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DIPLOMARBEIT / DIPLOMA THESIS

Titel der Diplomarbeit / Title of the Diploma Thesis

„Happy Shopping? An Ecocritical Analysis of Consumerism in Austrian ELT Course Books“

verfasst von / submitted by

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angestrebter akademischer Grad / in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Magistra der Philosophie (Mag. phil.)

Wien, 2016 / Vienna, 2016

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt /
degree programme code as it appears on
the student record sheet:

A 190 344 333

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt /
degree programme as it appears on
the student record sheet:

Lehramtsstudium, UF Englisch, UF Deutsch

Betreut von / Supervisor:

ao. Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Ute Smit

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I thank my parents for supporting me throughout the years of my studies – not only for having enabled me to study, but also for having given me the time and freedom for an education that goes beyond a university degree. Dad, thank you for your patience and generosity. Mum, thank you for thinking outside the box and for believing in me and my work.

Dr. Ute Smit, what a good intuition of me to choose you as my supervisor. Your genuine interest, your critical comments and your proficient support were truly motivating and allowed me to immerse myself in a scientific field that proved to be incredibly exciting and enriching to me. My warmest thanks!

Mo, my man, I would like to thank you for standing by my side during this challenging process. I am deeply grateful for all your questions, your feedback and above all for strengthening me with confidence in times of doubt.

Many thanks go to all family members and friends who expressed their curiosity and provided me with help along the way of writing this thesis.

Last but not least, I would like to offer my special thanks to Dr. Arran Stibbe in England, whose scientific efforts inspired me to conduct this study and who assisted me with essential advice during the initial phase of the present work.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Topic

Until we extend our circle of compassion to all living things, humanity will not find peace.

Albert Schweizer

All products that can be bought in the range of shopping places that there are have a story. This story starts with extracting the material for their components from nature, is then continued with the process of production, with distribution and consumption and frequently ends in disposal. The people who purchase the items, however, very often only see the sequence of the story that they are directly involved in – in buying and using the product. The remaining stages of the story are often invisible to consumers, and in many cases they take place geographically far away from the owners of the newly obtained goods.

‘The story of stuff’¹, or in other words, the lifecycle of consumer objects, however, involves and affects numerous living beings, both human and non-human, and the ecosystems they live in – these are all elements of and participants in the story which are way too often not represented to the visitors of shopping facilities. The way the majority of consumer items are produced at the present day frequently entails negative consequences on nature and underrepresented groups of people such as the destruction, contamination and pollution of livelihoods like forests, rivers or the air, exploitation of people working in factories producing objects for the consumer market and health damages for human and non-human living beings all along the way of the lifecycle of the products - to name just a few.

While people who can afford to and choose to live a lifestyle that revolves around the purchase of things are often not that directly affected by the ecological impact of consumerism, they might not truly benefit from being part of the consumerist culture either: A consumerist lifestyle is often connected to the pressure of earning a sufficient amount of money and

¹ The depiction of the lifecycle of consumer objects and the references to ecological and social consequences are based on the thoroughly-documented content of the educational video *The Story of Stuff* (2007).

spending a considerable part of their spare time on shopping in order to be able to buy specific consumer objects – time that is missing for other activities that might be more beneficial for their wellbeing. Despite all of this, the consumerist culture has become a way of life that is pursued by an increasing number of people all over this planet. One of the reasons for this development is that consumerism is regarded as the engine of the currently dominant form of global economy, wherefore a lifestyle of materialistic wealth and the underlying message “the more you buy the happier you will be” are advertised almost ubiquitously. The other reason why so many people live this kind of lifestyle and many more strive to do so is also because its harmful consequences are very often omitted in the stories of consumer objects that can be bought or in representations about other areas of consumerist culture.

Many Anglophone countries, with the U.S. leading the way, are characterised by a particularly distinct consumerist culture. As ELT is not only about teaching language, but also about introducing learners to cultural aspects of English-speaking countries, it has to be assumed that consumerism is frequently represented in ELT material. As the study of this paper shows, shopping and other areas of consumerist culture are indeed common topics in global as well as in Austrian ELT course books. The question that English teachers who use course books in their lessons should ask themselves is: Do we as language teachers want to contribute to the promotion of the consumerist ideology and tell our students only the agreeable part of the story that is related to product purchases or do we want to present a more comprehensive picture of it, including the connections to nature and social justice and to raise awareness for consumer responsibility? In order to realise the latter, a deeper understanding of the workings of language in construing and challenging representations of consumerism is without doubt of advantage. Ecolinguistics is a strand of linguistics that allows an in-depth analysis of the linguistic representations of consumerism – stories about buying consumer objects and stories about overconsumption – in the light of ethical concerns regarding environmental and global social justice.

Challenging consumer culture is hard because it is so deeply embedded in so many discourses, from advertising to news reports and the everyday conversation of friends admiring each other's possessions, and consumerism is so often overlooked as a target for action in mainstream environmental discourses. This is the kind of challenge that ecolinguistics is able to address, through exposing the ecologically destructive ways that everyday discourses construct notions of the 'good life', providing tools to help resist those discourses and searching for beneficial discourses which actively identify the 'good life' with something other than consumerism (Stibbe 2014: 125).

Why I have chosen to scrutinize discursive constructions of consumerism in Austrian ELT course books by means of a critical approach that considers global social and environmental justice will be explained in the following section.

1.2. Personal Motivation and Interest

My personal interest and motivation for this topic originate in the following aspects: First of all, I am concerned about the environment and social justice. Since I am of the opinion that I carry responsibility for my own life style and its consequences and because I have the economic privilege to be able to make certain choices in consumption, for the last three years, I have spent considerable amounts of time and effort on research about the social and ecological connections to and consequences of my own consumption behaviour.

Accordingly, I have been attempting to take on more responsible and ethical consumption patterns such as becoming a member of a food cooperative², growing my own vegetables and collecting wild herbs and fruits, buying most clothes second hand and visiting the repair café when my radio and my laptop broke down instead of replacing them by new ones, as well as to reduce my overall consumption. This attempt has made me realise that my personal happiness and well-being is only on a basic level dependent on material goods and needs. Focusing on the basic needs, taking time to produce and repair things myself and having time to spend in nature and with other people has proven to be much more fulfilling to me than purchasing the many things advertisements are trying to persuade me to desire. Even though I am aware that these attitudes and preferences are highly personal, from my experience working and interacting with other people, in particular children and teenagers, I dare to claim that replacing a great deal of the consumerist lifestyle with reconnecting with other human beings and nature in a respectful and loving way represents one of the biggest necessities of the present time.

Secondly, I am profoundly interested in a vast number of aspects related to language such as language politics, the workings of language in power relations, language and identity, second and foreign language acquisition, to name just a few. In this paper, I was able to touch upon many of these aspects – mostly not explicitly or in great depth, but they all played a role in

² A food cooperative provides the means to purchase locally and seasonally grown and produced groceries outside of the conventional market system and is organised by its own members; cf: www.foodcoops.at.

some form. On top of that, getting involved in ecolinguistic research promised an enriching side of linguistics to me that I was completely unfamiliar with before.

Thirdly, as a future teacher, I regard it as my educational responsibility to encourage my students to become aware of the consequences of their consumer behaviour on the environment and on other human beings. Course books usually provide a variety of topics and useful texts for foreign language acquisition. The cultural content of these texts is influenced by certain ideologies; as a teacher, I want to raise my own awareness about the underlying ideologies that are conveyed in the texts in order to be able to address them critically in the classroom.

In addition, I recall that shopping was a big topic during my teenage years in school: While many of my friends liked shopping and spent large amounts of time and money on it, I always felt somewhat objected to purchasing that many - in my eyes unnecessary - new products. At the same time, I felt exposed to peer pressure to buy fashionable clothes, make-up and other goods that would make me “cooler” in the eyes of my fellow class mates. In retrospect, I wished that consumerism and its ecological and social consequences had been addressed more often in school; perhaps it would have been easier for me to position myself more confidently within the consumerist discourse that was shared in my peer group and resist the pressure to follow the trend of shopping. All these aspects have inspired me to examine the linguistic representation of consumerism in Austrian ELT course books from an ecocritical perspective.

1.3. Official relevance for the subject English: BMBF teaching principles

Consumerism and its consequences for ecological and global social justice are not compulsory topics per se according to the syllabus for the Austrian school subject English (BMBF 2004). Nonetheless, there are sufficient arguments on the part of official school policy for dealing with consumerism from an ecocritical perspective with Austrian pupils. These arguments are found in at least three teaching principles, all released by the Austrian ministry for education and women (BMBF – Bundesministerium für Bildung und Frauen) between 2014 and 2015:

- a) “Unterrichtsprinzip Umweltbildung für nachhaltige Entwicklung” = teaching principle of environmental education for sustainable development (BMBF, Umweltbildung für nachhaltige Entwicklung 2014)

- b) “Unterrichtsprinzip Wirtschafts- und VerbraucherInnenbildung” = teaching principle of economic and consumer education (BMBF, Unterrichtsprinzip Wirtschafts- und Konsumentenbildung 2015)
- c) “Unterrichtsprinzip Politische Bildung” = teaching principle of political education (BMBF, Unterrichtsprinzip Politische Bildung 2015)

As teachers are encouraged to realize the teaching principles in all subjects that allow to do so in a reasonable way, they certainly apply to the subject of English.

In the following paragraphs, the relevant arguments of the three teaching principles for this paper will be briefly sketched:

a) Teaching principle of environmental education for sustainable development

One of the teaching aims of environmental education is to reveal the complexity of factors that have contributed to the present global environmental crisis and to heighten the learners’ awareness about this as well as a feeling of responsibility for their future actions. In the teaching principle (BMBF, Umweltbildung für nachhaltige Entwicklung 2014: 1), it is asserted that

Schülerinnen und Schüler sollen die Möglichkeit erhalten, [...] ihren persönlichen Lebensstil zu reflektieren und die Relevanz individuellen Handelns für die Umwelt zu überdenken [pupils shall receive the possibility [...] to reflect their personal lifestyle and to reconsider the relevance of individual behaviour in regard to consequences for the environment].

As consumer culture is without doubt an essential part of Austrian society, large parts of our personal lifestyles are influenced by consumerism. Furthermore, it is stated that students should learn to treat themselves, their fellow human beings and the environment responsibly and that they should develop an empathic attitude towards all living beings. The teaching principle asserts that pupils should be educated towards a disposition that contributes to the maintenance of biodiversity and natural resources. In regard to consumption patterns, environmental education should enable pupils to assess the consequences of their behaviour on a local and on a global level and to make responsible decisions about consumption and utilization of goods (BMBF, Unterrichtsprinzip Umweltbildung für nachhaltige Entwicklung 2014: 2).

b) Teaching principle economic and consumer education

The teaching principle of economic and consumer education points out the moral educational mandate by asserting that economic actions imply social and ecological consequences. The principle emphasises that learners should be made aware of their rights and at the same time of their responsibility as consumers. Teaching aims of economic and consumer education are among others: enabling students to reflect critically on their economic actions and to participate in creating a world that is worth living in.

Furthermore, the teaching principle refers to the Agenda 21, the UN Guidance paper for sustainable development in the 21st century, which aims at encouraging consumption and production patterns that meet basic human needs but have decreased environmental impact (BMBF, Unterrichtsprinzip Wirtschafts- und Konsumentenbildung 2015: 3).

c) Teaching principle political education

Teaching aims of political education are amongst others to discuss the legitimisation of political power and its control, global distribution of resources as well as responsible and resource-saving handling of nature and environment. Political education should enable students to question and assess social structures, power relations and the interests behind these. Also, in the teaching principle of the BMBF (Unterrichtsprinzip Politische Bildung 2015: 3), it is explicitly stated that political education should convey that

eine gerechte Friedensordnung und faire Verteilung von Ressourcen für das Überleben der Menschheit notwendig ist und dass dies weltweit den Einsatz aller Kräfte erfordert und auch als persönliche Verpflichtung aufgefasst werden muss [a just order of peace and a fair distribution of resources is necessary for the survival of humanity; this requests the efforts of all forces on a global scale and needs to be considered as personal commitment for every individual].

As we will see in chapter 2.3., a fair distribution of resources requires that people who live lifestyles with high consumption patterns should decrease their consumption activities. The average Austrian definitely belongs to the community of people who live lifestyles of over-consumption: In the global ranking of ecological footprint per capita, Austria is found on place 17 with an average footprint of almost 6 ha per person annually (Global Footprint Network 2014) - which is tremendously larger than the size of 1.7 ha that has been calculated as a neutral ecological footprint (WWF 2012: 59).

1.4. Research question

The overall research question that this paper tries to answer is: How is consumerism represented in Austrian ELT course books from the perspective of ecocritical discourse analysis? In order to answer this question in more detail, it seems helpful to divide it into the following subquestions:

a) In what ways is consumerism reiterated as hegemonic ideology and/or promoted in the selected texts?

- o Which relevant discursive strategies and linguistic features can be identified here?
- o To what degree are ecological/social consequences of consumerism and nature/oppressed communities mentioned or omitted?

b) In what ways is consumerism criticised in the selected texts?

- o Is the discourse in these texts potentially beneficial from an ecocritical point of view (i.e. aligned with my personal ecosophy), or is it ambivalent and thus not contributing to achieving more environmental and social justice?
- o Which relevant discursive strategies and linguistic features can be identified here?

1.5. Structure of paper

Chapter 2 provides the definition of consumerism that is relevant for this paper and attempts at sketching a number of consumerist phenomena, the role of consumerism as an ideology and its consequences for the environment and global social justice. Subsequently, chapter 3 introduces the grand theory of this paper, the discipline of ecolinguistics, by outlining a number of objectives and efforts of ecolinguists, the emergence and the different strands of the discipline as well as present challenges and drawbacks of ecolinguistics. In chapter 4, ecocritical discourse analysis is presented, which requires referring to its roots: critical discourse analysis (CDA). This chapter describes principles of the ecocritical approach and of CDA, elements of relevant CDA methodology and the philosophical framework of this paper, called ecosophy. Before describing the study of this paper and introducing the three selected course books, chapter 5 briefly deals with EFL course book evaluation, studies on consumerism and

environmental issues in course books as well as the role of the books for EFL teachers. Chapter 6 presents the analysis of the selected texts and concludes with the discussion of the results. In the conclusion, a summary of the findings of this paper is presented, possible future research questions in this field are proposed and an outlook on the need for action that the findings of the paper reveal are given.

2. Consumerism

2.1. Profile

2.1.1. Definition

The term consumerism is derived from 'to consume', which goes back to the Latin word 'consumere', meaning to 'use up', 'eat', 'waste' (Online Etymology Dictionary). As pointed out by Swagler (1994), the term consumerism has two divergent meanings nowadays. The first notion is related to the efforts of the consumer movement that started in the mid-sixties; here, consumerism means "protection of the consumer's interests" (Swagler 1994: 347). The other notion of consumerism is more negatively connoted and refers to excessive materialism, or in other words, to "high levels of consumption" (Swagler 1994: 354f). For the present paper, solely the second meaning of consumerism that relates to excessive and ecologically destructive consumption patterns is of relevance. It is "a particular strand of overconsumption, where we purchase things, not to fulfil our basic needs, but to fill some voids about our lives and make social statements about ourselves" (Leonard, referred to in Cole 2010) that is regarded as particularly destructive. To patterns of consumerism of this kind belong among other phenomena shopping as a leisure activity or hobby, shopping as retail therapy, compulsive shopping, overconsumption of any kind as well as purchasing luxury and expensive brand products.

In this context, it is essential to note that general human consumption will not be evaluated from an ecocritical point of view in this paper. Therefore, we need to distinguish between consumption and consumerism. While mundane consumption is described as having been an essential part of societies all over the globe throughout human history and defined as "the exercise of choice in respect of a variety of relatively inconspicuous or ordinary products and services intrinsic to the maintenance of everyday life" (Bevir & Trentmann 2008, referred to in

Smart 2010: 4), consumerism refers to a more recent phenomenon of Western culture that has emerged from the late seventeenth century onwards as a result of the industrial revolution and as a means to strengthen the economy (Smart 2010: 4). In the course of the last centuries, however, consumerism has become a much more complex phenomenon. Smart (2010: 5) depicts consumerism as

a particularly distinctive modern way of life [...] that is perpetually preoccupied with the pursuit, possession, rapid displacement, and replacement of a seemingly inexhaustible supply of things, first emerged, rapidly developed, and subsequently has grown to become global in scope and influence. It is a way of living that revolves around the wanting of things, the longing for things, the purchasing of things, a way of life in which having, desiring, and wishing for more and more things have become significant preoccupations for late modern subjects whose identities are increasingly bound up with what and how they consume.

As illustrated, consumerism has gained an influential social dimension and possesses a significant impact on the identity forming of individuals, which in turn is expressed in their lifestyle.³

The following sections provide a brief outline of consumerism and of some consumerist phenomena: the emergence of online shopping and enormous shopping complexes, a number of excessive shopping patterns, of consumerism as an ideology and of some global ecological and social consequences.

2.1.2. Numbers and settings

While in some European countries from 1970 onwards, a scattered call of critics to “work less, live more” tried to warn the public that consumerism might not be the path to happiness, the social imperative in America remained to be “work more, buy more” (Smart 2010: 16). Consequently, the US have become the nation of shoppers number one, consumer purchases accounting for 70% of the US gross domestic product in 2008, followed by the UK, Italy, France, Germany and Japan (Smart 2010: 2). Due to the global spreading of consumerist culture and increasing prosperity, however, countries with growing markets such as China and India are

³ Margaret Atwood (2015) illustrates this phenomena in a larger historical context with a positive outlook: “What are the implications for the way we view both ourselves and the way we live? In brief: in the coal energy culture — a culture of workers and production — you are your job. ‘I am what I make.’ In an oil and gas energy culture — a culture of consumption — you are your possessions. ‘I am what I buy.’ But in a renewable energy culture, you are what you conserve. ‘I am what I save and protect.’ We aren’t used to thinking like this, because we can’t see where the money will come from. But in a culture of renewables, money will not be the only measure of wealth. Well-being will factor as an economic positive, too”.

rapidly catching up: A study predicts that consumer spending of the Chinese and Indian population is going to triple by 2020 (Nasralla 2012). “The number of products and services produced and consumed has grown inexorably and promises to continue to do so as more of the world’s population aspires to the lifestyles that have come to predominate in ‘overdeveloped’ and ‘over-consuming’ countries” (Renner 2004, referred to in Smart 2010: 173)

Due to technological developments and new marketing strategies, consumerist patterns have been changing rapidly and are becoming increasingly more complex. Two specific phenomena in regard to the setting of consumerism are online-shopping and “landscapes of consumption”. Online shopping, also referred to as e-commerce, means purchasing products and services via the internet and has become the fastest growing sector in the European retail market with a projected market share of 8.4% in 2015. The UK are leading in the worldwide e-commerce statistics with a forecast market share of 15.2% in 2015, followed by the US with a projected market share of 12.7% in the same year (Centre for Retail Research, 2015). Provided that access to the internet and the required spending capacity are given, online-shopping allows conveniently obtaining an unprecedented variety of products and services at any time.

The expression “landscapes of consumption” refers to “the growth in scale of consumer activity and the increase in density of consumption settings in particular geographic areas”, ‘the Strip’ in Las Vegas being a particularly illustrating example (Smart 2010: 168). These landscapes of consumption consist of an agglomeration of chain stores and super stores such as in large shopping centres or malls. As pointed out in Smart (2010: 168), it is in particular American corporations which contribute essentially to consumerist culture and the growth of such consumerist landscapes. According to a report on global shopping centre development, the ratio of shopping centre space per capita is the highest in the US. On top of that, projects of more than 100,000m² in total are being developed into additional landscapes of consumption in the US at the time of the reporting (Dugard 2014).

2.1.3. Shopping patterns

A phenomenon of consumerism that is directly related to the outlined landscapes of consumption is the main motif of visitors of such areas: shopping as a leisure activity. As illustrated by Barber (interviewed by Morris 2008), for many consumers shopping changed “from a chore to leisure pursuit long ago”. It has to be mentioned that he refers particularly to

British consumers whose shopping behaviour stands in strong contrast with that of consumers in developing countries and that of European and US consumers half a dozen of decades ago. According to Barber, shopping is the favourite pastime of English citizens and accounts for 37% of all expenses of English households.

The motifs for shopping as leisure are diverse, as shown by a Swedish study about shopping experiences of recreational shoppers: 1) Some consumers consider shopping as hunting; they find pleasure in searching and finding specific objects of desire. 2) Another group of consumers uses shopping as scouting trips where they experience sensual stimulation and escape from everyday life. 3) The third purpose for leisure shopping according to this study is socializing; collective shopping can serve as an occasion to meet with friends or family members and it allows sharing consumer experiences (Bäckström 2011, 203-205). What these three shopping patterns have in common is the fact that they go significantly beyond the purchase of necessities and that consumers do not only spend money but also considerable amounts of time on consumerist activities.

Other consumerist phenomena of the present age are shopping as “retail therapy”, which means buying things in order to cheer oneself up (Oxford Dictionaries), and forms of addiction such as compulsive shopping. While “shopaholic” is the informal term for a person with more or less compulsive buying behaviour, the term “compulsive buying disorder” (CBD), also known as “onomania”, refers to a severe mental disorder that almost six percent of US citizens were reported to have in 2007 (Black 2007).

Quite an ambivalent notion that is related to consumer culture is the “green consumer”. The term “green consumers” refers to “environmentally enlightened individuals who seek to modify their consumption of products and services in order to minimize the negative impact this exerts on the environment”; correspondingly, green consumerism means to buy “environmentally friendly products and services” (Bland 2014: 5). Bland (2014: 2) asserts:

The high level of media attention given to the climate change debate in recent years has arguably played a key role in transforming the concept of green consumption from a minority concern to part of the mainstream of consumer culture. This transformation is evidenced by the frequent use of environmental terminology in marketing discourse; by the ready availability of ‘eco-friendly’ products in many shops; and by a burgeoning popular literature on ‘greening’ personal consumption.

Green consumerism and its potentially less harmful impact on the environment are highly complex issues: Certain 'eco-friendly' products might cause indeed less environmental harm than their conventional equivalents; at the same time, however, putting a green label on products is also a highly effective marketing strategy to keep consumers with an increasing environmental awareness eager to buy. As Barber (interviewed by Morris 2008) stresses: "Green consumerism is still consuming. The simplest way to go green is not to consume, or to consume less". I agree with the first and the last third of the quote from above. Retaining high levels of consumption rates with a slightly less harmful impact on the environment is not going to be considerably beneficial. However, not to consume, in the sense of buying no products at all any more, is not a practicable option for members of modern societies either. Therefore, according to the philosophical framework of this paper, aiming at decreasing shopping activities combined with purchasing products that meet certain ethical criteria such as regional, seasonal, fair trade, organic etc. is considered as the least harmful option for the environment and global social justice *and* at the same time as the most feasible in the context of the Western consumer culture that the Austrian society belongs to.

The briefly sketched aspects related to consumerism from above claim by no means to represent the complete range of phenomena of excessive consumption. Nevertheless, they should provide an overview and illustrate some recent developments in this area that will be examined in the ecocritical analysis of this paper.

2.2. Consumerism as ideology

Nowadays, consumerism is not only an economic but also a political, moral and social ideology and is closely associated with 'freedom, power and happiness' and 'the good life' (Smart 2010: 7f). Due to these interwoven aspects, consumerism has become a dominant ideology in Western culture and is perceived by many "as a way of life that has become global, 'natural', quite simply the way the world is thought to be and cannot be imagined otherwise" (Smart 2010: 8)⁴. As will be explained in chapter 4, this kind of dominant ideology corresponds to the

⁴ Without doubt, consumerism is an essential constituent of the present dominant economic system. However, it is to be assumed that other forms of economic systems are possible which are not based on endless economic growth, consumerism and exploitation of nature. One idea is the *Gemeinwohl-Ökonomie* (= 'Economy for the Common Good'), a form of economy that – to put it very briefly – aims at the wellbeing of human beings and nature (see for example Felber, 2012).

Gramscian concept of hegemony and is considered as a particularly pressing object for (eco)critical discourse analysis.

As outlined by Smart (2010: 14), happiness - or rather, the pursuit of happiness – stands at the centre of consumer culture:

Increasing turnover of commodities, aided by advertising images, marketing narratives, and the cultivation of brand loyalty that promote the idea that consumer activity – pursuing, purchasing, using, having and more importantly being seen to have a particular product – produces satisfaction and promotes happiness, is an essential part of modern social life and constitutes the foundation of our consumerist economy.

However, Smart agrees with Baudrillard (1998: 50, referred to in Smart 2010: 14) who states that the consumer happiness does not refer to happiness “in the full sense of the term” and is not to be understood as “inner enjoyment” but rather as an “enforced happiness” that is simulated by market strategies such as advertising in order to deliver a feeling of satisfaction to consumers during shopping activities or when they purchase a product.

