvanger het taalgebruik van de zender als een bewuste poging tot aanpassing ziet. In de gedrukte media - waar de standaardvariëteit de norm is - zou het gebruik van een niet-standaard variëteit (zoals tienerslang) een gemarkeerde linguïstische vorm zijn die gemakkelijk door de lezer herkend kan worden en als een handeling van accommodatie kan worden beschouwd. Het gevaar is echter dat de schrijver denkt dat hij of zij de linguïstische stijl van de lezer gekozen heeft, terwijl de lezer dat anders ervaart. Dat wordt “overaccommodatie” genoemd.

Volgens de CAT zullen ontvangers die het taalgebruik van de bron ervaren als gelijk aan hun eigen linguïstische stijl, zich meer aangetrokken voelen tot de bron. Gesteld wordt echter ook wel dat het gebruik van dezelfde taal (en dan met name de niet-standaard variëteit) alleen indirect de sociale aantrekkelijkheid van de bron beïnvloedt. Gelijkheid van taalgebruik kan interacteren met affectieve effecten (zoals gevoelens van plezier en opwinding bij de ontvanger, bewustzijn van zijn/haar sociale identiteit en waargenomen aandacht voor de taal) of met andere overeenkomsten tussen bron en ontvanger. Daarbij wordt dan een onderscheid gemaakt tussen overeenkomsten in lidmaatschap van een groep en overeenkomsten in attitudes. Het blijkt dat naarmate er een grotere overeenkomst bestaat in attitudes, de aantrekkelijkheid van de bron toeneemt. In het model in Figuur 1 worden twee routes onderscheiden waarlangs het gebruik van de niet-standaard variëteit de perceptie van de betrouwbaarheid van de bron kan beïnvloeden: direct als gevolg van een waargenomen gelijkenis in taalgebruik, en indirect doordat de sociale aantrekkelijkheid van de bron toeneemt als gevolg van het gebruik van die variëteit.

In dit onderzoek werden twee tienervariëteiten gebruikt: een originele loveLife-variëteit uit de mediacampagne van loveLife, en een authentieke tienervariëteit die ontwikkeld werd met de hulp van leden van de doelgroepen. Deze tienervariëteiten werden vergeleken met de standaardvariëteit. Verondersteld werd dat de loveLife-tienervariëteit wellicht zou worden gezien

als een voorbeeld van “overaccommodatie” en daarom niet zou aansluiten bij de linguïstische stijl van de doelgroepen.

In dit onderzoek werd een aantal hypothesen getoetst. Er werd verwacht dat de (tiener)proefpersonen de authentieke slangvariëteit zouden zien als meer gelijk aan hun linguïstische stijl dan de loveLife-variëteit en de standaardvariëteit. Daarnaast werd verwacht dat de authentieke slangvariëteit meer dan de loveLife-variëteit zou worden ervaren als een positieve schending van taalverwachtingen. Bovendien werd verwacht dat, in vergelijking met de loveLife-variëteit en de standaardvariëteit, de authentieke slangvariëteit zou worden beschouwd als gunstiger in termen van affectieve effecten (i.e. resulterend in verhoogde gevoelens van plezier, aandacht voor taal en bewustzijn van sociale identiteit), en dat de schrijver van authentiek slang gunstiger zou scoren op overeenkomsten tussen bron en ontvanger (i.e. sterkere overeenkomsten in achtergrond, attitude, waarden en groepslidmaatschap) en op overtuigingsgerelateerde bronkenmerken (i.e. grotere sociale aantrekkelijkheid en betrouwbaarheid van de bron). Er werd verwacht dat de schrijver van de standaardvariëteit hoger zou worden gewaardeerd in termen van expertise in vergelijking met de schrijver van de niet-standaard variëteiten. Ten slotte werd voorspeld dat de authentieke slangvariëteit en de standaardvariëteit tot een grotere acceptatie van de boodschap zouden leiden dan de loveLife-variëteit. Basis voor deze voorspelling was de verwachting dat zowel sociale aantrekkelijkheid, als expertise en betrouwbaarheid van de bron een directe invloed hebben op de acceptatie van de boodschap.