I approve of this point of view and have added this aspect to the philosophical framework of this paper which holds that happiness and ‘the good life’ are not to be found in excessive consumer activity but rather in situations of inherent value (cf. chapter 4.3. Ecosophy). Furthermore, this perspective is confirmed by the findings of several studies which show that the increase in prosperity is only to a limited extent connected to happiness and life satisfaction. A high-consumption lifestyle is often accompanied by debts, long working hours and less time for socializing (Mayell 2004). Similarly, Leonard (referred to in Cole, 2010) points out that possessing a large amount of objects does not inevitably lead to a happy life. On the contrast, frequently it is the very obsession with material things that entails neglecting social relationships. Once the basic human needs are met, however, recent studies show that social relationships are the strongest determining factor in the feeling of happiness (Leonard, referred to in Cole, 2010).

Despite the strong and deeply embedded influence of the consumerist ideology in Western culture, it is still a culture based on democracy, providing space for choice for its members. Everyone leading a consumerist lifestyle can ask themselves questions such as ‘Do I want to participate and live a consumerist lifestyle or do I decide to consume less alongside with a heightened consideration of social and environmental criteria?’. Brody (2013) takes quite a radical view regarding consumer responsibility. Even though it might seem to be extreme at

first sight, his analogy of consumers' obedience to the authority of corporations to the behaviour of participants in the famous Milgram experiment cannot easily be dismissed when reading his line of argumentation. Brody claims that today's most powerful authorities are the boards of directors of international business corporations and the state institutions that increasingly yield to their decisions. The way corporations succeed in making consumers obedient to their interests is predominantly by means of marketing and advertising, "by suggesting images, ideas and social narratives, and by manipulating emotions so that desired behaviours become more likely" (Brody 2013). Thus, I agree with Brody (2013) when he comes to the conclusion: "Overconsumption is a function of obedience built on the false premise that eternally acquiring more goods will make you, your family and your society happier".

According to Brody (2013), it is time to start reconsidering the consumerist culture and to realize that disobeying corporate-state authorities lies within the scope of our duties as democratic citizens. "In a post-Nuremberg world, the ultimate responsibility for one's actions falls on the individual, not on powerful interests that persuade or coerce" (Brody 2013). Not only is consumerism built on a misleading premise that will not increase human happiness, consumers' obedience in the form of living consumerist lifestyles is also becoming increasingly destructive for the global ecosystem and global social justice, as will be illustrated in the subsequent section.

2.3. Global consequences: ecological degradation and social injustice

The global human population is living in ecological "overshoot", which means that "humanity's demand on nature exceeds the biosphere's supply, or regenerative capacity" (Global Footprint Network 2015). Research shows that excessive patterns of human consumption are linked at least to the following harmful consequences for ecosystems and global biodiversity: loss, alteration and fragmentation of habitats for humans, animals, plants and other organisms, overexploitation of wild species' populations, severe environmental pollution and climate change (Living Planet Report 2012: 12).

As pointed out by Smart (2010: 169), the "landscapes of consumption" mentioned earlier

have consumed – quite literally have devoured, wasted, exhausted, and destroyed – irredeemable ecological landscapes, not just where the shopping malls and centres are physically situated, but also where the commodities they display and sell have been produced, increasingly with globalization, in remote low labour cost, low tax, and

lightly regulated locations, and further, where the growing volumes of waste from the consumer cycle are ultimately deposited.

The lasting destruction of vast tracts of land entails serious consequences. A number of scientists declare that due to human impact planet earth is presently facing a sixth wave of mass species extinction. This loss of biodiversity is endangering the well-being of the global ecosystem and thus also of humanity (Zeit online 2015). The Living Planet Report, one of the most important science-based ecological evaluations of the state of this planet, asserts that

[b]iodiversity is vital for human health and livelihoods. Living organisms – plants, animals and microorganisms – interact to form complex, interconnected webs of ecosystems and habitats, which in turn supply a myriad of ecosystem services upon which all life depends. Although technology can replace some ecosystem services and buffer against their degradation, many cannot be replaced. [...] All human activities make use of ecosystem services – but can also put pressure on the biodiversity that supports these systems. (Living Planet Report 2012: 12).

Humanity has reached an unprecedented population number and thereby unprecedented rates of consumption needs. This alone puts considerable pressure on the biosphere's capacity; in addition, as pointed out above, 2 billion of the human population lead consumerist lifestyles, which puts an additional burden on the ecosystem. If the consumerist ideology is maintained this way and realised by an increasing number of people, it can be assumed that consumerism will inevitably destroy the habitats for a countless number of living beings and eventually use up the finite resources of this planet.

It has to be pointed out, however, that there is a large discrepancy in consumption patterns on the global scale. While "the consumer lifestyles [are] enjoyed by a global consumer class of around 2 billion people" (Smart 2010: 161), the majority of the global population live quite a different 'lifestyle', of which a considerable part live under conditions that do not allow meeting daily needs such as clean water and food. In 2015, it is estimated that around 663 million people did not have access to safe drinking water (Unicef & WHO 2015: 7) and that almost 800 million people of the global population were undernourished (FAO, IFAD & WFP 2015).

First of all, these numbers reflect an indefensible state of social injustice that violates various human right standards. Secondly, the opposing patterns of consumption have also highly different consequences on the environment. Most middle- and low-income nations have ecological footprints per capita that are lower than 1.7 ha – which means that their consumption patterns do not exceed the regenerative capacity of this planet (Living Planet

Report 2012: 59). This sharply contrasts with the ecological footprint of inhabitants of high-income nations in Northern America and Europe that is up to five times larger than the one of inhabitants of low-income nations.

If all of humanity lived like an average resident of Indonesia, only two-thirds of the planet's biocapacity would be used; if everyone lived like an average Argentinean, humanity would demand more than half an additional planet; and if everyone lived like an average resident of the USA, a total of four Earths would be required to regenerate humanity's annual demand on nature (Living Planet Report 2012: 6).

In order to meet their consumption demand on the one hand and to find new locations for waste disposal on the other hand (cf. Greenpeace International 2009), wealthier countries often use the global commons such as the deep oceans or the biocapacity of other nations (Living Planet Report 2014: 59). The consequences of high-income countries' consumerist patterns and their exploitation of the biocapacity of low-income countries cause not only severe environmental degradation but contribute essentially to global social injustice. As Worldwatch Institute President Christopher Flavin (referred to in Mayell 2004) emphasises: "[A]s we enter a new century, this unprecedented consumer appetite is undermining the natural systems we all depend on, and making it even harder for the world's poor to meet their basic needs". Also, as warned in a recent UN report, climate change will affect less wealthier countries the most as they will not have as many possibilities to cope with the consequences of altered climate conditions as wealthier countries (Goldenberg 2014). On top of that, as has become more and more public over the last years particularly in the context of the apparel industry, the working conditions for people involved in the outsourced manufacturing process for products for Western consumers are very often extremely harsh or even below human rights standards, being also referred to as "slave labour" (EU 2014).

Considering the variety of severely harmful social and environmental consequences related to consumerism, how can the consumerist ideology continue to be successful? One of the reasons why consumerist culture is working so well is the fact that a large number of social and environmental problems have been relocated and made invisible for the people who are living the consumerist lifestyle:

With the globalization of economic life, significant environmental costs arising from the production of consumer goods are not born by the societies in which the goods are consumed, but 'locally' in the producer countries to which manufacturing has been outsourced and to which post-consumer waste is exported for recycling and disposal (Smart 2010: 169).

Rather than being confronted with the consequences of consumerism, people who are leading consumerist lifestyles are distracted and wrapped up in an idyllic consumerist world with the smell of Starbucks' coffee and fast food, entertainment of commercial TV shows and movies in which the characters represent role models in terms of living the consumerist lifestyle, the world of fashion and beauty, the rapid development of ever new electronic gadgets and computer games and an increasing number of purposes to obtain more such products⁵.

In spite of numerous warnings from climate scientists, human right activists and others and of the growing awareness of the social and environmental consequences of consumerism, consumerist patterns are further being promoted on a large scale and continue to be lived by an increasing number of people:

The damaging impact of modern industrial consumption-driven ways of life on the environment has attracted a series of warnings from critical social analysts and even, of late, from consumer industry insiders, but the overriding response to repeated forewarnings about a growing ecological crisis has been to resort to 'business as usual', in short, to continue pursuing economic growth, increasing production of goods and services, and creatively cultivating increases in demand by promoting consumerism (Smart 2010: 179).

The 'business as usual' attitude is often accompanied by the hope of resolving the environmental crisis by means of new technological inventions. However, as stated above, it can be assumed that our ecosystem is too dependent on the natural biodiversity of this planet to be entirely replaced by human inventions. Humanity seems to tend to look for solutions elsewhere rather than tackle the source of the problem. As Majfud (2009) asserts:

New technologies could help to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, but it is unlikely that this would be sufficient in a world that is just at the beginning of its capacity to consume, to squander, and to destroy. Trying to reduce environmental pollution without reducing consumerism is like combatting drug trafficking without reducing the drug addiction.

It seems reasonable to assume that the social and environmental problems related to consumerism that have been outlined above can neither be solved with new technologies nor with ethical or green consumption alone. In order to fight the causes for the environmental crisis and the indefensible state of global human injustice, I hold the view that consumerist societies need to aspire sufficiency in consumption patterns, stop promoting the consumerist lifestyle as 'the good life' and provide narratives that are more beneficial for the relation

⁵ An example for this is the commercialising of the Irish/US-American tradition of celebrating Halloween in Austria.

between humans and nature as well as for global social justice. And this is exactly where ecolinguistics comes in:

3. Ecolinguistics

3.1. What is ecolinguistics?

Alexander & Stibbe (2014: 105) define ecolinguistics as “the study of the impact of language on the life-sustaining relationships among humans, other organisms and the physical environment. It is normatively orientated towards preserving relationships which sustain life”. Reading the definition, it seems like the question “What is ecolinguistics?” is fairly straightforward to answer. However, it has to be noted that this is only one of the numerous definitions of ecolinguistics. In fact, the term ‘ecolinguistics’ has been attributed to various approaches and concerns, and the academic field is considered to be “divided” (Stibbe 2014: 125). Steffensen & Fill (2014: 22) refer to the academic area of ecolinguistics with its wide range of strands as an “archipelago” that needs to become more unified. Bang & Trampe (2014: 83) argue that

[t]he term *ecolinguistics* is a broad umbrella term covering on the one hand traditional linguistic methods applied on texts and discourses of ecological importance and on the other hand deeper reflections on the theories of language inspired by the holistic paradigm of ecology.

I have chosen Alexander’s & Stibbe’s definition for a number of reasons: 1) Among the various notions of ecolinguistics this is the one that is most relevant for the present paper, as it takes the term “ecological” literally, in contrast to others that understand the “ecology of language” metaphorically (this distinction will be outlined in the following section); 2) It is well-defined in the sense that it draws clear boundaries for the scope of the discipline, but is open enough for interpretation to embrace the approaches applied and efforts taken by ecolinguistics up to this point and leaves space for further approaches and issues; 3) It stresses the inclusion of interhuman relationships, in contrast to suggestions that appear to be misanthropically biased, proposing that the extinction of humankind would be more beneficial for the survival of this

planet⁶; and 4) It emphasises the orientation towards positive, life-sustaining relations. In my view, point 4 is essential, as offering criticism without showing ‘a more suitable path to go’ or suggesting new possibilities leaves the problems largely unsolved.

In order to understand the intentions and the archipelago-like character of the discipline it is inevitable to provide a brief overview over the history of ecolinguistics.

3.2. The history of ecolinguistics

3.2.1. The ecology of language

Ecolinguistics is a rather young branch of linguistics and can be seen as the point of intersection of the concept of ecology and linguistics, the study of language. The term ‘ecology’, a compound of the Greek word *oikos* = dwelling place or household and *logos* = study, was coined by the German biologist Ernst Haeckl, for “the study of the natural environment including the relation of organisms to one another and to their surroundings” (Odum & Barret 2005: 2-3). Soon after this, ecology was established as a separate branch of biology, ‘ecological’ was then used as a term for the environmental movement that was concerned with saving species, resources and the bio-diversity of the earth (Fill 2001: 420). The notion of ecolinguistics that is relevant for this paper refers in particular to the latter, more ideological meaning of ecology.

There were a number of early scholarly attempts to examine the relation of language and ecology, of which some reach back to the ancient Greeks such as Heraclitus and Plato. Some ecolinguists consider Humboldt as essential for the emergence of the discipline, others regard the Sapir-Whorf-Hypothesis as decisive (do Couto 2014: 123), to name just a few. The majority of scholars, however, trace the early beginnings of ecolinguistics back to the sociolinguist Einar Haugen, who was the first to apply an ecological approach to the study of language in his talk “On the ecology of languages” in 1970 (cf. do Couto 2014: 124, Steffensen & Fill 2014: 7) and also the first to introduce the term “ecolinguistics” orally to a colleague in 1972 (do Couto 2014: 124). Nevertheless, it took two more decades until the discipline of ecolinguistics as we understand it today was established.

⁶ This stance is occasionally taken by proponents of the Deep Ecology Movement, for example, and will be dealt with in chapter 4.3

Haugen (1972: 325) suggested the definition of “language ecology” as “the study of interactions between any given language and its environment”. Despite critique of too many second-hand references and the missing theoretical framework in Haugen’s work (Lechevrel 2009: 8), his definition was highly fruitful for the emergence of ecolinguistics as it led to the question: What is the environment of a language? Steffensen & Fill (2014: 7) categorise four interpretations of the environment of language in the history of ecolinguistics:

- Language exists in a symbolic ecology: this approach investigates the co-existence of languages or 'symbolic systems' within a given area.
- Language exists in a natural ecology: this approach investigates how language relates to the biological and ecosystemic surroundings (topography, climate, fauna, flora, etc.).
- Language exists in a sociocultural ecology: this approach investigates how language relates to the social and cultural focus that shape the conditions of speakers and speech communities.
- Language exists in a cognitive ecology: this approach investigates how language is enabled by the dynamics between biological organisms and their environment, focusing on those cognitive capacities that give rise to organisms' flexible, adaptive behaviour.

Steffensen & Fill (2014:7) stress that this categorisation should not be regarded as a strict distinction of four different ecologies of language. It should rather help to shed light on “different *perspectives* on the environment of language”, allowing for interpretations which take the concept of ecology metaphorically.

It is to say that the number of theoretical approaches to the ecology of language that ecolinguists have developed and work with is large; however, it would go beyond the scope of this paper to elaborate on them. What unifies the various approaches is the ecological point of view. Döring & Zunino (2014: 36) conclude:

Research in the area of ecolinguistics mainly displays two branches: eco-critical discourse analysis and the ecology of languages framing language as a basic and interrelated ingredient in a network that connects nature, society and language. In fact, eco-critical discourse analysis forms the most common research standpoint investigating the contemporary creations and effects of the environmental, scientific and other social actors’ discourses on ecology.

This paper falls into eco-critical discourse analysis, which will be outlined in the following chapter.

3.2.2. Halliday's seminal speech

A seminal event in the history of the discipline is M.A.K. Halliday's talk "New ways of meaning: The challenge to applied linguistics", that he gave in 1990 at the Ninth World Congress of Applied Linguistics in Thessaloniki (do Couto 2014: 125). This text is given particular attention here, as Halliday laid the foundations for the notion of ecolinguistics that is pursued in this paper and will help the reader to understand some major concepts of the discipline. In his speech (Halliday 2001: 180), the linguist addresses the role of language in construing our worldview, following the Sapir-Whorf-Hypothesis that suggests mutual interdependence between language and our interaction with the world. Halliday (2001: 180f) suggests that grammar and vocabulary of a language can be seen as a "theory of human experience", in the sense that they have evolved along the processes humankind has experienced over a long period of time. In contrast to the lexical area that is adapted to our living conditions and extended with new items at an increasing pace, grammar is more conservative. At the same time, "language has the power to shape and construe our consciousness; and it does so for each human child, by providing the theory that he or she uses to interpret and to manipulate their environment".

In the second part of his speech, Halliday demonstrates how unecological ideologies can be deeply enrooted in languages. Apart from a number of illustrations of ecocritical discourse analysis that operate on the text level (Halliday 2001: 191f), it is Halliday's major achievement to point out how the ideology of growthism – the strife for never-ending growth – is embedded in English grammar. The four grammatical features which he presents as samples of a certain way to construe reality "that is no longer good for our health as a species" (Halliday 2001: 193) are: 1) resources such as water, soil, air, oil and coal are represented as uncountable entities in most Standard European languages – as if they were "inexhaustible"; 2) there exists an asymmetry throughout grammar among gradable properties, usually in favour of the one that is higher in quantity and quality: e.g. the question is how *big*, how *long*, how *much*, how *good* etc. something is, and rarely the opposite; 3) inanimate elements of nature such as stones and fire and animate natural entities are hardly ever represented as an active participant or actor in events (e.g. how often do we hear that forests are holding water in store or are stabilising the soil?) and if so, mostly in connection with catastrophes and as destroying cause; and 4) English grammar distinguishes between conscious and non-conscious entities: In the pronoun system non-conscious things are represented with *it* and they are denied of the ability to

“project an idea” or to have feelings. Halliday (ibid: 195) claims that this “totally excludes the concept of Gaia – of the earth itself as a conscious being”.

The four examples of Halliday’s speech stand here as representative examples for the influence of language on the way we perceive and construe the world. I agree with Halliday that humankind has reached a point where we need to understand that a construction of grammar that promotes the ideology of growth, the limitlessness of resources and the passivity of inanimate nature is not beneficial for us as it supports our endeavours to pursue an economic system that destroys our planet as a habitable environment. “These and other features of the language system construe our experience in such a way that we believe we can expand for ever – our own numbers, our own power and dominance over other species, our own consumption and so-called ‘standard of living’” (Halliday 2001: 198). However, as Halliday (ibid: 196) argues, it is barely possible to change and adapt the “inner layers of grammar”; but it is the task of the applied linguistic community, and as I contend, in particular of the discipline of ecolinguistics, to draw attention to the unecological aspects of languages. In regard of the global social and environmental crisis and the role of the linguists, Halliday (ibid: 199) concludes: “I do not suggest for one moment that we hold the key. But we ought to be able to write the instructions for its use.”

3.3. Ecolinguistics today

3.3.1. Ecolinguistics as a discipline

That ecolinguistics is by now an established academic discipline is reflected in the fact that in 2014 a whole volume of the journal *Language Sciences* was dedicated to ecolinguistics. Another indicator for the lively dialogue among ecolinguists is the online platform *Language and Ecology Research Forum* (www.ecoling.net), organised by Arran Stibbe, which is used actively by around 320 researchers from all around the world and prospers with eco-critical discourse analysis contributions on a large variety of topics, ranging from the language of the sunbed tanning industry to the language of Hip Hop. In addition, nowadays ecolinguistic study courses are offered at universities around the world, even as part of master and doctoral degrees.⁷

⁷ E.g. study course with Alwin Fill: http://www.jointdegree.eu/uploads/media/additional_Description_Fill_03.pdf; master and doctoral program in Indonesia: <https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A2=ECOLINGUISTICS;c5480a2a.1206>

Nevertheless, it would be misleading to say that ecolinguistics is *well*-established in the language sciences. Cowley (2014: 62) ascribes this point among others to the reason that “ecology” was a rather positively connoted term in the 1970s and 1980s, but lost its attraction when “ecological” became a synonym for “alternative” lifestyle. Moreover, he claims that some of the ecolinguistic rhetoric appears to be too politically and ideologically laden, rendering some of the works suspicious of “political bandwagon”.

The main reason for the relatively low prominence of ecolinguistics in language studies, however, can be traced back to the division of the field – to the archipelago-like character of ecolinguistics –, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Despite the “vast body of research and propositions” of the academic area of ecolinguistics (Lechevrel 2009: 2), there is still a many-voiced call for a unified field of ecolinguistics by overcoming its partition in ecological theories of languages and in the critical discourse tradition (cf. Cowley 2014: 62) and through more cooperation among researchers (cf. Steffensen, Fill 2014: 21) as well as for the development of more profound and well-defined methods of analysis (cf. Döring & Zunino 2014: 39).⁸

In addition, it has to be admitted that it is difficult, if not impracticable, to prove the effects of ecolinguistic efforts on the health of the environment (cf. Mühlhäusler & Peace 2006: 473). At the same time, there can be little doubt that identifying unecological elements of language - no matter whether on the grammar, lexical or text level - and actively encouraging ecological language, will heighten awareness about the cultural roots of the environmental crisis and thus carry the potential to create a change. Therefore, I count myself to the proponents of ecolinguistics and agree with do Couto (2014: 127), who asserts that

[p]ractically every social science has an eco-version. Today there is even eco-architecture. However, practically all of its adherents are well aware that the ecological approach is not bound to have the enthusiastic approval of academics. In spite of that, they go on in this line of research because they are convinced that [...] it is a healthy way of doing science. This is certainly the case with ecolinguistics.

It is the belief that we need to change our ways of living in all kinds of aspects of human culture in order to overcome the current ecological crisis that unifies the eco-approaches of the respective sciences. How we represent nature in everyday and scientific language, in

⁸ These reasons might explain why I did not learn about ecolinguistics in any of my study courses at the University of Vienna during all these years, and why I underwent several stages of confusion and frustration during the initial phase of my research.

commercial works and in works of art is an influential factor on how we are going to treat our environment. How and where we build our homes, our working places and our shopping malls, how and where we spend our holidays and our leisure time, how we produce our food, clothing, household and technical equipment, how we organise our medical systems, how we move from one point to the next, how we transport goods around the world, what and how much we buy, how we dispose waste – all these ways make a difference in how we look after the health of this planet and its inhabitants, including ourselves, the human species. And all these ways of living are strongly affected by what we consider as necessary, important and desirable, which in turn is influenced heavily by what we socially negotiate to be important and also what we are *told* to desire. Language is a human form of communication by the means of which a large number of negotiations of these priorities take place and by which many of our worldviews are (in)formed.

What we need to understand therefore is that ecolinguistics carries the potential to play a crucial role in addressing and assessing how these ways of living are represented in language and by expressing and pointing out “healthier” ones. As Stibbe (2014: 117) asserts:

In essence, ecolinguistics consists of questioning the stories that underpin our current unsustainable civilisation, exposing those stories that are clearly not working, that are leading to ecological destruction and social injustice, and finding new stories that work better in the conditions of the world we face. These are not stories in the traditional sense of a narrative, however, but rather discourses, frames, metaphors and, in general, clusters of linguistic features that come together to convey particular worldviews.

However, the efforts of the ecolinguistic enterprise alone will never be able to make the change that is urgently necessary. Therefore, a number of ecolinguists plea for an interdisciplinary eco-approach (Alexander 2009: 31; do Couto 2014: 127; Stibbe 2014: 125) and for giving more attention to language in the life sciences (cf. Cowley 2014: 62). Bang & Trampe (2014: 90) come to the conclusion that

the ecological crisis is also a crisis of our language about nature and the environment. This could result in, not just an ecological turn in linguistics, but also a linguistic turn in the environmental sciences. Indeed, both turns are necessary if the world is to turn towards sustainable development⁹.

⁹ As shown by Alexander (2009) and Adami (2013: 351), the term *sustainable development* is frequently misused in ecologically destructive contexts. We can assume, however, that Bang & Trampe use it here in its original meaning, namely a way of living that has a neutral or positive effect on the health of eco-systems.

3.3.2. New challenges for ecolinguistics

As Mühlhäusler & Peace (2006) observe, there has been a “greening” of languages lately; that is, environmental discourse has found its way into everyday language, industrial and economic discourses and other areas of language. Environmental discourse is defined by Mühlhäusler & Peace (2006: 458) as

comprising the linguistic devices articulating arguments about the relationship between humans and the natural environment [...] [U]ntil recently most discourse took place in the belief that a largely self-regulating nature could be taken for granted. The new discourse differs in that its principal focus is the endangerment of nature and the human species in a global context.

While “green language” carries the potential to raise awareness about environmental problems (Mühlhäusler & Peace 2006: 462), there has been an increasing amount of abuse of environmental discourse in order to disguise the ecological consequences of certain practices, a phenomena that can be referred to by the term “greenwashing”. “Corporate discourses about the environment are capable of manipulating even the ecoliterate” (Mühlhäusler & Peace 2006: 461).

Greenwashing and other strategies at work demonstrate the significance of language in concern of the question: What are people made to believe, and in whose interest? To reveal the linguistic manipulations of corporations and other actors with specific intentions is another challenge that some ecolinguists have accepted. Among them is Richard J. Alexander (2009), who has undertaken ecolinguistic analyses of texts of a number of people in power in order to detect ‘greenspeak’ (a term derived from the Orwellian ‘newspeak’), greenwashing and other methods of what he calls “linguistic” or “discourse engineering”, which means in its essence much the same as propaganda (Alexander 2009: 21f).

Before we proceed on to eco-critical discourse analysis, a brief summary of the most essential aspects of ecolinguistics will conclude this chapter.

3.4. Summary

1. Ecolinguistics is based on the assumption that language both actively constructs and is constructed by our interaction with the world/environment.

2. Ecolinguistics is concerned with the cultural/linguistic roots of the ecological crisis: It seeks to raise awareness about features of language that promote unecological ideologies and to highlight the ones that promote life-sustaining relations.
3. Ecolinguistics consists mainly of two branches: theories about the ecology of language and linguistic methods applied to ecologically relevant issues, eco-critical discourse analysis being the most common one.
4. Ecolinguistics is by now an established academic discipline, but lacks unification among researchers and well-framed methods of analysis.

4. Ecocritical discourse analysis

Ecocritical discourse analysis is the term for the ecolinguistic approach to critical discourse analysis (CDA). Ecocritical discourse analysis is based on the school of critical discourse studies, but includes additional essential components: nature and the eco-system we live in. Stibbe (2014: 117), one of the most prominent representatives of ecocritical discourse analysis, holds that

[w]hile ecolinguistics tends to use the same forms of linguistic analysis as traditional critical discourse studies, the normative framework it operates in considers relationships of humans not just with other humans but also with the larger ecological systems that all life depends on. Ecolinguistics analyses discourses from consumerism to nature poetry, critiquing those which encourage ecologically destructive behaviour and seeking out those which encourage relationships of respect and care for the natural world. The expanded context of ecolinguistics complicates power relations between oppressor and oppressed since it considers impacts on non-human subjects and future generations not yet born, necessitating both theoretical development of CDS [critical discourse studies] and an application of an ecologically based normative framework for judging discourses against.

At this point it is worth mentioning that Stibbe considers works of literature to also lie within the scope of ecolinguistics, whereas most ecolinguists regard the analysis of these works as part of the field of ecocriticism, which can be seen as the “eco-approach” to literature studies (cf. do Couto 2014: 127). It has to be noted that the term “ecocritical analysis” is also used in the field of ecocriticism. In this paper, however, it shall refer to the ecolinguistic approach to critical discourse studies that is applied to non-literary texts.

As ecocritical discourse analysis is founded on critical discourse analysis, it is necessary to outline some basic principles of critical discourse analysis.

4.1. Critical discourse analysis (CDA)

Critical discourse analysis (CDA), also known as Critical discourse studies (CDS), has a multidisciplinary background and draws on a large number of different methods. Thus, as Wodak & Meyer (2009: 2f) point out, CDA has to be understood as a school or paradigm rather than as an approach. “CDA is characterized by the common interests in de-mystifying ideologies and power through the systematic and reproducible investigation of semiotic data (written, spoken or visual)” (Wodak & Meyer 2009: 3). In contrast to discourse studies (DS), which investigate language phenomena from an exclusively linguistic point of view, critical discourse analysis is always problem-oriented and strives to examine the social phenomena behind their linguistic representation. The term “critical”, going back to the “Critical Theory” that was developed by the Frankfurt School, entails the aim of critiquing and changing society, rather than solely trying to offer explanations about social phenomena (cf. Wodak & Meyer 2009: 6).

Despite the large number of different definitions of discourse used by different researchers involved in CDA, Wodak & Meyer (2009: 5f) suggests the common understanding of discourse in the field of CDA as “language use in speech and writing” and as a form of “social practice”; or in other words, “CDA understands discourses as relatively stable uses of language serving the organization and structuring of social life”. The borders of a discourse are often not clearly locatable; the boundaries between discourse on climate change and on global warming are partially fluid, for example (Reisigl & Wodak 2009: 89).

In its meaning for structuring society, discourse plays an essential role in terms of power distribution. “Discursive practices may have major ideological effects – that is, they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance) social classes, women and men, and ethnic/cultural majorities and minorities through the ways in which they represent things and position people” (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 258). As mentioned above, for the ecocritical approach to CDA we have to add unequal power relations between humans and non-human beings such as animals, plants, other elements of nature and generations of future life not yet born.

According to van Dijk (1993: 254), groups in power very often intend to “manage the mind” of others` in their own interest. This management of the mind can occur via manipulative, persuasive, dissimulating and other strategies, and “[i]t is at this crucial point where discourse and critical discourse analysis come in: managing the mind of others is essentially a function of text and talk”. CDA aims at pointing out linguistic patterns that are used to form certain world views in order to maintain existing power relations.

Of particular interest for CDA researchers are strategies and linguistic manifestations of ideologies that are not easily identified as such, but those that appear as everyday beliefs, e.g. in the form of metaphors or analogies. Once a dominant ideology becomes “neutral” and is shared by the majority of people in a group or society, it represents the “Gramscian concept of hegemony”. It is the task of CDA researchers to challenge such “common-sense assumptions” and hegemonic worldviews and to point out alternatives (Wodak & Meyer 2009: 8).

It would go beyond the scope of this paper to elaborate extensively on the concepts of ideology and power. However, it has to be stressed that “CDA researchers are interested in the way discourse (re)produces social domination, that is, the power abuse of one group over others, and how dominated groups may discursively resist such abuse” (Wodak & Meyer 2009: 9). The ways how power is manifested and exercised on a linguistic level are highly complex and diverse. For the present paper and its focus on consumerism it is relevant that “suggesting how happy people will become if they buy specific consumer products is also an exercise of power; marketing provides us with a large body of knowledge of powerful techniques” (Wodak & Meyer 2009: 9).

With regard to methodology, CDA stands in the hermeneutic tradition. According to Wodak & Meyer (2009: 22),

[h]ermeneutics can be understood as the method of grasping and interpreting meanings. The hermeneutic circle – i.e. the meaning of one part can only be understood in the context of the whole, but this in turn is only accessible from its components – indicates the problem of the intelligibility of the hermeneutic interpretation.

This means that CDA is not to be understood as a linear process, but rather as a dynamic process that allows moving back and forth between theory and the objects of analysis, by means of which earlier assumptions can be evaluated. This process is often referred to as the “hermeneutic circle” and is illustrated in the following figure:

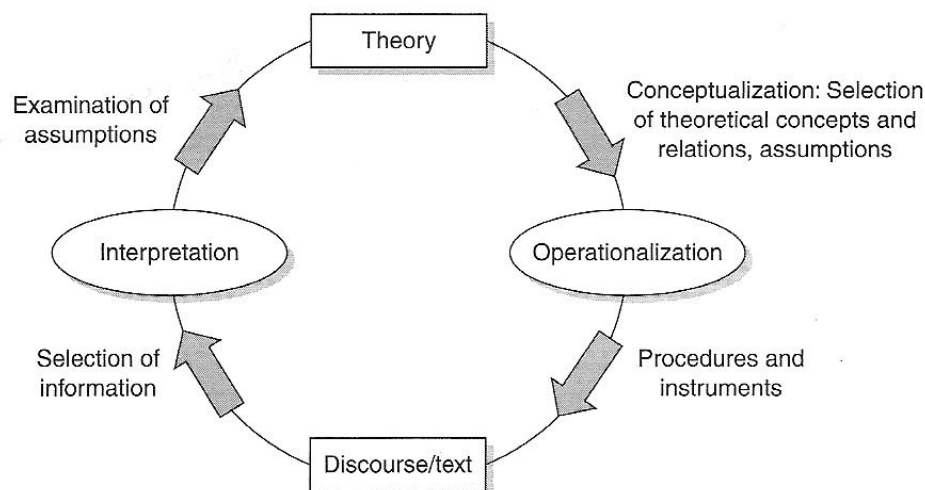


Figure 1: Empirical research as a circular process (Meyer & Wodak 2009: 24)

Another characteristic of CDA is that its methodology strongly relies on linguistic categories. Many of the linguistic devices used in CDA are taken from discourse analysis (DA), which differentiates between two steps in the analysis: structure analysis and fine analysis. Structure analysis is more content-oriented, concerned with the media and the general themes of texts. Fine analysis is more linguistically oriented and concentrates for example on context, text surface and rhetorical means, analysing linguistic concepts such as actors, mode, time, tense, vocabulary and argumentation for which both qualitative and quantitative aspects can be examined (Wodak & Meyer 2009: 28).

Among the many approaches of critical discourse analysis, discourse historical analysis (DHA) provides some helpful tools to examine the discursive strategies and linguistic features in the ecocritical analysis of the present paper. According to Reisigl & Wodak (2009: 93), DHA revolves around five questions:

1. How are persons, objects, phenomena/events, processes and actions named and referred to linguistically?
2. What characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to social actors, objects, phenomena/events and processes?
3. What arguments are employed in the discourse in question?
4. From what perspective are these nominations, attributions and arguments expressed?
5. Are the respective utterances articulated overtly; are the intensified or mitigated?

Based on the five questions, Reisigl & Wodak (2009: 94) have developed five categories of discursive strategies. By the term “strategy”, they refer to “more or less intentional plan of

practices (including discursive practises) adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic goal”:

1) Nomination strategies refer to the discursive construction of social actors, objects/phenomena/event and processes/actions such as devices of membership categorisation, deictics, metaphors; or more generally verbs and nouns used to denote processes and actions. A typical example that will also be relevant for the present paper is: What do pronouns refer to? Who is meant by ‘we’ or ‘you’? Is there an agent that is referred to at all?

2) Predication strategies can be understood as the discursive qualification of social actors, objects, phenomena, events/processes and actions (positively or negatively), e.g. by evaluative attributions such as adjectives, appositions, relative clauses, collocations and comparisons.

3) Argumentation strategies are about justifying and questioning “claims of truth and normative rightness”. For the DHA, Reisigl & Wodak (2009: 110) introduce the terms “topos” and “fallacy” that can be understood as “parts of argumentation which [...] connect the argument(s) with the conclusion, the claim”. These elements are referred to as topoi when the argumentation line is reasonable, i.e. when it follows certain conventions of arguing such as use of plausible arguments and premises based on liable evidence. In case of inaccurate argumentation we deal with fallacies. Topoi and fallacies can be overtly expressed or they can be implicit; in case they are implicit, they can be rendered explicit as part of the claims, as illustrated in the following example: The claim ‘Retail shopping is good for you when you are feeling unhappy’ builds upon the premises [you want to be happy] and [consumerism leads to happiness]. As outlined in point 2.2., linking consumerism to human happiness can be regarded as a misleading premise. Therefore, the sample claim can be identified as fallacious. It has to be noted, however, that without context knowledge it is often not possible to say whether an argumentation scheme is reasonable or fallacious (cf. Reisigl & Wodak 2009:110); in our sample case, the first premise could be fallacious as well – maybe the person addressed does not want to be happy.

The remaining two categories of discursive strategies will not be mentioned here as they will not be considered in the analysis of this paper. After having presented some principles and methods of CDA, we can go on to have a closer look at the ecolinguistic approach to it.

4.2. Some principles of an ecocritical discourse analysis

First of all, it has to be mentioned that ecocritical discourse analysis is still “an emerging area, with few studies of depth and sophistication” (Stibbe 2014: 125). Secondly, there is no definition of a universal approach of ecocritical discourse analysis as the range of discourses that can be examined with ecocritical discourse analysis is simply too vast. The ecocritical studies undertaken up to today demonstrate considerable variation in respect of comprehensiveness, depth of analysis and motivation. Nevertheless, Stibbe (2014: 118) provides a number of “general characteristics of an ecolinguistics approach to discourse studies” which seem to be highly useful for this paper. Subsequently, these characteristics will be enumerated and commented on in the context of the intention of this paper:

- a. The focus is on discourses that have (or potentially have) a significant impact not only on how people treat other people, but also on how they treat the larger ecological systems that life depends on.

Discourses relating to consumerism definitely fall in this category as the consumption of goods relies on a production chain with people involved at both ends and many other stages of this chain. Even though producers, workers and consumers hardly ever know (about) each other, they stand in relation to each other through the process of producing, selling and consuming a certain good. In addition, in particular excessive and irresponsible consumerism has a heavy impact on ecological systems in the form of exploitation of resources and high energy consumption in the process of production, storage and transport which causes effects on the climate, disposal problems, contamination and destruction of living habitats of animals and plants.

- b. The discourses are analysed by showing how clusters of linguistic features come together to form particular worldviews or 'cultural codes'. A cultural code is 'a compact package of shared values, norms, ethos and social beliefs... [which] constructs and reflects the community's 'common sense' (Gavriely-Nuri, 2012: 80). An example is the pervasive code that sees unlimited economic growth as both a possible and a desirable goal for human societies.

The worldviews and cultural codes as they are named here relate closely to the concept of ideology. In this paper, I am going to examine how the ideology of “the more we buy and possess the happier we become” is promoted and reiterated in course books texts.

- c. The criteria that worldviews are judged by are derived from an explicit or implicit ecological philosophy (or ecosophy). An ecosophy is informed by both a scientific

understanding of how organisms (including humans) depend on interactions with other organisms and a physical environment to survive and flourish, and also an ethical framework to decide why survival and flourishing matters and whose survival and flourishing matters.

The notion of ecosophy and my personal ecosophy will be described in section 4.3. as they require a more detailed explanation. At this point, however, it shall be mentioned that the advantage of making the framework (the ecosophy) explicit is that the analyst does not pretend to work in the name of an anonymous objectivity; it becomes rather clear that “the analyst is, in essence, comparing and contrasting dominant discourses with their own ethical philosophy of how they see an ideal society” (Stibbe 2014: 120). This corresponds to what Wodak & Meyer (2009: 3) assert about the objective of CDA researchers: “[They] attempt to make their own positions and interests explicit while retaining their respective scientific methodologies and while remaining self-reflective of their own research process”.

- d. The study [ecocritical studies in general, author’s note] aims to expose and draw attention to discourses which appear to be ecologically destructive (i.e. work against the principles of the ecosophy), or alternatively to seek out and promote discourses which could potentially help protect and preserve the conditions that support life (i.e. are aligned with the values of the ecosophy).

This paper is concerned with both aspects that are mentioned here: In the context of consumerism I intend to identify (potentially) ecologically destructive discourses, while simultaneously looking out for discourses with potentially beneficial effects (such as discourses that promote a reduction of consumption and/or a more conscious and responsible way of consumption).

- e. The study is aimed towards practical application through raising awareness of the role of language in ecological destruction or protection, informing policy, informing educational development or providing ideas that can be drawn on in redesigning existing texts or producing new texts in the future (Stibbe 2014: 118).

Clearly, the practical application of the findings of this paper will depend on the quality of the results. In case the insights gained through the ecocritical analysis show need for action, I see two strategies: The first is to forward the results to the respective course book designers and publishers in order to raise awareness for unecological language patterns and ideologies in the Austrian EFL course books; the second is to implement the findings in the classroom setting by addressing and discussing clusters of language that carry potentially destructive ideologies,

which can be complemented by providing reading and listening texts with potentially more beneficial linguistic features.

4.3. Ecosophy

This section explains the concept of ecosophy in general, describes briefly two ecosophies that are essential for the particular ecosophy of this paper and finally presents the ecosophy of this paper in four statements.

All critical studies are based on an explicit or implicit philosophy which gives an ethical vision of where societies should be heading, and they use this philosophy to judge discourses against. Typically in CDA this is a set of values concerning oppression, exploitation and inequality, and under what circumstances these are unacceptable and must be resisted (van Dijk 2008, referred to in Stibbe 2014: 120).

In ecolinguistics, this philosophy is referred to as ecosophy. An ecosophy is the philosophical and ethical framework that can be used to judge discourses against in the context of ecocritical discourse analysis; that is, an ecolinguist compares the examined discourse and its underlying ideology (or ideologies) to the aspects of their ecosophy. As defined above by Stibbe (2014: 119), an ecosophy is composed of scientific and ethical aspects relating to the survival and interactions of organisms in a physical environment. The range of ecosophies is large: They vary in terms of setting different priorities (e.g. animals over plants or non-human nature over humans) and they rely on different scientific “facts” about environmental and social issues. The “spectra [of ecosophies] run from anthropocentric to ecocentric, optimistic to pessimistic, and neoliberal to socialist, localist or anarchist”. What all ecosophies in ecolinguistic studies have in common is the ecological and traditionally also the social dimension (Stibbe 2014: 120).

The two ecological philosophies that shall form the basis for this paper’s ecosophy are deep ecology and social ecology. The deep ecology movement was first mentioned by Naess in 1973, as a contra-part to what he calls the more popular shallow ecology movement, which concentrates on the fight against pollution and resource depletion, aiming mainly at the health and affluence of people in developed countries (Naess 1973: 95). Proponents of the deep ecology movement “share a dislike of the human-centred value system at the core of European and North American industrial culture” (Nelson 2008: 206). The deep ecology philosophy starts from the premise that all life on earth, human and non-human, possesses intrinsic value, “independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes” and is based on

the assumption that the biodiversity of this planet is to be valued and protected, humans having not the right to interfere with the ecosystem to such an extent as it is done presently. According to the movement, economic, technological and ideological policies need to be changed. “The ideological change will be mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living”.

All these aspects shall be part of the ecosophy for this paper. However, there is one aspect of deep ecology that this paper strongly objects to: deep ecology suggests the need for smaller numbers of human population in order to save the flourishing of non-human life (Nelson 2008: 210). This aspect is the one that is criticised the most by opponents of deep ecology because this view - in its extreme form - can lead to eco-fascist views such as welcoming the AIDS virus as a necessary means of population control (cf. Messersmith-Glavin 2011: 15¹⁰). The ethical framework of this paper does not go in line with eco-fascist and misanthropic views; therefore it seems reasonable to replace some aspects of deep ecology from above with some aspects of social ecology.

The essential premise of social ecology is that human domination of nature is rooted in social hierarchies and that social crises are very often the cause for ecological crises (Messersmith-Glavin 2011: 13). In this respect, social ecology is very closely related to ecofeminism, which links domination of humans over nature to domination of men over women (cf. Bookchin 1987). The founder of social ecology, Murray Bookchin (1987), holds that social ecology is an ecological approach “that is rooted in an ecological philosophy, ethics, sensibility, and image of nature, and ultimately for an ecological movement that will transform our domineering market society into a non-hierarchical cooperative society – a society that will live in harmony with nature because its members live in harmony with one another”. As a conclusion, according to social ecology, the currently dominating neoliberal economic system that is based on small-scale (e.g. within local companies) and large-scale (e.g. transnational relations) hierarchies does not seem adequate at all to fulfil the requirements for a social economic system that fosters equality and harmony among humans and between humans and nature. In contrast to deep ecology, social ecology is not only concerned about human views of nature, ecology or humanity, but actively seeks for explicit changes in society, such as finding alternative economic systems. It provides

¹⁰ This view was uttered by Abbey, a member of a radical environmental advocacy group named *Earth first!*.

a radically left perspective and does not blame humanity in general for the ecological crisis, but rather particular human rulers (Messersmith-Glavin 2011: 15).

As stated above, the philosophical framework of this paper is based on some principles of deep ecology and social ecology. It is expressed in the following statements that constitute the four pillars of my personal ecosophy:

Intrinsic worth of nature: Nature has an intrinsic value that goes far beyond the utility of natural resources for human needs, therefore all species are to be protected. Apart from that, I believe that the direct experience of nature is nurturing for the human soul in a way that cannot be replaced by man-made landscapes and goods.

Life quality: Given that the basic human needs are met, I believe that “the good life” and happiness are not to be found on a materialistic level and in adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living, expressed in the consumption of more goods or goods of higher value (luxury), as it is constantly promoted in advertisements; but rather in dwelling in situations of inherent value, such as appreciating and enjoying “things” like moments of sunshine, the smell of flowers or rain, good talks or quality time with family and friends.

Reduction of overall consumption: The reduction of human consumption, in particular in the so-called “developed” countries, is urgently necessary in order to stop the destruction of the ecosystem of our planet. This goes in hand with changing from consumerist lifestyles to more ethical consumption patterns; i.e. buying products that are not based on human and natural exploitation.

Social justice: At the heart of the ecosophy is not only the concern about non-human beings, but also the well-being of as many people as possible and the wish for a more non-hierarchical and cooperative society. Following Stibbe (2014: 123), this aspect aims at

an extensive overall reduction of human consumption in order to protect ecosystems, while simultaneously reducing poverty and creating more equitable societies, [for which] a large-scale redistribution is necessary to bring people out of poverty even as the total consumption declines.

This means that according to this ecosophy, while people who lead a consumerist lifestyle should consume less, people living in poverty should be able to consume more, i.e. be able to meet the daily human needs such as food, clean water, sufficient shelter, clothing and

medicine. This point also includes that labour conditions of people working in factories that produce goods for Western consumers comply at least with human right standards.

4.4. Movements of (eco)critical discourse analysis

CDA strives to achieve two kinds of movements in order to change prevailing unjust power relations, both of which are relevant for the ecolinguistic approach: CDA seeks to stimulate “self-directed social movements” and “other-directed social movements” (cf. Stewart 1999: 91-92). Self-directed social movements refer to the process of raising awareness among the oppressed about common sense assumptions that operate in the service of maintaining unequal power relations in societies so that these assumptions are no longer perceived as common sense and thus lose their power entirely or at least to a certain extent. “Ecolinguistics can also operate this way, exposing how common sense assumptions within transnational capitalism play a role in destroying the ecological systems that oppressed communities depend on for their well-being and survival, and providing evidence and materials that self-directed social movements from these communities can use in working towards social change” (Stibbe 2014: 119.). 2) Other-directed social movements stand for the efforts of people who are not fighting for themselves, but for the rights of others. This aspect is particularly relevant in the context of ecolinguistics as “many of the victims of ecological destruction are those who cannot be made conscious of the forces behind their oppression and do not have a voice to resist oppressive discourses: other species of animals, plants, forests, rivers or future generations” (Stibbe 2014: 119).

This paper aims mainly at other-directed social movements; it can be counted among the range of ecolinguistic works which seek to raise consciousness “among people in ecologically destructive societies about the impact of their societies on others, both human and non-human, close or distant, and present and future generations” (Stibbe 2014: 120). To put it more precisely: This paper intends to raise awareness among teachers and pupils, school book authors and others about consumerist discourse that promotes the practice of excessive consumerism in a number of Austrian course books and its potential impact on humans, future generations of humans, non-human beings and the global ecosystem, which have been or will be suffering from the consequences of this practice.

4.5. Methodology

4.5.1. Objects of analysis and gathering data

Basically, any kind of discourse can be analysed from an ecocritical point of view by judging it against the ecosophy of the analyst. As pointed out by Stibbe (2010: 414), environmental discourses have received most attention from ecolinguists, even though it can be argued that other discourses such as discourses of consumerism, neo-liberalism and progress possess a larger potential for negative ecological impact. The latter kind of discourses, “precisely through their omission of ecological consideration, can encourage people to behave in ways that are ecologically destructive” (Stibbe 2014: 118). The range of ecologically destructive discourses that have been examined from an ecolinguistic perspective varies from discourses of financial institutions (Grabowski 2007), economics (Stibbe 2005), and advertising (Slater 2007) to factory farm industry (Glenn 2004), to name just a few.

The high number of analyses of environmental discourses undertaken by ecolinguists can be explained as followed: Stibbe (2014: 123) asserts that “[i]n addition to destructive discourses, a key interest of ecolinguistics is in discourses which at first sight appear to be constructive and do not contradict the principles of the ecosophy, but at the same time do not seem to actively work towards those principles either”. In other words, sometimes we might think we speak and act in a beneficial way for our natural environment when in fact we are not or only on a very shallow level (cf. Stibbe 2004). Here, ecolinguistics can help even eco-conscious persons to reconsider their own worldviews that are very often highly anthropocentric.

An illustrative example for such a discourse is the language used in United Nations documents about environmental rights. Adami (2013) did a thorough analysis of the UN “World Charter for Nature”, written in 1982, pointing out a number of anthropocentric and unecological features of the English language. Her analysis is based on identifying linguistic strategies by which anthropocentrism is manifested in language.¹¹ Among others, Adami (2013: 353f) examines the strategy of “utility naming”, that is referring to elements of the natural world “according to its utility rather than for its inherent value”; e.g. the United Nations’ use of the term “resources of the oceans” for animals of the ocean such as fish. By means of nominalisations such as “deforestation” or “degradation”, the human agents behind these processes are not identified and therefore it remains unclear who has to be held accountable (2013: 347). In her conclusion,

¹¹ Some of these strategies were firstly identified by Alwin Fill and will be briefly explained in point 4.5.2.

Adami (2013: 355) critiques the United Nations' anthropocentric approach to environmental rights and stresses that along with the "human rights perspective" the "nature rights perspective" should be considered as well.

Not to be forgotten are the kinds of discourses that can be described as positive or beneficial discourses from an ecocritical point of view. These are the kind of discourses "which resonate with and are aligned with the ecosophy of the analyst" (Stibbe 2014: 123). It has to be noted that up to today, the number of ecocritical analyses of texts other than literature which can be counted to the beneficial discourses is small. It seems like lyrical works and other works of literature provide a more inspiring and creative medium for ecologically positive discourses that give voice to nature and encourage a peaceful relation between humans and their environment (cf. Stibbe 2014: 124).

According to Wodak & Meyer (2009: 27), there is not a specific way of gathering data in CDA. Due to the hermeneutic character of CDA, and therefore of ecocritical discourse analysis, gathering data does not necessarily have to be a phase that must be finished before the beginning of the analysis but can also be completed at a later point of the investigation. For the purpose of this paper that includes exclusively texts of a selected number of Austrian ELT course books, however, the phase of gathering data will be completed before the fine analysis.