In Hoofdstuk 3 wordt de onderzoeksmethode uiteengezet. De onderzoekspopulatie van dit onderzoek bestond uit leerlingen van middelbare scholen (*grade 11*) in het grootstedelijke gebied Tshwane (met daarbinnen Pretoria), met Afrikaans, Engels en Sepedi als thuistalen. Er werden negen openbare middelbare scholen geselecteerd: drie scholen per taalgroep.

Er werden meerdere teksten als stimulusmateriaal ontwikkeld. Een originele (Engelse) loveLife-tekst werd gebruikt als primair stimulusmateriaal. Deze loveLife-tekst werd vertaald naar Standaard Afrikaans, Standaard Engels en Standaard Sepedi. Vervolgens werd aan 191 participanten (75 Afrikaans sprekers, 71 Engels sprekers en 45 Sepedi sprekers) steeds de bij hun thuistaal behorende standaardvariëteit voorgelegd, met het verzoek om op

basis daarvan een versie te maken met hun eigen tienslang (het “authentieke slang”). Tijdens de analyse van deze teksten werd duidelijk voor de taalgroep Afrikaans dat veel slangtermen die gebruikt werden door de kleurling Afrikaans sprekenden verschilden van de slangtermen die gebruikt werden door de blanke Afrikaans sprekenden. Daarom werden twee authentieke slangversies gemaakt: één voor de kleurling Afrikaans sprekende participanten en één voor de blanke Afrikaans sprekende participanten. Voor het Engels en het Sepedi werd steeds één authentieke slangversie gemaakt. Om de geloofwaardigheid en authenticiteit van de resulterende vier authentieke slangversies te bepalen, werd een experiment uitgevoerd. Kleurling Afrikaans (n=36), blank Afrikaans (n=19), Engels (n=37) en Sepedi (n=20) sprekende participanten werd gevraagd de authentieke slangversies voor hun thuistaal te evalueren. De deelnemers moesten steeds hun voorkeur aangeven voor één van de volgende drie versies: de (Engelse) loveLife-slangversie, de standaardvariëteit (gepresenteerd in de thuistaal van de taalgroep) en de authentieke slangvariëteit (ook gepresenteerd in de thuistaal van de taalgroep). Het bleek dat de deelnemers in elk van de vier taalgroepen een duidelijke voorkeur hadden voor de authentieke slangversie.

In het hoofdexperiment (n=657) werd een vergelijking gemaakt tussen de standaardvariëteit aan de ene kant, en de loveLife en authentieke slangvariëteiten aan de andere kant, door middel van vier dealexperimenten voor de vier verschillende taalgroepen (i.e. kleurling Afrikaans (n=106), blank Afrikaans (n=149), Engels (n=162) en Sepedi (n=240) sprekende participanten). Voor elke taalgroep werden drie tekstversies gebruikt: de (Engelse) loveLife-variëteit, de authentieke slangvariëteit (in de thuistaal van de groep) en de standaardvariëteit (in de thuistaal van de groep). De drie tekstversies werden in elke taalgroep *at random* gedistribueerd; elke participant ontving slechts één van de drie tekstversies.

Als belangrijkste meetinstrument werd een vragenlijst gebruikt. Daarbij werd onderscheid gemaakt tussen variabelen die te maken hadden met de onderzoekshypothesen en controlevariabelen. De aan de hypothesen gerelateerde variabelen behelsden variabelen over taalpercepties (schending van taalverwachtingen en gelijkenis in taalgebruik), andere waargenomen overeenkomsten tussen bron en ontvanger (overeenkomsten in achtergrond, sociale groep en attitudes), affectieve factoren (gevoelens van plezier, waargenomen aandacht voor de taal en gevoelens van een verhoogd bewustzijn



van groepsidentiteit), overtuigingsgerelateerde bronkenmerken (expertise, betrouwbaarheid en sociale aantrekkelijkheid) en ten slotte acceptatie van de boodschap. Controlevariabelen waren onder meer normatieve overtuigingen, evaluaties van de begripelijkheid van taal en tekst, en waargenomen geschiktheid van de taalvariëteit voor gebruik in gedrukte media.