4.5.2. Procedure of analysis and additional strategies

"Analysis proceeds by showing how clusters of linguistic features come together in discourses to present a particular worldview, then judging the worldview against the ecosophy. Discourses can fall along a spectrum in terms of their 'fit' with the ecosophy" (Stibbe 2014: 121). In other words: Once the data is selected, the first step of ecocritical discourse analysis is the dismantling of worldviews or ideologies that lie behind certain discourses - or what Stibbe calls "cluster of linguistic features"-, which can occur by means of examining a wide range of linguistic features and strategies.

At this point, this list of strategies by Wodak & Reisigl from point 4.1. shall be complemented with a few more linguistic strategies that are particularly relevant for the ecolinguistic approach to critical discourse analysis. All subsequent strategies belong to the category of nomination strategies. There are four anthropocentric nomination strategies that were firstly described by

the ecolinguist Fill (1997): utility naming, distancing, objectivization and euphemism. According to Fill (1997: 451), anthropocentrism is deeply embedded in human language because “language is an element in human evolution that serves the supremacy and growth of everything human – as against the ‘rights’ of other animate beings and of inanimate nature”. In this sense, the anthropocentric ideology is contradictory to deep ecology and with this to the ecosophy of this paper, as anthropocentrism regards humanity as the centre of evolution and neglects or denies the rights and the inherent value of plants, animals and other non-human organisms on this planet. In detail, the strategies are defined and illustrated by Fill (1997: 452f) as follows (as Fill is an Austrian scholar, some of the examples will be in German):

- utility naming: the “tendency of language to name the phenomena of the world from the point of view of their usability for humans”; e.g. *Nützlinge/Schädlinge, Kraut/Unkraut, firewood, beneficial animals, pests*, etc;
- distancing: “animals and plants are kept linguistically at a distance from humans because different words are used for analogous phenomena”; e.g. *die Pflanze ist kaputt gegangen* (instead of *gestorben*; literal translation: the plant got broken); *to clear trees* (instead of killing trees), *the terms veal, beef, pork and mutton* (instead of the respectively slaughtered animals);
- objectification: similar to the distancing strategy, very common in the hunter’s jargon, “transforming animals into pain free objects”; e.g. *quarry, trophies*;
- euphemism: “the use of a word with pleasant associations for a fact regarded as unpleasant in our society”, overlaps with the strategies of distancing and objectification; e.g. *animal health service, meat production, wood production* (all refer to the killing of animals or plants for human purposes)

Two more nomination strategies that were used in ecocritical works will complete this list:

- nominalisation: “consists in transforming verbs or whole clauses into nouns by replacing the explanation of an action with a vague noun that highlights the process rather than the actor” (Adami 2013: 347); e.g. the terms ‘water pollution’ or ‘environmental degradation’ do not indicate who or what are responsible for the phenomena, the agents are obscured.

- patterns of erasure: the “linguistic representation of an area of life as irrelevant, marginal or unimportant through its systematic absence, backgrounding or distortion in texts” (Stibbe 2015: 146). “Erasure”, in this context, “is used to indicate that something important, something that we should be giving attention to, has been ignored, sidelined or overlooked within a text or discourse”. It is the analyst who determines which specific area of life is considered to be important and to become investigated in the study (Stibbe 2015: 146). In the case of the present paper, erasure of nature and oppressed communities in consumerist discourse will be scrutinized. It is to be noted that there are various levels of erasure patterns: While complete omission is the strongest form of erasure, other forms of erasure can also occur by “using abstract language that glosses over concrete details” (Fairclough 2003: 139, referred to in Stibbe 2015: 146). As illustrated by Stibbe (2015: 158), in an expression such as ‘ecosystem structural elements such as biomass’ nature is not completely omitted; however, it “contains only the faintest trace of the natural world, and no hint of intrinsic value”.

The final step of the analysis according to Stibbe (2014: 121) is to evaluate the underlying worldview or ideology of the discourses by means of the ecosophy that the analyst has framed. Stibbe proposes to use the colours of traffic lights in order to indicate whether a discourse contradicts the ecosophy (red), if it is neutral, shallow or ambivalent but not supportive either (yellow), or if it is an ecologically positive discourse according to the ecosophy of the analyst (green).

5. ELT course book analysis

ELT course books, also referred to as textbooks, have received increasing attention from researchers over the last decades as course books function in many cases as syllabus and serve as the most essential source of teaching materials for teachers of the English language (Harwood 2014: 1). Course books do not only serve as a means of teaching linguistic features of a language, but also for introducing learners to cultural aspects of the speakers of the language. At the same time, they are ideologically laden, in the sense that “the forms the representation take tend to reproduce existing power relations” (Gray & Block 2014: 46).

5.1. ELT course books: consumerism vs. environmental issues

Findings of studies that examined the cultural content of global ELT textbooks showed that there has been a shift in topics and attitudes contained in the books: “Rather than focus on other people’s lives, more recent books ask learners to talk about themselves, the tenor having shifted from the more ‘educational’ and ‘serious’ towards the more consumerist, emotional, and aspirational” (Harwood 2014: 5).

Gray & Block (2014: 47) conducted a study on class representation in the current commercial global ELT course books, in which they observed a “celebration of neoliberal ideology” with an “overwhelming focus on consumerism and the lifestyles of a cosmopolitan middle class” in the books. The authors assert that course books moved away from the representation of language practices of native speakers towards the representation of a “global culture of consumerism”, creating a new “society of English speakers”, where the “main players represented are middle class and wealthy people” (Gray & Block 2014: 59). In another study by Gray (2010: 3), in which he scrutinizes the discursive construction of the English language, he describes the current typical global ELT course book as

a carefully constructed artefact in which discourses of feminism, multiculturalism and globalisation are selectively co-opted by ELT publishers as a means of inscribing English with a range of values and associations that include individualism, egalitarianism, cosmopolitanism, mobility and affluence, in which students are increasingly addressed as consumers.

Interviews with publishers confirmed Gray’s observation that global ELT course books are prudently constructed, ascribing consistently positive connotations to English. In his analysis of images and photographs in the books, he detected numerous advertising strategies which relate the represented goods and services as “part of the good life” and encourage the learners to aspire the illustrated consumer lifestyles (Gray 2010: 133).

Similar observations have been made by Sokolik (2007), author and editor of several ESL/EFL course books, who examined the promotion of consumerism in grammar textbooks. Even though the present paper will investigate only texts taken from course books and no extracts of exercise or grammar text books, the results of Sokolik’s examination are worth mentioning at this point. Due to the findings of her study, Sokolik (2007: 3) concludes that “consumerism in textbooks is tied to the portrayal of the middle or upper class as the global norm; in addition, it is further complicated by the promotion of certain brand names of goods, or the act of buying

itself". She further asserts that "the focus on money and shopping in grammatical examples ties into a socio-economic concept of creating a culture of desire: the desire to shop, go to malls, and to buy things" (Sokolik 2007: 6). Furthermore, despite the argument that presenting brand names is more authentic than referring to nonspecific consumer products, Sokolik (2007) warns that uncritical representation of brand names can easily serve promotional purposes instead of cultural learning - in particular when one brand name serves to represent an entire category of products (e.g. Coca Cola for soft drinks in general). After having pointed out some of the ecological consequences of consumerism and the class bias towards middle and wealthier classes, Sokolik (2007: 7) stresses the need to reveal the underlying ideologies of the grammatical example sentences:

It is a leap to suggest that example sentences in grammar textbooks are directly leading to the depletion of the world's resources, or are alienating entire groups of students because of the mention of Coca Cola, or the idea that one might buy a sports car. But, the promotion of consumerism, the elevation of a lifestyle that thrives on new cars and international vacations, in any form, must be examined for its value and place in the grammar textbook, and by extension, our classrooms. [...] We should be reading those seemingly innocent sample sentences and asking, "What is *really* being taught here?"

I agree with Sokolik: it is likely that frequent and unchallenged representation of the consumerist lifestyle in a variety of forms, and may it simply be its representation in isolated grammar exercise sentences, contributes to the hegemony of the consumerist ideology.

While consumerism seems to be highly present in global ELT books, ecological issues appear to be backgrounded. Akceseme (2013) did an ecocritical survey on the representation of nature in seven global ELT course books. The findings of the study demonstrate "an obvious lack of interest in addressing environmental crises" (Akceseme 2013: 102) and that "[c]oursebooks cover lots of things about modern life either with no reference to or with little emphasis on the fact that modern human activities risk damaging the environment, disturbing the balance in the ecosystem" (Akceseme 2013: 109). In her conclusion, Akceseme (2013: 114) emphasises the need for a discursive change in ELT course books:

Linguistic and discursive representations of nature and related categories about nature and natural entities condition the way that we interact with nature, and what we do with and about ecology depends on our ideas of the man-nature relationship. Rather than reinforcing the established systems and existing ideologies which have given rise to ecological problems, ELT coursebooks should promote clear environmental messages and ecological ethics to develop deeper devotion to nature.

As can be concluded from the findings above, in the case of global ELT course books, the representation of the English language and culture is closely associated with consumerist lifestyles and seems to be socially biased, depicting wealthier and more powerful people more often than less wealthier people with less power. Additionally, consequences of consumerism on the environment often seem to be backgrounded or erased completely. From an ecocritical perspective, this form of representation of the English language can be regarded as serving to the reiteration of current power relations (cf. Gray & Block 2014: 46): social power relations between dominant communities and oppressed communities as well as human dominance over nature. I am of the opinion that it is our task as teachers to decide if we want to contribute to the reiteration of existing power relations or if we try to question underlying values and world views of the teaching materials we use.

5.2. Teachers and ELT course book content

According to Gray (2014: 7), many teachers, in particular younger ones, do not question the authority of ELT course books and its potentially unecological content and/or language. However, in my opinion, there are a number of perspectives why teachers should well be doing so: 1) as socially and environmentally committed scientists, 2) as politically mature democratic citizens and 3) as engaged educationists and in order to fulfil the teaching goals of the teaching principles “Umweltbildung”, “Politische Bildung” and “Verbraucherinnenbildung” of the BMBF.

In my view, there are two ways of dealing with unecological content and linguistic features in ELT course books from an ecocritical perspective. The first option is to work with it critically in the ELT classroom; that is, to evaluate course book content from an ecocritical discourse point of view for example; to present it to the learners, scrutinize and discuss it with them; show them how to do ecocritical discourse analysis and let them conduct their own small-scale projects or to make use of alternative material. The second option is what Gray (2014: 191) calls for: He encourages teachers to take responsibility and become politically active in order to advocate for alternative representations of English in course books: “Teachers need to begin to see themselves as powerful and begin to make demands on publishers”. However, in order to be able to make demands on publishers, teachers need to become aware of the dominance of the consumerist ideology in the first place. Ecocritical discourse analysis carries the potential to heighten awareness for this issue in general and at the same time, it can serve as a useful

approach to examine course books with regard to linguistic aspects that are potentially more beneficial for ecological and global social justice.

5.3. Description of study

In the empirical part of this paper, three ELT course books approbated for different Austrian upper secondary school types will be examined in order to answer the following overall research question: How is consumerism represented in Austrian ELT course books from an ecocritical discourse analysis perspective?

The first step of the ecocritical discourse analysis of the present paper consists of a rough content analysis of general themes related to consumerism. This serves to identify the relevant texts for the main part of the analysis. The second step then, the fine analysis, goes beyond the surface level by trying to reveal the underlying ideologies and worldviews of the selected texts. In this sense, it can be understood as an in-depth technique as proposed by McGrath (2002: 27), as it enables to look at “underlying [...] values on which the materials are based”. Due to restrictions of feasibility, in-depth techniques can usually not be applied to entire course books, but are rather based on concentrating either on particular features (Cunningsworth 1995, referred to in McGrath 2002: 28), on a detailed examination of one or more sections (Hutchinson 1987, referred to in McGrath 2002: 28) or a comprehensive analysis of a small number of units by means of a list of questions (Johnson 1986, referred to in McGrath 2002: 28). The analysis of this paper moves between the focus on particular linguistic features and strategies and a detailed examination of a number of extracts. According to McGrath (2002: 28), the following shortcomings of such techniques have to be considered: a) the selected samples may not be fully representative for the whole book; b) the narrow focus of such techniques may give only a partial insight into the learning material; and c) in-depth techniques may need a large amount of time and expertise. The mentioned shortcomings of such in-depth techniques certainly apply to the ecocritical discourse analysis of this paper. Nevertheless, it seems apposite to use the ecocritical approach because the aim of the paper is not a quantitative comparison between the schoolbooks but rather a qualitative examination of a range of texts in a variety of currently used Austrian course books in order to identify relevant discursive strategies and their underlying (un)ecological ideologies.

The discursive strategies that will be looked at in the fine analysis are nomination, predication and argumentation strategies as described above in section 4.1. In detail, I want to examine how the agents involved in consumerism are referred to and how consumerism itself and consumerist actions and phenomena are referred to. Here, a particular focus will be placed on erasure patterns of issues of environmental and social justice. In other words, I want to examine whether nature and the ecosystem, oppressed communities (such as people who suffer from modern slavery in the production process of goods or who have to live next door to disposal areas of Western e-waste for example) and future generations of humans have been erased from the discourse in the selected texts or whether they are presented.

In terms of qualification strategies I will examine which discursive qualifications are attributed to consumerism and if they are potentially ecologically beneficial (e.g. the attribution 'destructive' to consumerism) or unecological (such as 'I love retail shopping'). Considering argumentation strategies I am particularly interested in arguments in favour or against pursuing a consumerist lifestyle and I will look out for relevant topoi and fallacies. In the context of this paper, all claims that are based on the premises that consumerism stands for 'the good life' or that it leads to happiness will be evaluated as fallacious as this conviction contradicts the philosophical framework of this paper. The same applies for claims that are based on premises that advocate for high consumption rates due to economic reasons.

The following grid represents the aspects of the analysis that will be focused on when examining the selected texts. The grid is to be understood as a guideline and not as something completed - similar to the guiding questions in a qualitative interview. Not all of these questions will be answered for each category; only patterns of erasure of nature and oppressed communities will be investigated in all of the texts as this is regarded as one of the most significant discursive strategies in the present ecolinguistic study.

Content analysis:

- ❖ What are the themes relating to consumerism in the selected course books?

Fine analysis:

- ❖ Nomination strategies: How are actors/objects/processes/phenomena/events of consumerism referred to? What do pronouns, group names etc. refer to? Are there manifestations of anthropocentrism such as utility naming, distancing, objectivization or euphemism? Are there nominalisation strategies that obscure the agents considering issues of environmental and social justice? Are ecological and social consequences of consumerism mentioned in consumerist discourse or have nature and oppressed communities been erased?
- ❖ Predication strategies: What characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to consumerism? Do these discursive qualifications contribute to promotion or critique of consumerism?
- ❖ Argumentation strategies: What arguments to pursue a consumerist lifestyle are employed in the selected texts? What arguments to pursue a non-consumerist lifestyle are employed? Are there hidden elements of argumentation (topoi or fallacies) that reiterate consumerism as a hegemonic ideology or that link consumerism to “the good life” and happiness?

5.3.1. Selection criteria

Due to aspects of relevance and feasibility, I have decided on the following criteria for the data collection:

- ❖ The ELT course books are currently approbated for the use in public upper secondary schools in Austria and found on the school book list 2014/15. The course book series are intended for respectively different school types:
 - AHS = Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schule (grammar school)
 - HTL = Höhere Technische Lehranstalt (college of technology),
 - HAK = Handelsakademie & HLW = Höhere Lehranstalt für wirtschaftliche Berufe (vocational training schools for commerce and economics)

I have decided on this criterion in order to be able to draw from a potentially larger variety of ideologies¹².

- ❖ Of the selected series, the books for the first grade of the upper secondary school are not considered as the initial inspection showed that they contain scarcely any relevant texts.
- ❖ Restricted modality: Only written or spoken texts will be analysed, no pictures or illustrations. For spoken texts, the tapescripts that are provided in the teacher's books or on the websites of the course books will be used.
- ❖ Only coherent reading or listening texts will be analysed, no exercises or fragmented texts.
- ❖ Only texts in which the act of buying or the plea to buy something (e.g. shopping as a leisure activity, supermarkets, online shopping, purchasing luxury products, retail therapy, shopaholism, etc.) or the notion of consumerism and/or its consequences are mentioned will be analysed. Even though the representation of e.g. fashion phenomena, materialistic wealth and lifestyle of celebrities belong to consumerism as well, they will be omitted in the analysis in order to put clearer limits around the field of inquiry.
- ❖ If present and available, additional notes to the selected reading and listening texts in the course books or in the teacher's books will be considered if they refer to relevant content or serve to look at the text in a particular way.

The selected texts of the course books are included in the appendix. The course books are referred to by capital letters (course book 1 is "A" etc. – the tables in the content analysis, section 6.1., and the list of references will give an overview of the lettering system), the chosen texts are numbered. In addition, the lines of the selected texts are numbered in order to facilitate referencing. The following example should illustrate this type of referencing: A2:14 refers to line 14 in the second text of course book A.

¹² This assumption is based on the different educational purposes of higher secondary school types in Austria: While the AHS (Allgemein Bildende Höhere Schulen) focus on general and humanistic education, the BHS (Berufsbildende Höhere Schulen) prepare their learners for their future jobs: the HTL for technical jobs, HAK and HLW for jobs in economics and commerce (cf. BMBF 2015. Bildungswesen in Österreich).

5.3.2. Introduction to course books

The subsequent course books have been chosen for the purpose of the study of this paper, each one being intended for the use either in the AHS, HTL or HAK/HLW:

- Prime Time
- TechCon
- Open Worlds

Prime Time

Prime Time is approbated for the AHS (Schulbuchliste 2014), and comprises four volumes, one for each year of the upper secondary of the AHS. Georg Hellmayr, Stephan Waba and Heike Mlakar are the authors of the series that was published by the öbv (Österreichischer Bundesverlag) in Vienna between 2011 and 2012. Neither in the course books nor in the teacher's books are any notes about text authenticity, topic choices or specific non-linguistic educational aims.

Open Worlds

Open Worlds English BHS comprehends four volumes (again the last volume is intended for the use in the last two grades) that were published by Manz Verlag Schulbuch in Vienna. The second volume was written by Karlheinz Rathgeb-Weber, Tanja Westfall-Greiter and Bernhard Strolz and was released in 2011. The third volume appeared in the following year, authored by Karlheinz Rathgeb-Weber, Bernhard Strolz, Christian Wachter and Astrid Stangl. Open Worlds BHS is found on the school book list 2014/15 for a range of higher secondary schools with a focus on trade and commerce such as HAK, HLW and higher colleges for fashion, art, tourism and agriculture (Schulbuchliste HAK/HLW 2014). The teacher's books were not available for the research purposes of this book, however, the tapescripts of the listening texts could be accessed online.

TechCon

TechCon (Technical Connections) is a four-volume series approbated for higher technical colleges (Schulbuchliste HTL 2014). Volume 4 is intended for the use in grades four and five. The course book was designed and developed by a team of six authors: Elke Beder, Sigrid

Haydo-Prugger, Sabine Martinjak, Robert Mayer, Petra Preede, Marjorie Rosenberg and published in Vienna by Hölder Pichler Tempsky. The book for the second grade of higher technical colleges was released in 2007, the ones for the third and fourth/fifth grades in the respectively subsequent years. In the introduction part of the teacher's book for TechCon 2 it is stated that "[t]he topics have been chosen to appeal to teenagers and are based on up-to-date information" (TechCon Teacher's book 2007: p.2). Otherwise there are no relevant notes on content or non-linguistic educational aspects. While in the book for grade 2 it is mentioned that "all units include text input" (TechCon 2 Teacher's book 2007: 4), in the book for grade 3 it is pointed out that "[t]he majority of units include authentic texts" (TechCon 3 Teacher's book 2008: 4). From this we can assume that TechCon 2 includes more texts that have been written or at least adapted by the authors for learning purposes. The Teacher's book for TechCon 4 was not available for the purpose of the present study.

6. Analysis

6.1. Content analysis

As described above, only texts that present consumerist settings and facilities, the plea to buy something, the notion of consumerism or ecological/social consequences of consumerism are selected for the analysis. The following tables give an overview of the relevant themes that are covered in the three course books.

Prime Time

Prime Time 6 (A)

name of unit	relevant themes
The Blue Planet	environmental crisis, consumer society, plastic pollution, using up resources, environmental footprint, food miles, water footprint

Prime Time 7 (B)

name of unit	relevant themes
-	-

Prime Time 8 (C)

name of unit	relevant themes
Big Money	supermarket tricks, major shopping days, Buy Nothing Day, outlet shopping

Open Worlds

Open Worlds II (D)

name of unit	relevant themes
The hand that feeds you	safe online shopping, ecological footprint

Open Worlds III (E)

name of unit	relevant themes
Footprints in the sand	simple living and happiness, water usage
Shopping Mania	places to shop, magic of shopping, future of shopping malls, ethical consumerism

Open Worlds IV/V (F)

name of unit	relevant themes
Food for thought	global food distribution, overconsumption in the West

TechCon

TechCon 2 (G)

name of unit	relevant themes
-	-

TechCon 3 (H)

name of unit	relevant themes
Online business	online shopping behaviour
Gift crazy	Buy Nothing Day, giving gifts, shopping for presents, anti-consumerist experiment
Ships and shipping	food miles

TechCon 4 (I)

name of unit	relevant themes
Globalisation and business ethics	ethical companies, business ethics, code of vendor conduct, working conditions in factories, child labour, consumer responsibility
Designer outlets and product management	shopping days, places to shop, designer outlets, teenagers as target group, shopping mall experiences
Luxury	online shopping of luxury products, Basel World Watch Fair, Millionaires` fair

In total, 30 texts fulfil the required selection criteria. The content analysis shows that a large range of themes related to consumerism are represented in the reading and listening texts of the selected course books such as specific shopping days, shopping at particular facilities, online shopping, luxury fairs, shopping research, attitudes about gift giving, ethical and green consumerism, aspects of the anti-consumerist and simple living movement as well as ecological and social consequences of consumerism.

Despite the qualitative character of the research aim of this paper, it shall be recorded at this point that the theme “places to shop” (shopping malls, outlet centres, etc.) is the most frequent one and more or less intensively dealt with in all three course book series. Equally, at least one concept to measure the ecological impact of consumer behaviour (either the ecological footprint, the water footprint or food miles) is mentioned in every one of the selected course book series.

In addition, the rough content analysis shows that similar text types can be identified with regard to the relevant themes for this paper: The 30 texts can roughly be distinguished in texts that deal with consumerist phenomena such as shopping facilities, online shopping, luxury, shopping events, gift giving and shopping research on the one hand and on the other hand texts that deal with ethical consumerism and ecological and social consequences of consumerism. The first cluster of texts will be referred to as consumerist texts, the second as environmental and ethical texts. From the main themes of the relevant texts, the following thirteen categories can be derived that will be of use for the fine analysis:

Consumerist texts:

- ❖ places to shop
 - landscapes of consumption
 - online shopping
 - luxury fairs
- ❖ shopping occasions
 - shopping days
 - the culture of gift giving
- ❖ shopping research

Environmental and ethical texts

- ❖ ethical and green consumerism
 - definition
 - ethical companies
 - ecological indicators
- ❖ anti-consumerism
 - non-consumerist lifestyles
 - anti-consumerist events
- ❖ consequences of consumerism
 - for ecological justice
 - for global social justice

6.2. Fine analysis

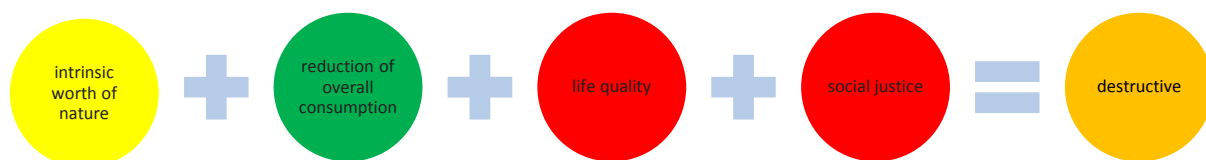
In order to structure and facilitate the fine analysis, texts with the same or similar main theme will be pooled and analysed together. The following table shall give an overview on the arrangement of the texts according to the theme categories. Each text is assigned to one category only. Some categories contain only a single text.

places to shop, landscapes of consumption	C3: Outlet shopping E3: Shopping in malls E5: Are you still buying or already shopping? I6: Where we shop I7: Verena's project – case study
places to shop, online shopping	H1: Shop and click D1: Online shopping made safe(r) I5: Luxury brands online
places to shop, luxury fairs	I6: Brief news flash from the Basel World Watch Fair I7: Millionaires' fair: presentation
shopping occasions, shopping days	C2: Black Friday and Cyber Monday are the royalty of "shopping days" I8: Reasons to shop
shopping occasions, the culture of gift giving	H3: To give or not to give
shopping research	C1: Supermarket secrets E4: King Customer
ethical and green consumerism, definition	E6: Ethical issues
ethical and green consumerism, companies	I1: Companies who take a stand I2: The ongoing story I3: What are the bloggers saying? I4: Gap acts after child labour allegations
ethical and green consumerism, ecological indicators	A2: Do food miles matter? A3: Forget carbon: Check your water footprint D2: Our ecological footprint

	E2: The truth about water H4: Have you ever thought about food miles?
anti-consumerism, non-consumerist lifestyles	E1: Going Simple H5: A Year of Nothing New
anti-consumerism, anti-consumerist events	H2: Buy Nothing Day
consequences of consumerism, ecological justice	A1: Bag Lady
consequences of consumerism, global social justice	F1: Feeding the world

In the analysis below, extracts of the original texts are marked by consecutive numbering in brackets (). Unless stated otherwise, sections in italics are my emphasis.

At the end of each analysed category of texts, a graphic evaluation in colour will be found, I name them the “ecosophy lights”, based on Stibbe’s concept (2014: 121) that was introduced in section 4.5.2. As this evaluation is not based on quantitative calculations, the ecosophy lights are to be understood as a symbolic representation of a rough evaluation of the respective discourse of the text(s) according to the ecosophy of this paper. The texts of each category are judged against each pillar of the ecosophy (intrinsic worth of nature, reduction of overall consumption, life quality and social justice), ranging from red = completely contradictive to the ecosophy, over yellow = neutral, to dark green = fully aligned with the ecosophy. The fifth circle then represents a symbolic average, or in other words the result of the pillar evaluations, as shown in this example:



The resulting colour means the following overall evaluation according to the ecosophy:



If there is more than one text in a category and the texts show the same evaluation, the ecosophy lights stand for all of the texts in one category. If texts in one pool reveal diverging results, the respective evaluations will be represented in individual ecosophy lights.

6.2.1. Consumerist texts

Places to shop, landscapes of consumerism:

C3: Outlet shopping

E3: Shopping in malls

E5: Are you still buying or already shopping?

I6: Where we shop

I7: Verena's project – case study

In the selected course book series, there are five texts about places to shop. People mentioned in this pool of texts who come to the shops are mainly referred to as “customers” (I9:9, E3:18, I10:41), “consumers” (E5:21) and more specifically as “Budget-minded shoppers (C3:4), “highbrow shoppers” (C3:26) and “The average consumer” (C3:35). The vast majority of references to human beings in these texts refer to their role as consumers or potential consumers (I10:17). Text I7 addresses explicitly young people from 15 to 20 years, and with that the intended target group of learners who use the selected course book series, as an essential group of consumers:

- (1) I am working on a project to increase the number of 15 to 20 year olds who come to the designer outlet centre (I10:3)
- (2) they [the 15 to 20 year old group, completed by author] are increasingly becoming *major spenders* (I10:6)

In extract (3), the pronoun “we” is used in an overgeneralising manner:

- (3) early shopping centres offered some of the features that we also enjoy nowadays, e.g. different types of shops or indoor shopping (E3:6)

From an ecocritical point of view, the question is: Who does this “we” refer to? To the global population? To citizens of Western society? To the community of consumers who are able to afford or who enjoy going to shopping centres? To the regular consumer? To whatever

community of human beings this “we” refers to, it leaves out and backgrounds a large and significant community of people who cannot be counted to the visitors of shopping centres. Simultaneously, the use of “we” in the sense of ‘us community of consumers’ suggests a specific identity based on a consumerist lifestyle. In combination with the positively connoted verb “enjoy”, consumerist activities can be regarded as promoted in the discourse of this text.

In text E3, consumerist facilities are described above all in terms of their size:

- (4) Meanwhile, shopping malls have become larger and larger. The biggest shopping mall in the world is Berjaya Time Square in Kuala Lumpur (700,000m²). Beijing’s Golden Resources Mall is the world’s second largest shopping centre (600,000m²). Dubai Mall is the largest mall in the Middle East; the Metro Centre near Newcastle upon Tyne (UK) is the largest shopping centre in Europe (E3:21).

“Big” and “large” are the attributions that dominate the descriptions of the consumerist facilities in this text. The dimensions in m² suggest that the term “landscapes of consumption”, as introduced in chapter 2.1.2., can be regarded as appropriate. The author of the text asserts that the emergence of large shopping malls and centres altered the infrastructure of cities and replaced smaller shopping facilities in downtown areas that could be reached without cars (E3:17). In none of the texts, however, it is indicated or let alone criticised that these enormous artificial constructions built for the purpose of human consumerism have “devoured, wasted, exhausted, and destroyed” natural landscapes (Smart 2010: 169).

In particular, outlet centres are ascribed essential features in regard to their visible appearance in a natural or suburban landscape:

- (5) With regard to architecture, they will have to stand out and be visible from far away. They will have to function as landmarks and tourist attractions (E5:24).

As in extract (4), no indication can be found that landscapes of consumption have replaced natural landscapes; on the contrary, the discourse of this text argues that outlet centres are intended to serve as “landmarks”, as distinctive visual features that overtower their surroundings to be easily recognisable.

Additionally, the functions of outlet centres are termed as “tourist attractions” (E5:25) and “destination centres” (C3:46) that encourage consumers to come from far away. Long distances to do shopping contribute to an even larger ecological footprint than people living highly

consumerist lifestyles have anyways. However, any critique regarding ecological consequences or issues of global social justice remain missing.

A significant feature in the descriptions of large consumerist places that appears in several of the texts is the fact that many shopping malls/centres are large building complexes that are completely enclosed:

- (6) fully enclosed shopping mall (E3:8)
- (7) These early shopping centres offered some of the features that we also enjoy nowadays, e.g. [...] indoor shopping (E3:7)
- (8) the customers can enjoy the luxury of shopping indoors (E3:14)
- (9) enclosed areas which makes shopping in bad weather more comfortable (I7:35)
- (10) The temperature at the mall is just right – if it's raining I don't have to carry an umbrella around, that's one of the super things about the malls (I11:17)

The representation of the physical separation between the indoor facilities of consumerist places and the outdoors or nature, and the positive qualifications (e.g. extract (8) "enjoy the luxury of shopping indoors") that accompany it, suggest that people keen on spending time in consumerist places appreciate the comfort of being separated from natural influences. Nature is extremely backgrounded in the text; if it is referred to, then only in terms of uncomfortable weather conditions.

The following two samples from below show that elements of nature are artificially reconstructed in shopping malls and that this is respectively enjoyed by the speaker (11) and advertised by the author (12):

- (11) we went to the Edmonton Mall. It was just amazing! We [...] went swimming in the artificial sea. They even have a wave machine, so we imagined we were at the beach. And this was in December with a foot of snow outside! (I11:23)
- (12) Artificial ponds and waterfalls with chill areas can serve to slow down consumers. Spectacular installations capture and fascinate them while classy showrooms can arouse interest and invite them to try out the latest products in a cool environment (E5:17).

In one of the texts, a synecdoche is used:

- (13) Outlet centres are thinking beyond (C3:61)

This specific nomination strategy obscures the fact that human beings are running shopping facilities and simultaneously allows the collocation of an expression for consumerist facilities with the verb 'to think'.

In terms of nomination strategies, it has to be pointed out that smaller and alternative places where potentially more ecological forms of shopping could take place, such as farmers markets, flea markets etc. are not mentioned in these texts. This becomes particularly obvious in text I6 with the title “Where we shop”. The pronoun “we” in the title initially suggests a broad range of customers, which is subsequently defined as the community of American customers in the first paragraph, supposedly still with a broad range of shopping habits. However, all of the places that are then enumerated are large places; reaching from the smallest unit of a factory outlet to the bigger ones such as shopping centres and outlet villages. In this context, the “we” in the title reiterates consumerism as a hegemonic ideology, letting it appear as common sense and without alternatives that consumers make their purchases at large consumerist facilities. In this sense, the representation of American shopping facilities can be regarded as biased as smaller or alternative forms of shopping opportunities such as farmers’ markets or 2nd hand shops are omitted.

In several texts, shopping and/or spending time at consumerist landscapes is represented and qualified as an enjoyable leisure activity. These representations of leisure shopping include all three motifs as outlined in chapter 2, from hunting (14) over sensual stimulation and escape from everyday life (15, 16) to socialising (17, 18).

- (14) it’s considered a bargain when shoppers can score a handbag for less than (C3:17)
- (15) We almost forgot to go shopping, we were so busy watching [...] But I did buy a couple of things that I needed and my mom had a great time in one of the designer boutiques. It was a super day and I can’t wait to go back again. (I11:29)
- (16) Consumers [...] smell, see, hear and touch, using all their senses to experience the mall (E5:19)
- (17) On weekends when I don’t have basketball or hockey practice I really enjoy going to the mall and just hanging out with my friends (I11:12)
- (18) everyone I know goes to the mall, so it’s a great free time activity (I11:20)

In terms of predication strategies, it can be noted that discursive qualifications such as “to enjoy”, “great” and “super”, as they appear in the extracts above, contribute to the promotion of leisure shopping in these texts.

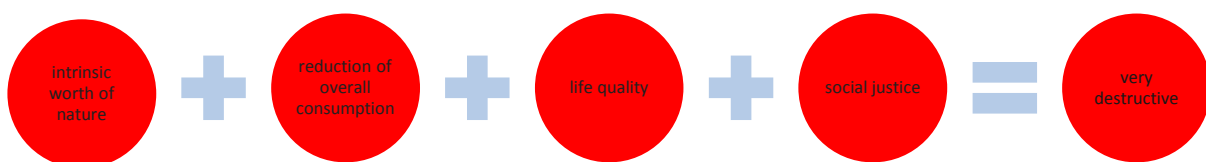
Of text E5 a longer extract is taken for a detailed analysis:

- (19) The economic recession and other social trends have also contributed to a change in shopping behaviour. More and more people do their shopping with a list: they grab the things they need and are out again. In order *to prevent ghost malls* [...] by developing shopping malls into *experiential places* where consumers are invited to come not primarily to buy goods but to *experience the atmosphere and the lifestyle*. Some shopping complexes are no longer called

shopping malls, but are advertised as *lifestyle centers*. Whereas in the past malls were openly meant for consumption, the focus now is on offering a *place away from home and work*, a so-called third place, where the people can browse, do some window-shopping, *relax*, enjoy the atmosphere, the events, the entertainment and the attractions and get *emotionally engaged* (E5:2-15).

At the beginning of the extract, a new type of shopping behaviour, which is described as doing shopping with a list and only buying the things one needs, follows a reduction of over-consumption and comes closer to the concept of sufficiency that is advocated for by the ecosophy of this paper. However, a reduction or absence of consumption is evaluated as something negative in this text as implicated in the phrase “to prevent ghost malls”. In order to heighten consumer activities, the discourse in this text argues for extending large shopping facilities into “experiential places” and “lifestyle centres”. As reflected in the text, people are encouraged to fulfil their need to experience, relax and feel emotions in shopping complexes that have been enriched with a large offer of entertainment opportunities and artificially constructed features copied from nature (cf. 12) rather than in nature itself or in non-consumerist settings. In particular the use of the term “lifestyle centre” for shopping centres can be regarded as destructive from an ecocritical point of view as the term does not say so explicitly, but clearly, the lifestyle that is promoted is a consumerist lifestyle.

Regarding erasure patterns of nature and oppressed communities the following can be asserted: As mentioned above, in a small number of texts nature is implicitly mentioned in the form of weather conditions (rain, snow, temperature) and in this context evaluated as something uncomfortable that is good to be protected from within the walls of shopping complexes. The consideration of intrinsic worth of non-human beings, however, is omitted. Issues of social justice are in none of the texts referred to at all.



Places to shop, online shopping

D1: Online shopping made safe(r)

H1: Shop and click

I5: Luxury brands online

In text D1, online shopping is referred to as “virtual shopping tour” (D1:16), which suggests that shopping as a leisure activity can also happen online, hopping from one online shop to the next.

Terms such as “e-shopaholic” (H1:2) and “ebay addict” (H1:12) reflect that with the rise of e-commerce new forms of compulsive buying have evolved. The “early adopter”¹³ (H1:13) can be identified as a particularly extreme phenomena of the consumerist ideology that includes the strife for being up-to date with trends of fashion and technology, based on a high replacement rate of still working products. None of this consumerist phenomena is criticised in any form in the category of this texts.

Text I5 displays an overgeneralising use of the indefinite indefinite pronoun “everyone” and the locative adverb “everywhere”:

(20) The spread of e-tailing has now made products available to everyone everywhere and at any time (I5:5).

The universal notion of “everyone”, without any further specification of the group of people that is referred to, suggests that online shopping is a phenomena that is available to literally all humans on this planet; which is obviously not the case. Or else, “everyone” means the community of wealthier inhabitants of this planet who have access to the internet, erasing the community of people without internet access, which was more than half of the global human population in 2014 (ITU).

Online shopping is evaluated with the positive qualification “enjoyable”, given that a number of precautions are met by e-commerce customers (D1:15) and the person that describes

¹³ Definition of „early adopter“: An individual or business who uses a new product or technology before others. An early adopter is likely to pay more for the product than later adopters, but accepts this premium if using the product improves efficiency, reduces cost, increases market penetration or simply raises the early adopter's social status. Companies rely on early adopters to provide feedback about product deficiencies, and to cover the cost of the product's research and development (Investopedia).

himself as an ebay addict asserts: “I love it” (H1:10). These positive discursive qualifications of online shopping contribute to the promotion of consumerism.

Text I5 describes the role of online shopping for luxury brands:

- (21) Nowadays people rely on the security offered by sites and spend \$ 1,000 online for a watch or an article of clothing (I5:38)
- (22) Luxury customers today are technically savvy and expect the best. They are willing to pay for exclusive products and appreciate the convenience of ordering online (I5:61)

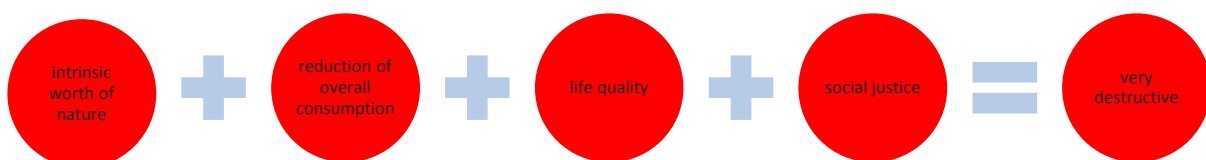
The neutral, uncritical representation of the online shopping behaviour of luxury customers can be defined as a destructive form of discourse when judged against the ecosophy of this paper. According to the ecosophy, luxury is regarded as a form of over-consumption that is based on the fallacious premise that exclusive and expensive products contribute to higher life satisfaction.

Next, there are a number of arguments given why online shopping is beneficial for costumers.

- (23) A click of the mouse, and shoppers can buy nearly any product online. [...] You can select, order and pay, and you don’t even have to leave your home (D1:2).
- (24) Customers have become accustomed to the convenience of shopping online (I5:41).
- (25) So of course – I order online – [...] after all, I need it fast (H1:14).

The arguments employed refer to matters of convenience and quick availability for the customers. As there is not a single argument given why online shopping could also be seen controversially from an ecological and particularly also from a social perspective¹⁴, this representation can be regarded as biased from an ecocritical point of view.

In terms of patterns of erasure, it can be recorded that nature and oppressed communities have been completely erased from the discourse of the texts about online shopping in the selected course book series.



¹⁴ A number of online retailers have been involved into issues of extremely poor working conditions in the past:
<http://derstandard.at/1360681526767/Schwere-Vorwuerfe-gegen-Amazons-Leiharbeiter-Beschaeftigung>
<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2012/02/mac-mcclelland-free-online-shipping-warehouses-labor>

Places to shop, luxury fairs

16: Brief news flash from the Basel World Watch Fair

17: Millionaires' fair: presentation

Both of the texts of this pool belong to the unit *Luxury* in TechCon4. In the lead-in to this unit in the teacher's book it is stated: "This unit aims at making students see the topic from various points of view, e.g. luxury as business, luxury in technology. A project from an Austrian student will be introduced where design and technology merge" (Teacher's book TechCon4, 2009:49) A closer look at the texts of this unit shows that the points of view that luxury is looked at are restricted to technical, economical and aesthetical aspects; plus a point of view that can be described as 'luxury as a curiosity' in the sense of exclusive inventions such as a burger for \$ 5,000 or a "diamond-encrusted version of the Nokia N95" for \$ 20,000 (Teacher's book TechCon 4 2009: 50). Any critical comments or suggestions of how to work with this controversial topic in a classroom setting are missing.

Text 16 presents luxury items mainly from the technical point of view.

(26) My piece of advice for you: if you cannot make it to Basel in the next two days, have a look at the website and take an exciting adventure trip into the world of mechanical watches (16:20).

(27) I would highly recommend their website. This is the place for those who like luxury and would love to own such a watch, but even more for those who are interested in technical details and inventions (16:34).

In the extracts above, the speaker reveals her affection for technological inventions and expresses personal recommendations to the listeners. Despite the focus on the technical aspects of the luxury products, these recommendations can be regarded as contributing to the promotion of luxury products, in particular because any critical evaluations of and arguments against luxury remain missing in this text. Also, nature and suppressed communities have been erased from the discourse of this text.

The speaker of text 17 reveals himself as an enthusiastic believer of the consumerist ideology by starting his presentation with the French proverb "It is impossible to overdo luxury" (17:3), which he leaves uncommented, using it as a guiding statement for his speech. The statement can be evaluated as diametrically opposed to the ecosophy of this paper. The speaker then

goes on to promote the Millionaires' fair and the Millionaires' Guide that was compiled for the fair by referring to the range of luxury products that are represented at the fair as "the best-of-the-best the world has to offer" (17:15) and he praises the Millionaires' Guide by means of positive attributions as "the *ultimate* guide for the luxury lifestyle and both a *wonderful* souvenir for those who want to remember the fair and a distinctive present for those who could not come in person" (17:15).

In addition, the speaker uses a variety of adjectives and nouns to qualify the event Millionaire's fair:

(28) We are very proud to have the honour of hosting around 200 exhibitors (17:5)

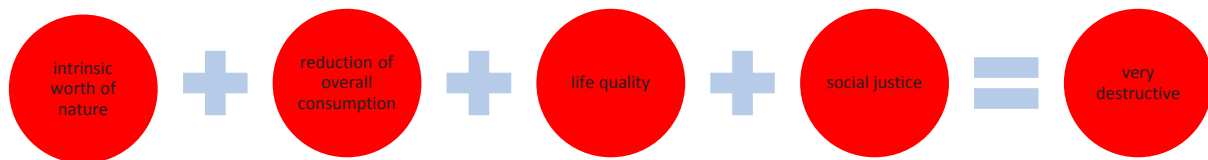
(29) We are very happy to have so many of the sophisticated major brands from all over the world (17:9)

(30) very well-known and respected journalists, experts on luxurious, fashionable, and glamorous lifestyle. I am very honoured to welcome some of them here today (17:17)

These nouns and adjectives are derived from fields that are ascribed high social value, such as pride, honour and respect and serve to qualify the presentation of companies, persons and brands involved in the luxury business very positively in this text.

In sum, the discourse of this text employs a range of nomination and predication strategies that serve the promotion of a luxury and with this a highly consumerist lifestyle.

In regard to patterns of erasure, it can be said that oppressed communities and social issues related to consumerism are not represented at all in this text. Nature is referred to in the context of "charity projects" (17:23) and donations that go to the environmental organisation WWF, in order to help to "preserve our wonderful Russian landscape" (17:27). However, what is completely erased is the fact that living a consumerist lifestyle contributes to environmental and social injustice in the first place. By leaving out this essential link while pointing out the good will of wealthy consumers to make donations to charity projects, the speaker manages to present the community of luxury consumers in a positive light. Additionally, the use of the pronoun "our" and the focus on aesthetic features of nature in the phrasing "preserve our wonderful Russian landscape" allows the interpretation that the intrinsic worth of nature is not considered here; rather, the speaker is referring to the visual pleasure for human eyes and possibly to motifs linked to patriotism or tourism.



Shopping occasions, shopping days

C2: Black Friday and Cyber Monday are the royalty of “shopping days”

I8: Reasons to shop

Text C2 deals with the culture of shopping events and specifically named shopping days. This is particularly interesting in terms of nomination strategies, as the text itself deals with the topic of establishing and labelling specific consumerist events:

(31) the Saturday before Christmas – a shopping happening still without a cool name (C2:56)

(32) Shipping stuff around the country has long been an American tradition – one that online shopping actually reinforces – so why not create an event day around that, too? (C2:62)

In my eyes, a strong consumerist ideology lies at the bottom of the discourse of this text; one, that strengthens and celebrates the culture of shopping simply for the sake of shopping as an activity as terms such as “shopping happening” and “event day” suggest.

In the following two extracts, the general pronoun “you” and particular modal verbs reflect the inherent social obligation to take part in consumerist activities on particular shopping events:

(33) all the other special days when you should be out there shopping (C2:4)

(34) On 20 November you are supposed to “show the love for your local businesses” by shopping at the shop round your corner (C2:12)

Later in the text, the importance of specific shopping days is questioned:

(35) Whether or not any of these red-letter days matter is something that could stir a nice debate over a cup of hot chocolate and a pile of shopping bags (C2: 24)

At the same time, however, it exposes the uncritical stance towards a consumerist lifestyle of the author of the text by putting the question into the context of a comfortable consumerist setting. By doing so, the hegemony of the consumerist ideology is reiterated.

Text I5 displays a highly consumerist ideology as well. The title “Reasons to shop” is followed by a short text about different holidays, also referred to as “important shopping days” (I8:6)

when shops in the UK and in the US encourage customers to heighten their consumerist activities by offering special deals on products. The following sentence reflects the fact that a large number of people spend their leisure time on shopping:

(36) As many people have the day off, bank holidays are often major shopping days simply because people have time to spend in the shops (I8:4).

To spend time on shopping is depicted as natural in this text, which simultaneously reveals and reiterates the dominant character of the consumerist ideology. The discourse of this text uses the term “reason” based on the fact that shopping as a leisure activity is followed by a large community of people, therefore having spare time is regarded as sufficient to represent it as a purpose to visit consumerist facilities where new goods can be acquired. According to the ecosophy of this paper, however, the title and the argumentation line of the last sample can be regarded as fallacious, as simply having time to spend in the shops cannot not regarded as a ‘reason’ in the sense of a necessity to acquire material goods.

An outstanding phenomenon related to consumerism is described in the text:

(37) people line up outside the shops hours before they open in order to be the first to buy electronics and other expensive items (I8:9)

By no word is this phenomena – that could be regarded as quite peculiar from a non-consumerist angle – critically qualified or criticised by means of arguments. A positive discursive qualification, however, is employed for the relevance of specific shopping occasions for a group of humans who lead a particularly consumerist lifestyle:

(38) It is the *perfect* time of the year for bargain hunters and those who want to be the first to buy the latest products (I8:11)”.

On the whole it can be said that the hegemony of the consumerist ideology is reiterated in this text by depicting living a consumerist lifestyle – here in particular spending considerable amounts of time in (and even waiting in front of) consumerist facilities and considerable amounts of money on new goods – as natural.

Issues of social and environmental justice have been entirely erased from the discourse of both of these texts.



Shopping occasions, the culture of gift giving

H3: To give or not to give

In this listening text, six different speakers express different attitudes about the culture of gift giving. In line with this, diverging ideologies are present in the statements; the ecosophy-lights for this text will therefore attempt to reflect an average evaluation of the statements.

Two out of the six speakers show materialistic and pro-consumerist attitudes about gift giving:

(39) We have always bought each other little gifts at Christmas and it was something I really looked forward to. Even if it was just a bar of chocolate or a paperback book it was great (H3:3).

(40) She had made donations for us instead of buying us gifts. I was really offended. [...] I think gift giving is important because it shows that you care (H3:5).

(41) Instead of something more romantic like cologne or even a watch she had bought me a memory card for my computer (H3:11).

The past form of the verb “to buy” appears three times in collocation with products that are intended as gifts. As displayed in the second sample, making charity donations on behalf of the person to be gifted is designated as offensive. This shows that the ideology underneath the extracts from above are based on the belief that gifts have to be new material objects attained as a result of pecuniary negotiations.

This notion of gift giving is also revealed in the following extract. This speaker says she is a “regifter”; that is, she gives away the presents she receives but does not need to other people.

(42) Don’t tell anyone, but I am a regifter. I know that regifting is not considered to be nice (H3:36).

This attitude towards gift giving can be regarded as materialistic, but at the same time as non-consumerist, as she does not buy the gifts herself. Also, the extract reveals the dominant connotation of gift giving as the phrases “Don’t tell anyone” and “I know that regifting is not considered to be nice” demonstrate. These phrases qualify giving presents to other people that were not specifically and newly bought for them as something socially unmoral.

The rest of the speakers demonstrate a less consumerist attitude towards the culture of gift giving, showing appreciation for self-crafted gifts such as personal voucher books or computer year-planners with family pictures (cf. H3:24) and time spent together, as shown by the following extracts:

(43) This year we decided that instead of buying really silly things for each other at the holidays, we would do something special together (H3:18).