Voor zover mogelijk werden gestandaardiseerde meetschalen gebruikt. In sommige gevallen (zoals bij de schalen voor taalpercepties) konden geen gestandaardiseerde schalen worden gevonden, en werden schalen met meerdere items ontwikkeld op basis van de relevante literatuur en pilot studies. Om de betrouwbaarheid en validiteit van het meetinstrument verder te verbeteren, werd de vragenlijst met de hardop-denkmethode gepretest onder acht participanten.

In Hoofdstuk 4 worden de resultaten van de vier experimentele onderzoeken per taalgroep gepresenteerd, gevolgd door een onderlinge vergelijking van de vier taalgroepen, en daarna worden de resultaten van een aantal correlatieanalyses gepresenteerd waarmee de sterkte van de relaties zoals voorgesteld in het boodschap- effect model voor tienerslang werden gemeten.

De resultaten laten in alle vier de taalgroepen een relatief lage waardering zien van de loveLife-variëteit. De authentieke slang en standaardvariëteit werden over het algemeen hoger gewaardeerd in de kleurling Afrikaans en Sepedi sprekende groepen. Sepedi sprekende participanten zagen het authentieke Sepedi tienerslang als een positieve schending van hun verwachtingen. Bij de kleurling Afrikaans sprekende participanten was er ook een trend om de authentieke slangvariëteit als een positieve schending van de verwachtingen te beschouwen. De blanke Afrikaans en Engels sprekende participanten echter ervoeren authentiek slang als een negatieve schending van hun verwachtingen.

Zowel de kleurling Afrikaans als de Sepedi sprekende participanten zagen de authentieke slangvariëteit en de standaardvariëteit vergeleken met de loveLife-variëteit als meer gelijk aan hun eigen linguïstische stijl. Ook beschouwden de kleurling Afrikaans sprekende participanten de schrijver van de authentieke slangvariëteit en de schrijver van de standaardvariëteit vergeleken met de schrijver van de loveLife-variëteit als meer gelijk aan henzelf qua attitude, waarden en achtergrond. Gezien de positieve perceptie van de authentieke slangvariëteit door de kleurling Afrikaans en de Sepedi sprekende

participanten werd verwacht dat authentiek slang een positief effect zou hebben op de acceptatie van de boodschap, hetzij direct hetzij indirect via de sociale aantrekkelijkheid en/of betrouwbaarheid van de bron. Er werd echter geen effect gevonden van het gebruik van de authentieke slangvariëteit op de sociale aantrekkelijkheid en de betrouwbaarheid van de schrijver; ook was er geen effect op de acceptatie van de boodschap.

De vergelijking van de taalgroepen gaf aan dat kleurling Afrikaans en de Sepedi sprekende participanten vergelijkbare evaluatiepatronen lieten zien. Kleurling Afrikaans en Sepedi sprekende participanten zagen het taalgebruik - ongeacht de taalversie - als meer gelijk aan hun eigen taalgebruik in vergelijking met de blanke Afrikaans en de Engels sprekende participanten. Bovendien ervoeren de kleurling Afrikaans en de Sepedi sprekende participanten meer gevoelens van plezier na het lezen van de tekst, voelden zij zich meer aangetrokken tot de taal in de tekst, zagen zij de schrijver meer als iemand die zich met tieners identificeert, en zagen ze de schrijver als sociaal aantrekkelijker, betrouwbaarder en meer als expert dan de blanke Afrikaans en Engels sprekende participanten. De kleurling Afrikaans en de Sepedi sprekende participanten neigden er ook toe de authentieke slangvariëteit en de standaardvariëteit als meer gelijk aan hun eigen taalstijl te zien dan de blanke Afrikaans en Engels sprekende participanten. Daarnaast hadden de kleurling Afrikaans sprekende participanten de neiging om de schrijver van authentieke slangvariëteit en de standaardvariëteit als meer gelijk aan henzelf te zien qua attitude, waarde en achtergrond, in vergelijking met de blanke Afrikaans, Engels en Sepedi sprekende participanten.