(44) This year we decided to do a “No gift” Christmas. We are just going to come together and eat and talk and we think that will be much better than getting gifts we don’t know what to do with (H3:33).

The expression “No gift” Christmas in this context is particularly interesting, as on the one hand it suggests that these people are considering the event of Christmas to be something else than the consumerist climax of the year with piles of presents in front of the Christmas tree; on the other hand, the notion of “gift” employed here is also a materialistic one, leaving out the option that giving quality time to each other could be considered a precious gift as well.

Issues of social and ecological justice are erased from the discourse of this text, with the exception of the aspect of “recycling” (H3:39) that potentially refers to an environmental consideration. However, nature is too backgrounded here for representing it with any other colour than red for the first pillar of the ecosophy for the overall text.



Shopping research

C1: Supermarket secrets

E4: King Customer

There are two texts related to shopping research from the consumer’s perspective in the selected course book series. The first one critiques overconsumption and provides arguments to think actively about what to buy and what not:

(45) if you buy more than you need, it’s not necessarily a bargain. It could even lead to over-indulging. Mindless shopping leads to mindless eating (C1:19)

However, this critique is uttered solely from an anthropocentric view, referring to matters of finances and possibly to matters of health and beauty of the human consumers. Issues of

ecological and social justice are not mentioned and can therefore be regarded as erased from the consumerist discourse of this text.

Text E4 advocates that “the magic of shopping” depends on particularly unnecessary and irrational purchases:

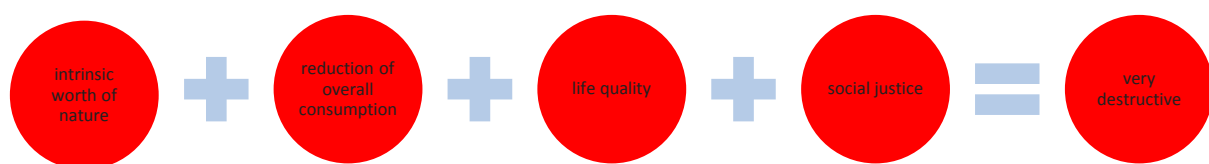
(46) Why – under certain circumstances – do we decide to buy something that we might not even feel a need for? Unfortunately for the business world, yet fortunately for us consumers, the code has not yet been fully deciphered (E4:5)

(47) customers make erratic buying decisions, i.e. they buy something without a reason. [...] maybe that’s a vital element of the magic of shopping (E4:13)

This text revolves around the magical experience of shopping, illustrating consumerist activities, and in particular the very unnecessary ones, as something mysterious that cannot fully be explained (cf. ex. 46). The author of the text uses the first person plural pronoun in different forms (we, us), which is later defined as “us consumers” when referring to a potentially large community of consumers that seem to enjoy making irrational purchases and being able to remain unpredictable for market research and companies.

When judged against the philosophical framework of this paper, the implicit argumentation that certain consumerist activities are connected to a form of enjoyment which the author refers to as something magical has to be regarded as fallacious. As the author explicitly promotes erratic buying behaviour, that is, purchasing goods “without a reason” (ex. 47) and without the feeling of a need for it (ex. 46), the consumerist discourse employed in this text can be regarded as particularly destructive.

Issues of global social and ecological justice have been entirely erased from the texts.



6.2.2. Ethical and environmental texts

Ethical and green consumerism, definition

E6: Ethical issues

Regarding nomination strategies it is worth pointing out that the speaker of this text asserts that a definition of “ethical consumerism” is not pre-given, but has to be found. Subsequently, the speaker offers a “good definition” of it, as he qualifies the definition himself.

(48) a different type of consumer is beginning to emerge: a consumer that places more emphasis on ethical issues than things like price, brand name or availability. Let’s first find a good definition of ethical consumerism, which is often also called ethical shopping or green consumerism. Ethical consumerism means that before the customer makes a decision to buy something, he or she takes ethical standards into account and will only purchase a product or service if certain ethical standards have been fulfilled (E6:1).

Subsequently, the text enumerates a number of criteria for considerations that ethical consumers take into account when buying products of a company:

(49) Are they only interested in maximising their profits, no matter what that means to farmers, suppliers, or other businesses, or do they try to treat their business partners fairly? (E6:25)

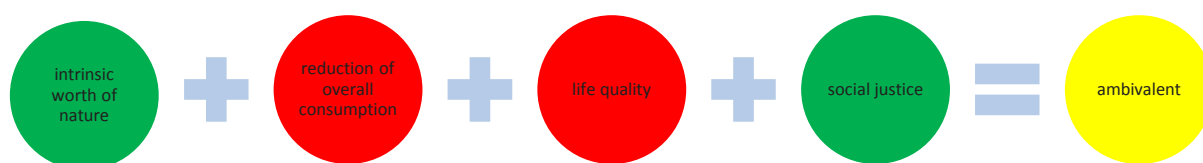
(50) What is the relationship to nature and wildlife? Are resources exploited without thinking of the consequences to our environment – you may have heard of the eco-footprint – or does a company invest in renewable energy, recycling and similar issues? Are products tested on animals? (E6:17)

People involved in the production process for consumerist goods are mentioned in several forms in this text. What is not mentioned is those people who are less directly involved in Western consumerism but who might still suffer from its consequences such as climate change or loss of land. Nature and wild animals are explicitly mentioned, and the fact that animal testing is considered as unethical allows the interpretation that nature is ascribed intrinsic worth in this text.

A reduction of overall consumption, however, is not explicitly encouraged by the speaker. The same applies to the notion of happiness and life quality; there is no indication in the text that happiness can be attained by something other than consumerism. Ethical or green consumerism seems to be the future path to pursue according to the speaker of this text and in his view humanity is on the best way to achieve this as shown in the following extract:

(51) The main reason for this rise in ethic-based consumerism is obvious: increased awareness because more information about business practices is available to us. We simply know more, and better still: we want to find out more. We have become responsible consumers! (E6:33).

The use of the first person plural pronouns “we” and “us” suggest that the speaker includes an enormous number of people to the group of consumers who care about ethical consumerism. In my eyes, this is fallacious as the majority of Western consumers is not that interested in the above stated ethical standards yet; or even if people are interested, a considerable number of them is not willing or not able to pay the price that goods produced according to high ethical standards cost. On top of that, the tense form in the statement “We have become responsible consumers” suggests that this enormous group of consumers is already acting responsibly, which can be regarded as a fallacy again (cf. chapter on consumerism).



Ethical and green consumerism, responsible companies

- I1: Companies who take a stand
- I2: The ongoing story
- I3: What are the bloggers saying?
- I4: Gap acts after child labour allegations

These texts belong together and are about business ethics of the company GAP, the Code of Vendor Conduct, a report about a case of child labour a factory producing for GAP, bloggers’ reactions to the scandal and GAP’s subsequent actions.

As these texts are less about consumerism itself and more about business ethics and working conditions of people involved into the production process of consumerist goods, the analysis of this text will mainly allow to examine the representation of suppressed communities.

The majority of expressions representing people working in the apparel industry refer to these people implicitly as the following extracts show:

(52) reporting on social issues (I1:14)

(53) child labour (I2:6; I2:30, I4:2)

(54) conditions in their factories (I1:16)

(55) expose working conditions in the apparel industry (I4:11)

(56) clothing produced “in near-slavery conditions” (I4:6)

The human beings that are involved in the production process of goods for Western consumers are not explicitly referred to in these extracts; they are only implicitly present in the term “social issues”, “child labour” and in the references to their working conditions in the factories. In these references, the people of suppressed communities involved in consumerist production processes are present, but backgrounded.

In a number of extracts, however, these people are referred to explicitly:

(57) international labour laws which apply to the age, safety and health of the workers (I1:4)

(58) to stop the abuse of children (I2:17)

(59) Children as young as ten had been bought by the managers of the factory and were forced to work in dangerous and filthy conditions. In some cases, the children were beaten and made to work sixteen hours a day for no pay (I2:7)

Extract (57) is one of the few of all analysed texts of the three course book series that explicitly refers to the rights of people working at the beginning of the production chain of goods aimed for consumerist Western markets. The extract foregrounds some human aspects of the people working in factories that produce for GAP and proposes that all people have rights and needs that are to be protected. Extract (58) foregrounds children as young human beings that are considered worthy of protection according to human rights standards and must not be abused as workers; the expression “abuse of children” evokes probably a more precise image in the reader than the rather abstract term “child labour” and shows a more critical and determined stance towards the issue of making children work on garments for Western consumers. Extract (59) is a detailed illustration of the conditions young human beings were forced to bear in factories that produce for GAP. In text I4, these very conditions were referred to as “near-slavery conditions” (I4:6); in fact, the expression “near-slavery conditions” can be regarded as a euphemism, as the state described in ex. (I2:7) fulfils sufficient criteria to be defined as slavery¹⁵.

¹⁵ According to the Merriam Webster Online Dictionary a slave is “someone who is legally owned by another person and is forced to work for that person without pay”.

Among the bloggers two opinions are expressed that represent a link between the role of the consumer and global social justice:

(60) who knows how often we consumers contribute to this kind of slavery? (I3:15)

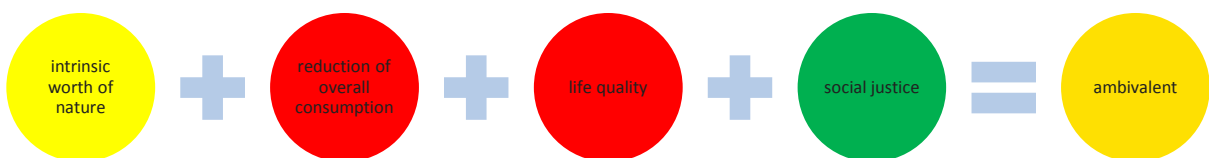
(61) big companies have been doing this for years. I never buy their clothes because of these reports. This cycle of trade just makes the West richer and keeps other countries poor (I3:2)

The blogger in extract (60) names the scandal that was reported on in text I2 as “slavery”. In addition, she/he questions the role of the consumers in this issue, which can be interpreted as pointing out consumer responsibility. The writer of extract (61) displays a critical stance towards large apparel companies and an awareness about the consequences of consumerism that relies on cheaply produced products while disregarding nature and suppressed communities (which he refers to as “This cycle of trade”) for global social justice.

Ecological issues are referred to in one case:

(62) In addition, they must protect the environment (I1:4)

However, the stance of the discourse of this text towards the intrinsic worth of nature cannot be identified; it is not revealed whether nature is considered worthy of protection for its own sake or because the survival of humanity is dependent on it.



Ethical and green consumerism, ecological indicators

A2: Do food miles matter?

A3: Forget carbon: Check your water footprint

D2: Our ecological footprint

E2: The truth about water

H4: Have you ever thought about food miles?

These five texts are all about concepts that try to show the connections between patterns of human consumption/consumerism and its ecological consequences. According to the definition of consumerism of this paper, these texts deal with consumption as well as with over-consumption as in terms of food and similar goods it is not simple to distinguish what is necessary to fulfil daily needs and what can be counted to consumerism. E.g. while buying sufficient amounts of locally grown groceries definitely fall into the category of mundane consumption, the regular purchase of exotic fruits or daily consumption of large amounts of meat can be regarded as over-consumption.

The texts vary in their representation of the complexity of the above mentioned concepts. The first example argues that measuring the impact of human consumption/consumerism is complex and cannot be explained by means of one of the above mentioned indicators:

(63) For some people, “food miles” [...] are a simple way to gauge food’s impact on climate change. But it’s how food is produced, not how far it is transported, that matters most for global warming, according to new research (A2:8).

In contrast, the following extracts convey the impression that this measurement is rather easy:

(64) A new website [...] gives consumers a chance to work out the hidden implications of their shopping habits (A3:7).

(65) These figures make it possible for those of us who are not scientists to understand how our lifestyle affects our environment (D2:25).

In my view, in particular extract (65) can be regarded as argumentatively fallacious as “understanding” the ecological consequences of human consumption/consumerism is not as simple as calculating and looking at one’s virtual ecological footprint - indicators such as the ecological footprint or the water footprint can help people to *grasp the idea* of the ecological impact of their consumption behaviour in the best case.

A similar fallacy in argumentation can be detected in the following claim:

(66) Ethical shopping just got harder (A3:1).

As becomes clear when reading on in the text, the statement refers to the belief that while in the past the carbon footprint was an essential indicator for the environmental consequences of one’s individual shopping behaviour, now this has to be complemented by taking the water footprint into consideration in order to shop “ethically”. Divided up into two premises, the claim

reads as follows: [Ethical shopping relies on ecological indicators] and [Now there are more indicators to be considered]. According to the ecosophy of this paper, the fallacy of the claim “Ethical shopping just got harder” lies in the first premise: Ethical shopping should not be regarded as dependent on a single or two indicators that serve to measure in specific units how ecologically harmful human shopping habits are; ethical consumption should be regarded as something more holistical and could be something that aims at considering amongst other aspects the four pillars of the ecosophy of this paper for example.

The following extract argues for a reduction of production and with this inevitably a reduction of consumption of new goods by means of recycling in order to prolong the global availability of water:

(67) Recycling such products, minimising fresh production, could make the Earth’s water resources go much, much further (A3:34-36).

A critical stance towards the consumption of bottled water in Austria can be observed in the following extract:

(68) Even though we have excellent tap water in Austria, Austrians buy about 640 million litres of mineral water each year (E2:26).

The adverb “even though” in the extract emphasises that the author considers buying bottled mineral water in contradiction to drinking tap water. This allows the interpretation that the author of this text advocates for a reduction of unecological consumption patterns that go beyond the daily needs.

In a text about food miles it is discursively qualified that long ways of transportation of food entail negative ecological consequences:

(67) just imagine the harm this does to our environment (H4:9)

(68) The unnecessary CO2 emissions from the lorries transporting this milk are not good for the environment (H4:20).

Other than that, consumerism and its consequences are nowhere significantly discursively qualified in the pool of these texts.

With regard to patterns of erasure of nature it can be said that despite the intention of these texts for heightening awareness for environmental consequences of consumerist activities, nature itself has been backgrounded in a number of texts. Terms such as “climate change”

(A2:10) and “global warming” (A2:12) refer only implicitly to nature, and “hidden implications of their shopping habits” (A3:7) could possibly include ecological consequences, but does not necessarily have to do so. However, other texts mention nature more explicitly as “Earth” (A3:36, A3:38) and “environment” (H4:8, H4:21).

Concerning erasure of suppressed communities there is one single case where they are implicitly mentioned: “water shortages would affect four billion people by 2050” (A3:40). However, as this is the only case and as it is not explicitly referred to in more detail who these “four billion people” are, it can be asserted that overall suppressed communities and consequences of consumerism on social global justice are extremely backgrounded.

Of text D2 a longer section is taken for a detailed analysis as it shows several interesting linguistic strategies. Concerning patterns of erasure of nature the analysis shows that the text includes the term “environment” once, the terms “nature” and “Earth” respectively twice and the term “planet” even four times. Nature is definitely represented in this text. Nevertheless, the text displays a number of linguistic features that can be considered as destructive from an ecocritical point of view:

(69) ... so this brings us to the fundamental question: How long will mankind be able *to live off* this planet? As we all know, *we cannot consume more than we have*, and if we continue to use all the Earth’s resources of our planet but don’t help nature to regenerate them, we will soon *bankrupt our planet*. Around 20 years ago, scientists introduced a concept that measures how much land, water and natural resources a person, city, country or mankind as a whole requires *to produce the resources* it consumes: it is called the ecological footprint, or eco-footprint. We all leave ecological footprints on our planet; in other words we usually consume more than what we give back to nature. To leave no footprint would mean that a person gives back to the environment exactly what he or she takes. It is a sad truth that for the last 30 years, humankind has had *a negative balance*, which means *we are running out of resources*. The latest estimate suggests that our total ecological footprint is 1.4 planet earths, which means that humanity uses *ecological services* 1.4 times as fast as the Earth can *reproduce* them (D2:1).

The language of this text is highly influenced by economic expressions such as “bankrupt our planet”, “produce the resources”, “negative balance”, “ecological services” and “reproduce”. The way that nature is portrayed in this text lets it appear like its sole purpose is to produce resources for humans. “It is a sad truth” is a qualification that could potentially refer to empathy for nature and its beings; however, as it is being followed by the conclusion “which means we are running out of resources”, it is clear that there is no reference to the intrinsic worth of

nature implied. On the whole, the ideology of this text can be described as anthropocentric as the state of nature is only evaluated according to its capability of ensuring human survival. This is already indicated by the question at the beginning of the section: “How long will mankind be able to *live off* this planet?” The lexical choice of the verb “to live off” has a close connotation to the principle of consuming and evokes the picture of humankind as a parasite on Earth, whereas an alternative formulation such as ‘to live on’ would suggest a more cooperative relation of human beings and nature, presenting human beings more like guests or gardeners on this planet. Also, the subsequent extract “we cannot consume more than we *have*” reveals the anthropocentric ideology by showing human dominance over nature. Obviously, the discourse of this text regards non-human beings and elements of nature as possession of humans as indicated by the verb “have”. According to the ecosophy of this paper, the argumentation line of this sentence can be considered as fallacious as nature does not only exist to be exploited by humans but has the right to be and flourish for its own sake.



Anti-consumerism, non-consumerist lifestyles

E1: Going Simple

H5: A Year of Nothing New

These two texts are about a radical reduction of consumerism: Text E1 is about a family that decided to change from a highly consumerist to a non-consumerist lifestyle, Text H5 is about a group of young people who decided to make an anti-consumerist experiment by not buying any new things for a whole year.

In the first half of text E1, a number of arguments are given which show that the protagonist of the story used to connect happiness with consumerism.

(70) She was working so hard that she hardly saw her family except for the weekends, which they usually spent in a mall doing the shopping and buying stuff that would make them happy (E1:16)

(71) 'I [...] bought all shades of scarves because this was the only way I could think of to make myself and my daughter happy.' Even though she admits that these material things did make her happy for a while, she felt that there had to be something more to life than consuming and consuming even more (E1:15).

A number of linguistic features from the extracts above indicate that the pursuit of happiness in consumerism is regarded as deceptive in the discourse of this text, or at least that this kind of happiness is limited in extent and short-termed. The subjunctive form "would" in the first sample displays that the protagonist relied on the belief that buying consumerist goods would make her family and her happy, when in fact it did not. The temporal adverb "for a while" illustrates the short-termed character of the kind of happiness or satisfaction that the protagonist felt after shopping activities and the phrase "she felt there had to be something more to life" shows that the temporarily perceived feeling of happiness through consumerist activities did not equal life satisfaction and inner enjoyment. At the same time, the argument "because this was the only way I could think of" shows that the ideology of achieving happiness through excess consumption was deeply internalised in the protagonists mind and had become dominant as she was not even capable of imagining alternatives of making other people and herself happy at that time.

A powerful nomination strategy that is present in text E1 is the use of a motto for the family's anti-consumerist lifestyle:

(72) So she and her daughter made a radical change in their life: they decided not to spend any more than they really needed. Their new motto was 'reduce, reuse, recycle'" (E1:28).

The alliteration used here is an effective rhetorical device that is often used in advertising or political speeches in order to give messages more power.

In the second half of text E1, several extracts imply the observation and/or own experience of the protagonist and her daughter that happiness is not based on consumerism: but can be achieved with few material possessions.

(73) They had nothing, but despite their misery they appeared to be happier and more content than most of the well-off people she had met in the US (E1: 10).

(74) On the whole I believe we as a family are happier now because we have less (E1:28).

These two extracts subvert the notion of the good life and happiness that are linked to the consumerist lifestyle and introduce a kind of life satisfaction that can be achieved with few material possessions.

Arguments that establish a link between gaining time and life quality by leading a non-consumerist lifestyle activities are found in both texts:

(75) Instead of having two cars, they share one and use public transport as often as they can. They no longer travel to exotic destinations to recover from a stressful life but have instead managed to de-stress their everyday life. They spend more quality time together, play board games, cook, enjoy family dinners and have conversation (E1:21).

(76) they felt freer as they didn't need to plan shopping activities. I never realized how much time I spent in stores comparing prices, looking at new products, reading magazines or looking online for items. Suddenly I had time to do other things [...] Take a walk in the park, read a book or relax in the bathtub (H5:19-23).

In extract (77), a non-consumerist and non-materialistic notion of gift-giving is presented:

(77) We gave each other homemade gifts or did little tasks for each other (H5:44).

Also, text H4 includes a distinction between consumerism and consumption:

(78) We said from the beginning that we could buy food, of course, and anything else that came under the heading of health or safety (H5:25).

This implicit definition of consumption that serves to fulfil basic human needs can be regarded as beneficial from an ecocritical point of view as it helps to distinguish necessary consumption behaviour for members of modern societies from patterns of over-consumption.

Concerning erasure patterns of nature and oppressed communities it is to say that global environmental and social justice are only implicitly referred to as the following extracts show:

(79) I realized that it was not enough to talk and write about ecological footprints and environmental pollution, globalization and consumerism; you also have to do something about these problems (E1:26).

(80) Kathy and several of her friends decided over dinner one evening to help the planet and not buy any new products for a whole year (H5:7)

Clearly, "ecological footprint" and "environmental pollution" are related to environmental considerations; however, from an ecocritical point of view these terms do not reveal if the intrinsic worth of nature is being considered. Also, the term "globalization" can be interpreted

critically and could possibly refer to unjust working conditions of people involved in the production process of Western consumerist goods. The term “planet” potentially includes nature and the entire human population; and yet more explicit references to nature and people suffering from global social injustice remain missing. Thus, even though nature and oppressed communities are not erased from this text, they are nonetheless backgrounded.

In regard to predication strategies, it can be noted that the discursive characterisation of consumerism as a “problem” (E1:28) underlines the critical stance to consumerism of text E1. Also, it is worth pointing out that “consumerism” is translated as “Konsumwahn” (E1:18) in the column on the left hand side of the reading text; this translation complies with the notion of consumerism that refers to excess consumption as it is also used in this paper.

Furthermore, reading text E1 is accompanied by a number of text lines before and a group activity after the text that encourage the learners to reflect upon their own lifestyle in terms of environmental impact: “Read the following article about a family that has radically changed its lifestyle and compare theirs to yours” (Pre text E1) and “What can you live without to reduce your ecological footprint? Work in groups of 3 or 4 and discuss which gadgets or services you normally use are unnecessary or which products you don’t really need to buy. What could you ‘reduce, reuse or recycle’? [...] (Post activity E1).



Anti-consumerism, anti-consumerist event

H2: Buy Nothing Day

This text is about an anti-consumerist event named “Buy Nothing Day”. The name and purpose of this event are explained in the first paragraph of this text:

(81) The people who take part in this day simply do not buy anything for 24 hours. This event should make people in the First World countries more aware of their often wasteful habits (H2:12).

In regard to nomination strategies, it can be stated that the group of consumers that is criticised here for their consumerist lifestyle is specified as “people in the First World countries”. By specifying the community of people who lead a consumerist lifestyle, it is implied that not the entire global human population lives like this. Consumerist lifestyles are characterised as “wasteful habits”. The expression “wasteful”, which could be understood as ‘environmentally destructive’, is the only case where ecological consequences are possibly implied in this text. Other than that, representations of nature and suppressed communities remain missing.

Several linguistic features show that the author of the text takes a critical stance towards consumerism:

(82) the rampant consumerism which affects all of us, especially before the holidays (H2:5)

(83) they passed out flyers and talked to people about consumerism and the dangers it can present for our society (H2:81)

On a closer look, or in other words from an ecocritical perspective, it becomes clear that this critical stance is taken based on mere anthropocentric considerations. The adjective “rampant” in combination with the verb “affect” in extract (82) can be interpreted as qualifying the phenomena of consumerism as something negative or harmful; however, the harm that it can do is restricted to negative consequences for the human psyche in this text as the phrase “especially before the holidays” reveals. This conclusion can be drawn from the fact that the consequences of consumerism for ecological and global social justice are long-term and consistent, and not only existent at the peak of consumerist activities during the time of special deals and busy crowds in shopping facilities as it is suggested in this text. Extract (83) shows a similar viewpoint: The dangers of consumerism are only considered according to its potential negative effects on “our society”. First of all, this can again be identified as anthropocentric, leaving out any consideration of consequences of consumerism for nature. Additionally, the expression “our society” can be interpreted as Western-centric, backgrounding the dangers consumerism presents for other societies, in particular for suppressed communities which usually suffer more from the consequences of consumerism than Western consumers, as shown in chapter 2.

Like in text E1, the notion of “consumerism” in this text is the same as the one used in this paper, meaning excess consumption.

In terms of argumentation strategies, in the following extract it is proposed that life quality is not dependent on consumerist activities:

(84) Some people feel that by staying away from the shops and the sales on this day brings back the real spirit of Thanksgiving, which focuses on friend and family and not how much we can manage to cram into our shopping trolley (H2:24).

This argument can be regarded as contributing to the anti-consumerist idea and it promotes the importance of social relations and time spent together for life quality.