Om de sterkte van de relaties in het boodschap-effect model voor tienerslang te bepalen werden correlatieanalyses uitgevoerd. Het model voorspelt dat de acceptatie van de boodschap direct gerelateerd is aan de sociale aantrekkelijkheid, betrouwbaarheid en expertise van de bron. In afwijking van de verwachting bleek de acceptatie van de boodschap door de participanten slechts matig te correleren met de perceptie dat de bron een vergelijkbare attitude heeft. Wel correleert de perceptie van eenzelfde attitude sterk met de sociale aantrekkelijkheid van de bron. De sociale aantrekkelijkheid van de bron bleek indirect verband te houden met de acceptatie van de boodschap, namelijk via de perceptie van eenzelfde attitude. Zoals verwacht werd er een sterke relatie gevonden tussen de waargenomen gelijkenis in taalgebruik en de sociale aantrekkelijkheid van de schrijver. Waargenomen

gelijkenis in taalgebruik correleert alleen indirect met de perceptie van eenzelfde attitude, namelijk via sociale aantrekkelijkheid van de schrijver.

In Hoofdstuk 5 worden antwoorden geformuleerd op de onderzoeksvragen die zijn geïntroduceerd in Hoofdstuk 1. Daarna volgt een discussie waarin de beperkingen van het onderzoek worden besproken en aanbevelingen worden geformuleerd voor het gebruik van tienerslang in schriftelijke HIV-communicatie in Zuid-Afrika.

Verwacht werd dat de authentieke slangvariëteit een positief effect zou hebben op de acceptatie van de boodschap; die verwachting werd niet bewaarheid. De belangrijkste determinant voor acceptatie van de boodschap bleek een al bestaande negatieve houding te zijn tegenover seks met meerdere partners (*sleeping around*). Alleen kleurling Afrikaans en Sepedi sprekende participanten bleken positief te oordelen over het gebruik van authentiek slang. Zij beschouwden authentiek slang als overeenstemmend met hun linguïstische stijl, en zagen gebruik van de authentieke slangvariëteit als een positieve schending van hun taalverwachtingen. Blanke Afrikaans en Engels sprekende participanten daarentegen neigden ertoe de tienerslangvariëteiten lager te waarderen. Binnen deze twee groepen lijkt er een sterker gevoel voor situationele normen te bestaan, resulterend in een lagere waardering van het gebruik van tienerslangvariëteiten voor een ernstig onderwerp als een boodschap over HIV/AIDS.

Wanneer voor de verschillende taalgroepen de effecten van de tienerslangversies op taal- en bronpercepties worden vergeleken, blijkt het belangrijkste verschil tussen de taalgroepen de perceptie te betreffen van het gebruik van authentieke slang in gedrukte media en de perceptie van de bron. Kleurling Afrikaans en Sepedi sprekende participanten waardeerden authentiek slang hoger en beoordeelden de schrijver positiever in vergelijking met de blanke Afrikaans en Engels sprekende participanten. De invloed van situationele normen leek sterker te zijn bij blanke Afrikaans en Engels sprekende participanten dan bij kleurling Afrikaans en Sepedi sprekende participanten.

Het boodschap-effect model voor tienerslang zoals voorgesteld in Hoofdstuk 2 voorspelt dat de expertise, de sociale aantrekkelijkheid en de betrouwbaarheid van de bron de potentie hebben om de acceptatie van de boodschap direct te beïnvloeden. In de correlatieanalyses werd echter geen

steun voor deze veronderstelling gevonden. Wel werd een correlatie gevonden tussen de perceptie van eenzelfde attitude en de acceptatie van de boodschap. Op basis van deze resultaten kunnen de volgende conclusies getrokken worden over de route waarlangs tienerslang het overtuigingsproces kan beïnvloeden.

1. Waargenomen gelijkenis in taalgebruik is alleen indirect gerelateerd aan acceptatie van de boodschap, en wel via de perceptie van eenzelfde attitude.
2. Waargenomen gelijkenis in taalgebruik is alleen indirect gerelateerd aan de perceptie van eenzelfde attitude. Terwijl waargenomen gelijkenis in taalgebruik direct verband bleek te houden met de sociale aantrekkelijkheid van de schrijver, is de relatie tussen waargenomen gelijkenis in taalgebruik en de expertise van de schrijver indirect, en wel via onder meer de perceptie van een gedeelde sociale identiteit tussen de schrijver en de lezer, en de waargenomen betrouwbaarheid van de schrijver.
3. In een aangepast boodschap-effect model voor tienerslang dienen de onderlinge relaties tussen de perceptie van een gedeelde sociale identiteit, sociale aantrekkelijkheid, betrouwbaarheid en expertise van de schrijver te worden verklaard.

Een van de beperkingen van het onderzoek betrof de stimulustekst. Daarin wordt het onderwerp seks met meerdere partners vanuit slechts één invalshoek gepresenteerd, en wordt een standpunt ingenomen dat overeen bleek te komen met de reeds bestaande attitude van de participanten. Daarom kon niet nagegaan worden wat de invloed van de nu gebruikte taalvariëteiten zou zijn geweest op de acceptatie van een boodschap die tegen de bestaande attitude ingaat. Het boodschap-effect model voor tienerslang dient te worden aangepast op basis van de resultaten van dit onderzoek, en te worden uitgebreid naar andere contexten, onderwerpen en taalgemeenschappen.

In dit onderzoek bleek dat alle taalgroepen in het algemeen een lagere waardering hadden voor de Engelse loveLife-variëteit. De aanname dat er een universeel soort “tienerslang” bestaat waarin de hele heterogene groep tieners in Zuid-Afrika zich zou herkennen, lijkt daarmee ongegrond.

Blanke Afrikaans en Engels sprekende tieners lijken het gebruik van tienerslang bij serieuze onderwerpen als situationeel ongepast te zien. Voor

kleurling Afrikaans sprekende tieners heeft slang waarmee de tieners zich kunnen identificeren de potentie om de overtuigingskracht van de boodschap te vergroten, gegeven de kennelijk minder sterke situationele normen in deze groep en de gunstiger percepties van authentiek slang. Voor deze groep tieners lijkt authentiek slang de voorkeursvariëteit bij onderwerpen van een serieuze, persoonlijke en emotionele aard. Wanneer het gaat om dergelijke onderwerpen lijkt voor Sepedi sprekende tieners het Standaard Sepedi de voorkeursvariëteit. Bij onderwerpen van minder serieuze aard kan bij Sepedi sprekende tieners het gebruik van tienerslang de voorkeur verdienen.

Afsluitend: tienerslang kan de overtuigingskracht van schriftelijke communicatie-uitingen positief beïnvloeden, onder de voorwaarde dat de doelgroep zich sterk identificeert met de gebruikte tienertaalvariëteit, en in de tekst een gelijkenis in attitudes tussen lezer en schrijver meent te herkennen. Ook dient de tienertaalvariëteit niet ervaren te worden als een negatieve schending van situationele normen. De persuasieve route voor tienerslang is nog steeds “onder constructie”. Dit onderzoek maakt hopelijk de weg vrij voor meer studies naar de manier waarop en de condities waaronder tienerslang het overtuigingsproces effectiever kan maken.



## **Curriculum Vitae**

Elvis Saal was born on 31 May 1969 in Concordia in the Northern Cape. He completed the Senior Certificate examination at Concordia Secondary School in 1986. From 1987 to 1989 he studied Afrikaans Linguistics and Literature at the University of the Western Cape. In 1989 he obtained the bachelors degree (cum laude) with Afrikaans, Linguistics and History as majors. From 1990 to 1994 he pursued postgraduate studies at the University of the Western Cape, and obtained his masters degree (cum laude) in Afrikaans Linguistics in 1994. Since 1995, he has been a lecturer in Afrikaans Linguistics in the Department of Afrikaans and Theory of Literature at the University of South Africa (Unisa).







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