In terms of predication strategies, two extracts in the text are worth to be mentioned:

(85) It was such a fun day [the Buy Nothing Day, author's note] and so much less stressful than running from shop to shop (H2:55).

(86) Taking a day to reflect on what we actually need and what is necessary for us is not at all a bad idea (H2:102).

Both extracts from above qualify the anti-consumerist event of "Buy Nothing Day" as something positive; in addition, extract (85) qualifies the absence of highly consumerist activities as "so much less stressful" and thus supposedly higher in life quality compared to the consumerist lifestyle.

As a conclusion, the ecocritical analysis of this text reveals that the underlying ideology of the text aims at a reduction of consumption in First World countries and that it shows a notion of life quality and happiness that is not dependent on consumerist activities. However, issues of global social and ecological justice can be regarded as extremely backgrounded in the discourse of this text.



Consequences of consumerism, for ecological justice

A1: Bag Lady

In terms of nomination strategies, this text includes several direct references to specific consumerist products that harm specific animals. A large number of consumerist products are named:

(87) Cups, keyboards, DVDs, plates, combs, knives, forks, toys, TVs, drink bottles, sandwich wrappers, lipsticks, hair brushes, pens, shoes, plugs, clocks – every plastic item you would find in a typical house was on that beach (A1:41).

Soon after this extract, the text contains an explicit reference to the fact that this phenomena is caused by wasteful consumerist patterns:

(88) Welcome to consumer throwaway living (A1:46).

Various specific animals which suffer from plastic litter are mentioned:

(89) Adult albatrosses fly out over the sea for thousands of miles looking for brightly coloured squid to feed on. However, today there is so much colourful plastic in the water that they pick this up instead. They fly back and feed their chicks with it. It fills up the chicks' stomach so they die (A1:17).

(90) we watched a whale rescue team untangling a whale from plastic ropes; I came across an old turtle and her throat was full of plastic packaging; we talked to seal scientists who told us they regularly have to rescue animals from plastic (A1:58).

Nature and the ecological consequences of consumerism are clearly represented in this text. The proximity of representations of the affected animals and different plastic items as cause of their death or torture in the same clause gives the reader an intimate picture of the ecological consequences of consumerism. Also, the way animals are referred to (e.g. no utilisation strategies but the naming of particular animal species) allow the interpretation that the stance towards nature taken in this text complies with the principles of deep ecology, i.e. nature is ascribed intrinsic value and is not being cared about due to its significance for human survival.

A metaphorical reference to the oceans as “the lungs of the world, providing far more oxygen than all the rainforests” (A1:107) indicates the importance of the oceans for the complex and vulnerable ecosystem of this planet by being depicted as one of the most essential organs of a human body. The pronoun “we” in the subsequent sentence “We are polluting them at a terrifying rate” (A1:108) refers either to humanity in general or to people who lead consumerist lifestyles. By doing so, it makes explicit that human actors are responsible for the plastic

pollution of the oceans; however, it remains unclear which human activities or which groups of humans are precisely meant and erases all humans who are not contributing to the pollution of oceans. Concerning patterns of erasure it has to be pointed out that oppressed groups are not mentioned at all; therefore, issues of social justice are to be considered as erased from the discourse of this text.

In terms of predication strategies, it can be noted that the use of fossil oil for production of throwaway plastic bags that results in environmental pollution is titled with “madness” (A1:115) and “waste of our planet” (A1:115) in this text. These qualifications underline the critical stance towards plastic packaging involved in consumerist patterns.

However, the stance of the discourse of this text towards consumerism in general is not that critical after all as the following extract reveals:

(91) Six months on and in Modbury our ban [of plastic bags, author’s note] has been a huge success. Trade has not suffered and the traders have saved half a million bags (A1:98).

According to the ecosophy of this paper, the argumentation line of this supposedly environmental text can be regarded as fallacious as high turnover of products and growing consumption rates are still regarded as the goal in this text; reduction of overall consumption is seemingly not aimed at. This contradicts the ecosophy of this paper that emphasises the need to reduce overall consumption. Replacing plastic packaging by more environmentally-friendly materials is certainly a positive thing; however, the consumerist ideology in general remains unchallenged in this text.



Consequences of consumerism, for social justice

F1: Feeding the world

This text explicitly represents oppressed communities on this globe that cannot meet their daily need of food and suffer from global social injustice:

- (92) 925 million people around the world are starving and every day thousands of people die because of malnutrition and food shortage (F1:10)
- (93) starving people in African, South-East Asian and Central American countries (F1:32)
- (94) people in LDCs pay more for food and have less of it (F1:44)

The lack of food in less developed countries is set in strong contrast to a safe food situation in more developed countries, with two references to overconsumption in the latter:

- (95) nowadays famines do not usually affect the Western industrialized nations (F1:10)
- (96) overproduction of food in most Western countries (F1:21)
- (97) large quantities of food are thrown away every day or perish in warehouses (F1:22)

On a superficial level it could be said that this text entails a critical stance in terms of consumerism and global social justice by demonstrating the contrast of the food situation in different regions of the world; however, on a closer look it is revealed that the critical stance of the text towards consumerism is not that critical after all as the state of the global food distribution is argued as being complex and hardly possible to change (F1:25). In the closing sentence of the text, the unjust food distribution is characterised as “irony”:

- (98) So the irony behind this is that whereas an increasing number of Westerners suffer from food-related illnesses such as diabetes and heart-conditions, which are often due to overeating, people in LDCs pay more for food and have less of it (F1:43).

In my eyes, “irony” is a term that indicates that there is something wrong; yet it blurs the fact that certain dominant groups of humans are responsible for the unjust global food distribution. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that there are no arguments found in the text that Western countries should reduce their oversupply and overconsumption of food.

From an ecocritical perspective, this text demonstrates a strong anthropocentric perception of nature. Nature is only referred to according to its utility for humanity, more precisely as resources such as “arable land” (F1:28), plants are referred to as “food crops” (F1:33) and “cash crops” (F1:33) or mentioned in connection to the patent rights of large corporations such as Monsanto (F1:40). Animals are solely mentioned as “livestock” (F1:34). The nomination strategies at work in these extracts can be identified as utility naming and objectification. It can

be concluded that nature is extremely backgrounded and that no intrinsic worth is ascribed to non-human beings in this text.



6.3. Discussion of results

This section aims at answering the research questions as formulated in chapter 1.4, at a rough comparison of the three course book series and at discussing them in the context of the Austrian ELT classroom.

The overall research question reads as follows:

How is consumerism represented in Austrian ELT course books from the perspective of ecocritical discourse analysis?

The rough content analysis shows the representation of a large variety of themes revolving around consumerism in the selected ELT course books: On the one hand, there are texts about consumerist phenomena such as various shopping facilities, online shopping, shopping events, luxury fairs, the culture of gift giving and shopping behaviour. Various linguistic strategies serve the promotion of consumerism and as a means to reiterate its ideological dominance. On the other hand, just as many texts represent consumerism from a more critical point of view; they mainly refer to ecological and social consequences that consumerist activities entail and to non-consumerist lifestyles and events. However, as the fine analysis reveals, the discourse in a number of the texts that at first glance seem to criticise consumerism proves to be not beneficial when judged against the ecosophy of this paper. The subsequent answers to the more specific research questions will explain these findings in greater detail and will give an overview of the linguistic features and discursive strategies at work in the selected texts about consumerism.

- a) Is consumerism reiterated as hegemonic ideology and/or promoted in the selected texts?

Yes, in the majority of the selected texts, consumerism remains unchallenged as hegemonic ideology and many texts comprehend linguistic features that serve the promotion of consumerism. This evaluation applies to all texts categorized as consumerist texts in this paper and partly for a number of the environmental and ethical ones.

o If yes, which relevant discursive strategies and linguistic features can be identified here?

In terms of nomination strategies, the following findings are worth pointing out: A number of terms in the selected texts refer to people with particularly excessive consumption behaviour (e.g. “e-shopaholic” (H1:2), “ebay-addict” (H1:12), “early adopter” (H1:13), “Luxury customers” (I5:61), “bargain hunters and those who want to be the first to buy the latest products” (I8:11)). These terms for people living highly consumerist lifestyles – of which two refer to compulsive buying behaviour - are used in a neutral context, i.e. the consumption behaviour of these people is neither criticised nor questioned in any way. Additionally, these terms obscure the harmful consequences of this type of consumption for ecological and social justice.

Another nomination strategy is the overgeneralising use of the pronoun “we” in the sense of ‘us as a community of consumers’ (E3:6, E4:5, E6:35) and of the pronoun “everyone” (I5:5); this strategy can convey to the reader/listener that all people belong to this consumerist culture and simultaneously it suggests that the recipients themselves have a consumerist identity – in this case on the learners. Furthermore, in two cases, young people are explicitly addressed in their role as increasingly important costumers of designer outlets: “to increase the number of 15 to 20 year olds who come to the designer outlet centre” (I10:3); “they are increasingly becoming major spenders” (I10:6). The unchallenged linguistic representation of teenagers as customers of designer outlet centres and referring to young people as “major spenders” in EFL course books can be regarded as particularly problematic from an ecocritical and also from a pedagogical view: Firstly, it serves the promotion of an unecological lifestyle; secondly, it can potentially put pressure on young people as they are referred to according to their consumption capacity.

The linguistic representations of shopping facilities in the selected texts consist mainly of descriptions of the facilities that concern their size and outstanding or convenient features. Only large and conventional shopping facilities are represented in the selected texts; smaller or alternative shopping opportunities such as flea markets or farmers’ markets are not mentioned.

Furthermore, outlet centres and shopping malls are referred to as “lifestyle centres” (E5:12), “tourist attractions” (E5:25), “destination centres” (C3:46), “experiential places” (E5:9), “a place away from home and work” (E5:13) – all these labels bestow consumerist facilities with an image of ‘the place to be’ and of where ‘the good life’ can be found.

Leisure shopping is promoted, mainly through arguments that refer to aspects of socialising and entertainment. With regard to nomination strategies, it can be asserted that expressions such as “shopping happening” (C2:56) and “event day” (C2:62) serve the promotion of shopping culture. Online shopping, in one case labelled as “virtual shopping tour” (D1:16), is also being depicted as something beneficial for consumers, mainly by motifs that refer to quick availability and convenience. Both online shopping and leisure shopping are qualified as enjoyable in several extracts and attributed with positive adjectives.

A particularly unecological discursive construction can be identified in text E4, in which the author claims that “erratic buying decisions”, i.e. “buying things without a reason” account for the “magic of shopping” (E4:13). Other forms of destructive discursive constructions of consumerism can be detected in the texts about luxury. Various positive qualifications and personal recommendations contribute to the promotion of luxury products and a luxurious lifestyle.

An unexpected finding of the study of this paper is that a considerable number of extracts construct a consumerist notion of gift giving; to put it more precisely, only gifts that are material products and explicitly purchased for the person who receives the item as a present are regarded as proper gifts; re-gifting and making donations on behalf of someone else are qualified negatively. These extracts feature several occurrences of the collocation of “to buy” and “gift” or specific material products that are designated as gifts. Only three extracts present handmade gifts and spending quality time together as precious.

- Are ecological/social consequences of consumerism and nature/oppressed communities mentioned or are they omitted?

The analysis shows that in the texts about areas of consumerist culture, consequences for ecological and global social justice are omitted. Oppressed communities can be regarded as erased from the discourse featured in this pool of texts as they are completely absent.

In the consumerist texts, nature is implicitly referred to in a small number of cases: Once in a text about a luxury fair “to preserve our wonderful Russian landscape” (I7:27). However, here we are dealing with a case of “greenwashing”; that is, environmental discourse is used in order to disguise the ecological consequences of luxury culture (Mühlhäusler & Peace 2006: 462). In a few texts about enclosed consumerist facilities, the natural world is mentioned in the form of weather conditions that are rather unpleasant for humans of the Western world such as rain and cold temperatures. It is to be assumed that in none of these extracts consideration of the intrinsic worth of nature is given. Furthermore, there is no indication of landscapes of consumption having destroyed and replaced natural landscapes. Instead, artificial constructions imitating natural phenomena (“artificial ponds and waterfalls” (E5:17), “artificial sea” (I11:24)) are promoted as positive features of consumerist facilities. On the whole, it can be said that nature is erased from the discourse of the consumerist texts, too. It shall be emphasised once more why this kind of discourse and erasure patterns of nature and oppressed people are qualified as particularly destructive from an ecolinguistic perspective: Representing and promoting areas of consumerist culture without mentioning consequences for nature and social global justice can stimulate people to pursue lifestyles that are harmful for other human beings and non-human beings (Stibbe 2014: 118).

Only few of the environmental and ethical texts explicitly represent nature and/or oppressed communities. Among these nature is most prominently represented in text A1, mainly in form of references to specific animal species and natural ecosystems: “whale” (A1:59), “albatrosses” (A1:12), “turtle” (A1:60), “rainforests” (A1:108), “oceans” (A1:108). Oppressed communities are foregrounded the most in text F1: “925 million people around the world are starving and every day thousands of people die because of malnutrition and food shortage” (F1:11), “starving people” (F1:31), “people in LDCs pay more for food and have less of it” (F1:44) and in text sequence I1-I4: “international labour laws which apply to the age, safety and health of workers” (I1:4), “stop the abuse of children” (I2:13), “children as young as ten” (I2:7). Most of the other ethical and environmental texts mention at least one harmful consequence of consumerism whereby nature or oppressed communities are either explicitly or implicitly referred to.

Remarkably, future generations of humans and other living beings not yet born have to be considered as erased from the discourse of all of the selected texts.

b) Is consumerism criticised in the selected texts?

Yes, all the environmental and ethical texts feature critique on aspects of the present form of consumerism. However, as the ecocritical discourse analysis reveals, most of the critique remains on a shallow level.

- o From an ecocritical point of view, is the discursive construction of consumerism in these texts potentially beneficial (i.e. aligned with my personal ecosophy), or is it ambivalent and thus not contributing to achieving more environmental and social justice? Which particular discursive strategies and linguistic features can be identified here?

As the present study reveals, only two out of the thirty selected texts are regarded as featuring potentially beneficial discourse when judged against the philosophical framework of this paper: the texts about non-consumerist lifestyles (E1 and H5). In these texts, a radical reduction of consumerist activities is advocated, more ecological consumption patterns are mentioned and in numerous extracts a non-consumerist notion of the 'good life' and happiness is given. In fact, in both texts it is argued that a reduction of consumerist activities results in more spare time and higher life quality (E1:21, H5:19). Issues of global social and ecological justice are mentioned as further motifs for the change of lifestyle of the people presented in the texts.

All the other ethical and environmental texts are evaluated as ambivalent discourses; that is, neither do they completely contradict the ecosophy of this paper nor are they aligned with it. The main reasons why these discourses are qualified as ambivalent are that they either comprise linguistic features that reiterate consumerism as a hegemonic ideology (e.g. texts A1 and E6) or they are based on an underlying anthropocentric worldview, disregarding the intrinsic worth of nature. In text D2 about the ecological footprint, for example, the anthropocentric ideology can be disclosed by identifying a number of uses of the nomination strategies utility naming and objectification. Similarly, text H2 about the "Buy Nothing Day" is to be evaluated as anthropocentric; here, the negative consequences of consumerism are predominantly associated with stress for consumers themselves.

In order to complete the findings of this paper with regard to the notion of gift giving, it can be asserted that a few extracts present a non-consumerist understanding of gift-giving in which

self-made gifts, doing tasks for one another or spending quality time with others are represented as appreciable (H5:44, H3:33).

Also, it is worth pointing out that the term “consumerism” is mentioned twice (E1:27, H2:5); both times the notion of the term complies with this paper’s understanding of consumerism, namely referring to excess consumption and never to the movement of consumers’ rights (cf. chapter 2.1.1.)

6.3.1. Comparison of course book series

The following graphs serve to illustrate the relation of beneficial, ambivalent and destructive discourses featured in the respective course book series.

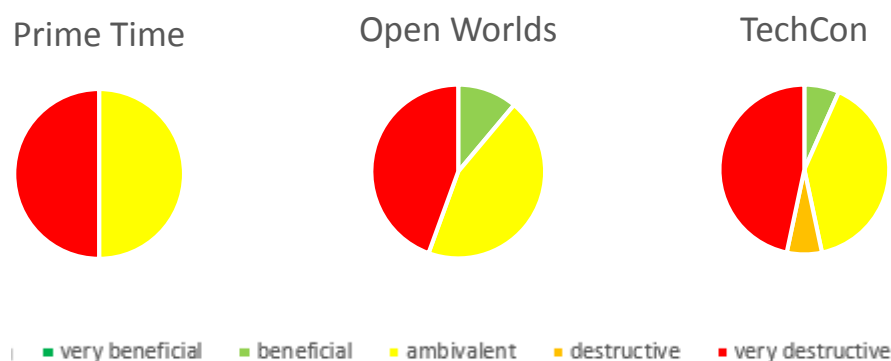


Figure 2: Relative comparison of course book series

A comparison of the texts in the course book series shows similar results in the evaluation according to the ecosophy lights: Each series comprehends mostly destructive and either as much or a little fewer ambivalent discourses. The two texts that are evaluated as representing beneficial discursive constructions of consumerism are found in *Open Worlds III* and *TechCon 3*, respectively. None of the course books contains a text featuring a form of discourse that is evaluated as very beneficial, that is, completely aligned with the ecosophy of this paper.

Contradicting the expectations, the slight tendency among the course book results reveals that *Prime Time*, the course book series that is approbated for the AHS, performs most unfavourably and that *Open Worlds*, the course book series for HAK and HLW, achieves the most favourable results from an ecocritical point of view.

6.3.2. Relevance for Austrian ELT class rooms

It needs to be emphasised that the majority of the discursive constructions of consumerism in the reading and listening texts of the selected course book series are evaluated as destructive when judged against the ecosophy of this paper. Additionally, the course books prove to barely support the three teaching principles that are outlined in chapter 1.3. Presenting these texts to Austrian learners for ELT purposes without addressing and challenging the underlying consumerist and anthropocentric ideologies is likely to contribute to the maintenance of unecological cultural patterns and “existing power relations” (Gray & Block 2014: 46); in this case the dominance of human over non-human beings, of more powerful human communities over less powerful human communities and of present human generations over generations of living beings not yet born. For engaged teachers, scientists and democratic citizens, it needs to be regarded as their duty to question the power relations and the unecological ideologies underlying ELT course book texts and discuss them in the classroom setting.

By doing so, we can implement the arguments from the teaching principles which are mentioned in chapter 1.3: Raising awareness for ecological and social consequences of economic actions, the need to take responsibility as consumers, the relevance of individual behaviour and personal commitment, the importance of a fair distribution of resources for a just order of peace and of developing more sustainable consumption patterns in order to maintain high life quality on this planet.

7. Conclusion

Consumerism has become an increasingly dominant ideology on a global scale with disastrous effects for nature and global social justice. In at least three of the teaching principles of the Austrian ministry of education and women (BMBF), arguments are given to address the connection between consumption behaviour and ecological and social consequences as well as to point out the need to take responsibility as consumers in Austrian classrooms. Despite the growing awareness about its harmful impact, however, areas of consumerist culture seem to be popular topics and are frequently uncritically represented in ELT books. This applies also to the three Austrian ELT course books that were selected for the study of this paper. In order to

draw from a possibly wider variety of ideologies and critical stances represented in the books, three books were chosen that are approbated for respectively different school types of upper secondary education (*Prime Time* for grammar schools, *TechCon* for technical colleges and *Open World English* for colleges of economy and commerce). Of these books, all texts that present the act of buying, the plea to buy something or the notion of consumerism and/or its consequences were scrutinized by means of ecocritical discourse analysis. This approach to discourse analysis is taken from ecolinguistics, a discipline of linguistics that is devoted to study the role of human language in the context of ecological considerations (cf. Alexander & Stibbe 2014: 105), and allows a critical and thorough investigation of discursive constructions in the light of ethical concerns such as environmental and global social justice. The ethical aspects are summed up in the philosophical framework, the ecosophy, which has to be made explicit by every ecolinguist for the purpose of the respective study. In the present work, the ecosophy is based upon four pillars which the discursive constructions of consumerism are evaluated against: intrinsic worth of nature, an understanding of life quality and happiness independent from a culture of excess consumption, reduction of overall consumption and social justice.

The findings reveal that – against expectations – the course book for grammar schools performs the most unfavourably. Overall, however, the study shows similar results of the selected books: In most of the selected texts, consumerism as hegemonic ideology remains unchallenged in the form of linguistic representations of consumerist facilities and activities in which ecological and social consequences are omitted. In many of these texts, consumerist culture is promoted by means of discursive strategies such as positive attributions to and arguments in favour of consumerism. These texts are evaluated as destructive forms of discourse when judged against the philosophical framework of this paper, the ecosophy, as they carry the potential to encourage people to pursue an unecological lifestyle.

Among the texts that include ethical or ecological concerns about the present form of consumerist culture, many are identified as ambivalent discourses when judged against the ecosophy of this paper since their critique remains on a shallow level, not addressing the cultural roots of the ecological crisis and social global injustice connected to consumerism. Many of these texts reveal an underlying anthropocentric ideology, disregarding the intrinsic worth of nature, which contradicts the ecosophy of this paper. Others point out one or more harmful consequences for the environment and/or oppressed communities on this globe that

are related to consumerism, but fail to identify consumerist culture itself as an essential cause of the respective problems. Only two out of the thirty texts related to consumerism can be regarded as featuring beneficial discursive constructions of consumerism when judged against the philosophical framework of this paper: These texts advocate for a reduction of consumerist activities, mention issues of ecological and global social justice, promote non-consumerist activities as essential for life quality and explicitly construct a non-consumerist notion of happiness.

Further potential investigation objectives that arose in the course of conducting the research for the present paper would be examining extracts related to consumerism other than reading and listening texts in school books such as grammar exercises and images. Moreover, themes related to consumerism that were omitted in the present study could be investigated, e.g. the representation of the lifestyle of celebrities, wealth, products or fashion.

Finally, a brief outlook on the need for action that the findings of this paper have pointed out shall be provided at this point: First of all, the results will be forwarded to the respective course book designers and publishers and possibly be published in the form of an article. Secondly, I will certainly try to implement the insights into my future ELT classroom projects. Most important, however, would be the development of checklists for ELT course book content and didactic ecocritical concepts for foreign language learning which consider issues of ecological and global social justice. This could encourage teachers to heighten their own and their pupils' awareness about the cultural roots of the present ecological crisis and global social injustice and with that of consumer responsibility. After all, the purpose of foreign language learning at Austrian schools is certainly more than simply being able to perceive and produce numbers of phrases in another language – it also matters to understand and question the worldviews that are transmitted in these clusters of linguistic features. Ecolinguistics seems to provide a helpful approach to address the role of language in the negotiation of how humanity can live more peacefully and considerately on this planet – with each other, other living beings, the whole ecosystem we live in and for the generations yet to come.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Selected course book texts

A1

Bag Lady

1 Before you read

- Before you read the text make a mind map on the term "plastic".
- When you have finished mark the positive aspects in one colour and the negative ones in another colour.
- Compare your mind map with that of your neighbour and add items which are not on your diagram. Have you had the same ideas?



2 Reading: Plastic

- While reading, highlight all the words and phrases in the text that refer to environmental issues.
- Add information about plastic to your mind map.

It was the birds that finally made me break down and weep. The Hawaiian island of Midway is the main breeding ground for the Laysan albatross, as beautiful a seabird as you will ever see. But
5 standing on a Midway beach, I was surrounded by thousands of dead and dying albatross chicks. I could not move without standing on dead birds. I was filming a Natural World documentary for the BBC about the environmental crisis facing the region's marine wildlife. But this was beyond
10 a crisis – this was an apocalypse.

Adult albatrosses fly out over the sea for thousands of miles looking for brightly coloured squid to feed on. However, today there is so
15 much colourful plastic in the water that they pick this up instead. They fly back and feed their chicks with it. It fills up the chicks' stomachs so they die.

Two years ago I thought I was environmentally
20 aware. I was born on a South Devon farm where my father instilled in me the importance of thinking green. And I work as a camerawoman for the BBC Natural History Unit. But I was just sleepwalking then. I had no idea how desperate
25 our situation really is. My wake-up call started 18 months ago on the island chain of Hawaii at the start of my wildlife documentary. We had heard that in the North Pacific the ocean currents move in a huge circular motion, sucking in all
30 the rubbish from the continents into the centre, where Hawaii is. We had learned that 80 per cent of all marine litter comes from land and that 90 per cent of it is plastic, but what we didn't know was the scale of the problem. Our ignorance
35 became clear when we interviewed researcher Charles Moore.

Charlie said, "Guys, let me take you to the dirtiest beach in the world." Kamilo beach was five miles long but wasn't the golden sand
40 you would expect of a Hawaiian beach. It was multi-coloured as far as the eye could see. Cups, keyboards, DVDs, plates, combs, knives, forks, toys, TVs, drink bottles, sandwich wrappers,

lipsticks, hair brushes, pens, shoes, plugs, clocks
– every plastic item you would find in a typical
45 house was on that beach. "Welcome to consumer throwaway living," said Charlie. He pointed to the sand – it wasn't sand; it was tiny fragments of plastic, small enough to be eaten by animals at the bottom of the food chain. This plastic carries
50 dangerous toxins that ascend the food chain right up to the top. Guess where we are in that food chain.

Charlie's last words to us that day haunted me. "Plastic lasts for at least 400 years and each
55 year it's getting worse." Four centuries to clear up the mess – and that's if we start today. Over the following months we watched a whale rescue team untangling a whale from plastic ropes; I came across an old turtle and her throat was full
60 of plastic packaging; we talked to seal scientists who told us they regularly have to rescue animals from plastic; dolphins were using a plastic bag as a football, unaware of the danger; and on
65 Midway, the albatrosses moved me to tears. I knew I had to do something, anything.

Back home in South Devon, I wondered how on earth I was going to get people to understand what we are doing to the planet.

By March this year our documentary was
70 finished and I lent a copy to a friend, Adam, who runs a delicatessen in my hometown of Modbury. The next evening he told me he wanted to stop using plastic bags in his shop. I lent the film to another friend, Sue, who owns an
75 art gallery. Her response was the same. Suddenly the penny dropped – two traders, same reaction. Why not get all the town's traders to watch the film? Sue offered her gallery as a venue and so the Modbury campaign began.
80

Of the town's 43 traders, 37 turned up and after the film I told them the facts and figures about marine plastic. I told them how bits of plastic act like sponges for many of the nasty chemicals we have been pouring into the oceans.
85 These chemicals move up the food chain and

end up in us. Many of these chemicals cause cancer. When I had finished, the room was silent. Everyone looked shocked. Simon, our local
90 butcher, whispered to me to take a vote on the proposed bag ban. Every hand went up.

Over the following month, half the world's press seemed to descend on our town. Modbury wasn't just the first town in Britain to ban plastic
95 bags; it was the first town in Europe to do so. Other towns followed our lead. Then e-mails came in from Sweden, from America, from China. They all wanted to ban plastic bags. Six months on and in Modbury our ban has been a huge
100 success. Trade has not suffered and the traders have saved half a million bags. They now sell reusable cotton bags and biodegradable bags.

I'm thrilled with the campaign, but walking on my local beaches provides a nasty reality check. There is throwaway plastic still littering
105 the sand. Water covers seven-tenths of the Earth. The oceans are the lungs of the world, providing far more oxygen than all the rainforests. We are polluting them at a terrifying rate and politicians are doing practically nothing about it. It takes
110 nature 300 million years to form oil. We use much of the plastic made from that oil for just a few moments before discarding it. It then takes another 400 to 1,000 years for that plastic to degrade. Is that not madness? What a waste of
115 our planet.

(Rebecca Hosking, *The Mail on Sunday*)

(Prime Time 6, 2011: 36-37)

A2

Do food miles matter?

On a typical spring day, lunch for Seattle-based writer Sage Van Wing includes pasta with pork sausage from a small local farm. The peppers, cheese and shallots on top come from the
5 nearby farmers' market. Van Wing is a locavore – she tries to eat only locally grown foods whenever possible.

For many people, “food miles”, the distance food travels from farm to plate, are a simple
10 way to gauge food's impact on climate change. But it's how food is produced, not how far it is transported, that matters most for global warming, according to new research. In fact, eating less red meat and dairy products can be
15 a more effective way to lower an average US household's food-related climate footprint than buying local food, says Christopher Weber of Carnegie Mellon University.

Weber found that transportation creates
20 only 11 per cent of the 8.1 metric tonnes (t) of greenhouse gases that an average US household generates annually as a result of food consumption. The agricultural and industrial practices that go into growing and harvesting
25 food are responsible for most (83 per cent) of its emissions. For perspective, food accounts for

13 per cent of every US household's 60 t share of total US emissions. By comparison, driving a car for 12,000 miles per year (the US average) produces about 4.4 t. Switching to a totally local
30 diet is equivalent to driving about 1,000 miles less per year, Weber says.

A relatively small dietary shift can accomplish about the same greenhouse gas reduction as eating locally, Weber adds.
35 Replacing red meat and dairy with chicken, fish or eggs for one day per week reduces emissions equal to 760 miles per year of driving. And switching to vegetables one day per week cuts the equivalent of driving 1,160 miles per year.
40

Several other recent studies have analysed foods and poked holes in the food miles concept. For example, it can be more energy efficient for a British household to buy
45 tomatoes and lettuce from Spain than from heated greenhouses in the UK.

Van Wing read Weber's paper and found it a “helpful” look at food miles. But she says she will continue to buy from local growers, whose production practices she can see firsthand.
50

(Erika Engelhaupt, *Science News*)

(Prime Time 6, 2011: 38)

A3

Forget carbon: Check your water footprint!

Ethical shopping just got harder. The concept of water footprints will tell consumers the amount of precious H₂O that has been used in the manufacture of products they buy. As with carbon footprints, the message is clear: less is better.

A new website run by the University of Twente in the Netherlands gives consumers a chance to work out the hidden implications of their shopping habits. Groceries, clothes, stationery and electrical goods are evaluated according to a water footprint calculator. In each case, the water footprint covers both the manufacture and transport of the goods.

The results are striking. An apple weighing 100 g has a water footprint of 70 litres, while a 125 ml cup of coffee has a water footprint twice that size, 140 litres. But the water used in producing wheat or meat is much greater.

Academics have also created a worldwide league table for the water footprint of different

countries. The US is the biggest offender, with a water footprint of close to 2,500 cubic metres per year per capita, while Italy is a close second. Britain's water footprint is relatively modest at 1,245 cubic metres per year per capita.

The calculations are complicated, but for consumers keen to minimise their water wastage, there remains a simple mantra to live by: always recycle. A cotton shirt, for example, has a water footprint of 2,700 litres, tallying up the water evaporated in irrigating and growing the cotton, as well as the water needed to wash away fertilisers. Recycling such products, minimising fresh production, could make the Earth's water resources go much, much further.

Though it covers more than two-thirds of the Earth's surface, water has never been more precious. An influential UN report published in 2003 predicted water shortages would affect four billion people by 2050.

(Amol Rajan, *The Independent*)

(Prime Time 6, 2011: 39)

C1

3 Reading: Supermarket secrets

a) Read the following article revealing some of the tricks discussed above. While reading, fill in headlines summarising the respective tricks in as few words as possible.

Five things your supermarket doesn't want you to know

Grocery shopping seems like a harmless enough activity. It's a chore, but it's one that most of us do at least once a week, without giving much thought to what's going on behind the scenes at the supermarket. But how we shop has become a science that's studied endlessly. So to make yourself a smarter shopper, learn about the top tricks and other secrets lurking at the supermarket.



Fact 1:

Anyone who shops with a child in tow has to keep an eye out for products kids grab and toss into the cart. Packages with cartoons on them are often placed on low shelves where even toddlers can reach for them. At the cash register candy is strategically placed to encourage impulse buys.

Fact 2:

In the groceries department you can get veggies cut up and ready for cooking. At the meat counter, chicken breasts are cut into chunks ready for immediate grilling. Pre-cut foods can make life
45 incredibly easy but you're also paying a tremendous premium – sometimes up to twice as much.

Fact 3:

Foods with enticing photos on the packaging that aren't on your shopping list are prominently placed to encourage you to reach for them. Even in the pasta aisle, you'll find the most popular noodles at eye level. Look up to the highest or lowest shelves to find healthier whole-wheat options.

Fact 4:

Who can resist an offer like "buy five, get one free"? Very few people can. But if you buy more than
20 you need, it's not necessarily a bargain. It could even lead to over-indulging. Mindless shopping leads to mindless eating. Once the stuff is in the house, you'll eat it whether you really want it or not.

Fact 5:

The layout of your grocery store is carefully calculated to help you part with more money. At the front doors you're faced immediately with hard-to-resist items like just-baked loaves of bread. Try
25 walking past them en route to a carton of milk without tossing something extra into your cart.

(Sally Wadyka, *MSN Health & Fitness*, 17 February 2011; adapted and abridged)

(*Prime Time 8*, 2012: 80-81)

C2

Black Friday and Cyber Monday are the royalty of "shopping days"

FACT FILE

Black Friday

Black Friday is used to describe a number of historical Fridays in which an event led to public chaos or disaster. Today, Black Friday is best known as the shopping day after Thanksgiving in the United States when retail stores generate their highest sales. Black refers to the accounting term as a business moves from losses in red ink to gains in black ink.

Cyber Monday

Cyber Monday, the Monday following Thanksgiving in the US, is one of the busiest shopping days of the year for online retailers. Many retailers use Cyber Monday to kick off the holiday shopping season by offering special promotions.

There are the twelve days of Christmas and then there are all the other special days when you should be out there shopping. Maybe you don't have them all on the calendar yet. On 20 November you are supposed to "show the love for your local businesses" by shopping at the shop round your corner. Still to come are also: Black Friday,

"There are only two that are meaningful in my opinion – Black Friday and Cyber Monday," said Scott Silverman, co-founder and vice president of marketing for Ifeelgoods.com, a new company in Menlo Park, California, formed to work with retailers interested in virtual goods and social gaming. "The rest are 'me too' attempts to get press coverage or to build a shopping website business." He has a point about Black Friday. While the name may not have been well known until the past decade or so, the day after Thanksgiving has long been a retail happening. What started out as a good time to get a jump on holiday shopping because everyone was off work has become a driver of the American economy. Over 140 million people are expected to spend money this year the weekend following Black Friday. Backed up by statistics, Silverman's trade group created a CyberMonday.com website where retailers would share their deals. Last year, the site drew 15.8 million visitors, according to the retail federation. In 2006, the group reported about 300,000 visitors to the site.

Despite the hype, Black Friday is not the busiest shopping day of the holiday season. That is typically the Saturday before

or not any of these red-letter days matter is something that could stir a nice debate over a cup of hot chocolate and a pile of shopping bags.

Christmas is a shopping happening still without
a cool name. FedEx Corp. expects to move a
record 16 million shipments on 13 December, a
60 more than 12 per cent increase from last year's
busiest day when the company handled 14.2
million shipments. Shipping stuff around the
country has long been an American tradition –
one that online shopping actually reinforces –
65 so why not create an event day around that,
too? Two years ago, Luke Knowles of Coupon
Sherpa came up with Free Shipping Day in
which participating merchants promoted on

the freeshippingday.com site guarantee delivery
by Christmas Eve. More than 800 retailers have 70
signed up so far this year with the site's stated
goal to get more than 1,000 involved.

Had enough commercialisation? Then how
about the contra-shopping event: Buy Nothing
Day. The anti-consumption day is a 24-hour 75
moratorium on consumer spending timed
coinciding with Black Friday which is promoted
by Adbusters.org.

(Teresa F. Lindeman, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 23 November 2010;
adapted and abridged)

(*Prime Time 8*, 2012: 82-83)

3 Choosing the right expressions

STANDARDISIERTES TESTFORMAT

- 0-K: techie
 1-L: website
 2-E: linking
 3-C: encourage
 4-H: reward
 5-A: commercial
 6-F: marketing
 7-B: complex
 8-I: smartphones
 9-J: targets
 Not used:
 D: guidelines
 G: responsibility

Check-out

1 Listening: Outlet shopping

Die Schüler/innen vervollständigen hier Fragen zum Hörtext mit maximal vier Wörtern. Es kann vorkommen, dass Lösungsvorschläge Ihrer Schüler/innen zwar von den Antworten hier im Schlüssel abweichen, aber dennoch richtig sind und die Sätze passend vervollständigen. Vergleichen Sie in solchen Fällen gemeinsam unterschiedliche Lösungsmöglichkeiten und -zugänge.

Track 5/ Track 3.5: Outlet shopping

At a time when the rest of the retail landscape is still in recovery mode, a rising star has emerged: the outlet mall. Budget-minded shoppers are

- 5 flocking to outlet centres in search of name brands at reduced prices. Retailers, who are struggling to persuade their discount-trained shoppers to pay full price at their regular locations, are increasingly looking to open outlet stores. Apparel sales at
 10 factory outlets rose 17.8% for the twelve months that ended in April, according to estimates by market research firm NPD Group. Meanwhile, apparel sales industrywide rose a meagre 1.4%.

- Outlet shops typically offer 30 to 70% off retail
 15 prices for popular, high-quality brands that usually resist heavy markdowns. Although the prices still aren't cheap, it's considered a bargain when shoppers can score a handbag for less than \$100 or a cotton cardigan for \$19.99. People tend to go
 20 where their dollar lasts. They accept that they are not getting the brand-new styles, but they are still getting the name brands for half off, sometimes even more than that. That change in perception has been a welcome one for outlet mall executives,
 25 who say that their centres used to face undeserved stigma in highbrow shoppers' eyes. They feel the

economic downturn was kind of a blessing for them.

- For retailers, outlets provide a way to offer lower
 30 prices and clear excess inventory. To properly stock the growing number of factory stores, companies are increasingly ordering outlet-only merchandise, with analysts estimating that 85% of the products at outlets were never carried in full-price locations.
 35 Other merchandise might be damaged or returned items. In today's world, the outlet business is a business upon itself. The average consumer cannot tell the difference between a golf shirt made for an outlet centre compared to one made for a full-line
 40 retail store. The difference is mainly cosmetic, like a little less embroidering or a little less detail.

- Because so many products are unique to the outlets, there isn't much overlap between those locations and their full-price counterparts. Without
 45 the fear of sales cannibalisation, and because outlets serve as destination centres that reach a broader geographic customer base than traditional malls, retailers have focused on opening more outlet stores. Additionally, retailers save money at the outlets: It typically costs less to open a factory
 50 location because rents are cheaper, and many companies that pay salespeople commissions at traditional stores don't do so at outlets. Many retailers are using those savings to renovate and
 55 remodel their outlet locations by updating the fitting rooms and installing more attractive fixtures and lighting. Retailers recognise that the outlets can be the very first experience a consumer has with their brand, so the experience has to be a true
 60 extension of the brand and the company's image.

- Outlet centres are thinking beyond simply adding new stores. Many are offering special coupons for tourists, concerts and valet services just like the traditional malls. They're also turning
 65 to social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter to promote deals and events.

STANDARDISIERTES TESTFORMAT

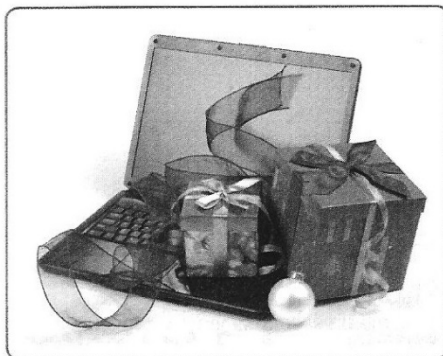
- 0: At outlet centres, customers can buy **brands at reduced prices**.
 1: Customers are not willing to **pay (the) full price** at regular shops.
 2: Though prices aren't cheap, shoppers always have the feeling of **getting a bargain** at outlet centres.
 3: Over the last years, the image of outlet centres in the public **has improved**.
 4: More and more companies are producing clothes exclusively **for outlet centres**.
 5: Many customers first **get to know** a brand in an outlet centre, therefore companies ensure that the shops make a good impression.

(Prime Time 8, Teachers' book, 2012: 46)

9. Read the article about Internet safety.

Online shopping made safe(r)

A click of the mouse, and shoppers can buy nearly any product online: from groceries to cars, from software to the latest albums. Electronic commerce (e-commerce) gives consumers the opportunity to shop at thousands of online stores. You can select, order and pay, and you don't even have to leave your home.



However, sometimes things can go very wrong. Consumers get damaged goods or have to pay more than they were told on the website. Or they are simply cheated by clever scam artists.

With a few simple precautions, online shoppers can make their online shopping experiences enjoyable and safe. The following guidelines will help you to get the most out of your virtual shopping tour.

1. Shop at secure websites

Look for signs of security. Symbols like an unbroken lock or key, a URL that begins with https, or the words Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) mean that only you and the merchant can see your payment information.

2. Do your homework before you make a purchase

Only do business with companies you already know. If the company is unfamiliar, you can do some research in the Internet Yellow Pages. Agencies like the Better Business Bureau can also give you useful information.

3. Protect your privacy

When placing an order, only provide the bare facts about yourself, such as your name and address. If a company wants further information about your lifestyle or financial background, it may be used for marketing purposes, so it is best not to give them more than is absolutely necessary.

4. Keep a record of your transaction

Make a habit of saving and printing the online confirmation of your order, just like a receipt in a real shop. It may be important if you are not satisfied with your purchase.

5. Read the terms and conditions carefully

Before you click the final place order button, read the terms and conditions carefully. They sometimes contain a hidden clause that may result in higher costs. Also find out about shipping and handling charges. Check to see whether the return policy is clear and whether you get a refund if you return the goods. The most reliable online merchants will always make this information available.

6. Never give your credit card number as proof of your age

Sometimes merchants ask for your credit card number as a proof of age. Never give this information – a credit card cannot verify one's age.

scam artists = Betrüger

precaution = Vorsichts-
maßnahmeURL = Uniform Resource
Locator
merchant = Händler

purchase = (Ein-)Kauf

to place an order =
bestellenhabit = Gewohnheit
receipt = Rechnung, Belegshipping and handling
charges = Versandkosten
return policy = Rückgabe-
recht
reliable = verlässlich

verify = bestätigen

(Open Worlds English II, 2011: 56)

Track 8: Our ecological footprint

- ... so this brings us to the fundamental question: How long will mankind be able to live off this planet? As we all know, we cannot consume more than we have, and if we continue to use all the Earth's resources of our planet but don't help nature to regenerate them, we will soon bankrupt our planet. Around 20 years ago, scientists introduced a concept that measures how much land, water and natural resources a person, city, country or mankind as a whole requires to produce the resources it consumes: it is called the ecological footprint, or eco-footprint. We all leave ecological footprints on our planet; in other words we usually consume more than what we give back to nature. To leave no footprint would mean that a person gives back to the environment exactly what he or she takes. It is a sad truth that for the last 30 years, humankind has had a negative balance, which means we are running out of resources. The latest estimate suggests that our total ecological footprint is 1.4 planet earths, which means that humanity uses ecological services 1.4 times as fast as the Earth can reproduce them.
- How is this ecological footprint measured? It looks at all the goods and services people use for their daily needs and activities: food, electricity, water, travelling, raw materials, land, forests—and also what we do with our waste products. This is then compared to the time and effort it takes nature to generate these products. Footprints can be measured for an individual, for cities, regions, countries, continents and for the whole planet. It can also be applied to certain activities, for example driving a car or travelling by plane. You can also measure how much water or oil it really takes to produce certain goods. Did you know that it takes more than 5,000 litres of water to produce a pair of jeans? In your calculation you have to include the water needed for growing the cotton, and for transport, production, packaging, and so on. Another factor that is often used is the emission of carbon dioxide, or CO₂. These figures make it possible for those of us who are not scientists to understand how our lifestyle affects our environment.
- If you want to measure your own ecological footprint, you will find numerous calculators online. When I measured mine for the first time, I was really shocked: 2.9! So if everybody on this planet had my lifestyle, we would need almost 3 planets to keep going.
- I'm coming to the end of my speech now, so I would like to summarise the most important points...

(Open Worlds English II, 2011: online tapescript, <http://www.wissenistmanz.at/sbx>)



15. Read the following article about a family that has radically changed its lifestyle and compare theirs to yours. **R**



surgeon = Chirurg

consumerism =
Konsumwahn

5

10

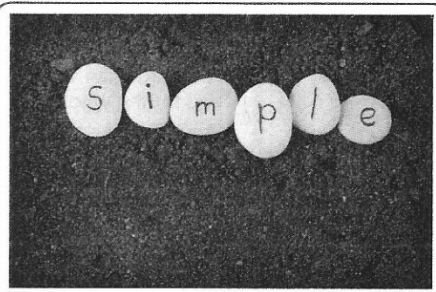
15

20

25

Going Simple

For many years Susan Jones (46) was a successful plastic surgeon who used to work 12 hours a day. She was working so hard that she hardly saw her family except for the weekends, which they usually spent in a mall doing the shopping and buying stuff that would make them happy. A holiday in India then opened her eyes. Susan spent some days in the slums of Calcutta and watched the people there. They had nothing, but despite their misery they appeared to be happier and more content than most of the well-off people she had met in the US. There she also met her future husband, David, an environmental activist who introduced her to the simple living philosophy. He made her reflect upon her own life, and in the end she felt that she had a successful professional life but had emotionally lost her daughter. "I used to check my mobile every 10 minutes and bought all shades of scarves because this was the only way I could think of to make myself and my daughter happy." Even though she admits that these material things did make her happy for a while, she felt that there had to be something more to life than consuming and consuming even more. So she and her daughter made a radical change in their life: they decided not to spend any more than they really needed. Their new motto was "reduce, reuse, recycle". They gave away unnecessary things, which meant no TV, video games or MP3 players, no washing machine, no dishwasher. Instead of having two cars, they share one and use public transport as often as they can. They no longer travel to exotic destinations to recover from a stressful life but have instead managed to de-stress their everyday life. They spend more quality time together, play board games, cook, enjoy family dinners and have conversations. At first Susan's daughter Tara, 17, was quite shocked at this sudden change of lifestyle. "But then I realized that it was not enough to talk and write about ecological footprints and environmental pollution, globalization and consumerism; you also have to do something about these problems. I am more authentic now and many friends admire me for my family. On the whole I believe we as a family are happier now because we have less."



Do you know how big your ecological footprint is?



16. What can you live without to reduce your ecological footprint? **L**

Work in groups of 3 or 4 and discuss which gadgets or services you normally use are unnecessary or which products you do not really need to buy. What could you "reduce, reuse or recycle"? Agree on something, present your suggestions in class and then try to put your ideas into practice for one week. After one week, report to the class whether and in which areas of life you were successful. Also talk about whether this experiment has changed your lifestyle and if so, how.

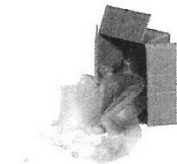
(Open Worlds English III, 2012: 28)

estimate = schätzen
average consumption =
Durchschnittsverbrauch

grow = hier: züchten



harvest = ernten, Ernte



packaging = Verpackung

feed on = sich ernähren
von

tap water = Leitungswasser

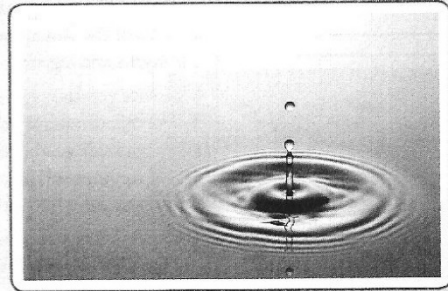


landfill = Mülldeponie

The truth about water

Until recently it was estimated that the average consumption of water per individual was 140 litres per day. That might sound somewhat okay and would not really make the headlines. However, it's only one way of calculating water usage. "And it's totally wrong", argues British scientist Tony Allan, who has published radically different numbers and facts that show us how much water we really use when we buy and use certain products.

He calls this "virtual water", and it is not just the water that we drink every day. It also includes all the water that was necessary to grow, produce or transport something.



Breakfast: 400 litres

Let's take a look at a simple example: Imagine you are having breakfast. A glass of orange juice alone needs 170 litres of virtual water! In your calculation you have to include the water that the oranges need to grow, the water that the workers drink when they harvest the oranges, and then add in the production and packaging of the orange juice as well as transporting both to the oranges and juice – and you will arrive at this figure. If you eat some cheese (50 litres), an egg (135 litres) and a slice of bread (40 litres) for breakfast too, you start your day by using almost 400 litres of virtual water!

But that's not all: the biggest water waster is meat. Cows drink lots of water and feed on grass that is also the reason why eating meat or fish regularly has a big impact on one's eco-footprint.

Bottled Water

Even though we have excellent tap water in Austria, Austrians buy about 640 million litres of mineral water each year. Water is taken from the earth and transported to a factory where it is bottled. Then it is transported to a store where you can buy it to drink and then the bottle is recycled or put into a landfill. It takes 362,666 barrels of oil just to produce the 640 million plastic bottles sold in Austria. That doesn't count the cost of transporting the bottle to a store near you.

Mass tourism versus ecotourism

Due to the environmental and economic problems caused by mass tourism, many travellers and environmental organizations have been increasingly concerned about the harmful impact of tourism: high living standards and cheap transport have resulted in increased mobility of tourists. As a consequence, the tourism industry has provided the necessary infrastructure to cater for the needs of the travellers by building resorts and facilities in even the remotest locations. Although the tourism industry provides employment and economic opportunities which benefit the local population, unplanned tourist development has also caused a variety of problems:

(Open Worlds English III, 2012: 34-35)

E3

P 2: Read the article and answer the questions. ★★

Shopping in malls

Shopping centres – with many shops under one roof – have been around for a long time: the first bazaars go back to the 10th century. The Grand Bazaar in Istanbul is a famous example; it was built in the 15th century. These early shopping centres offered some of the features that we also enjoy nowadays, e.g. different types of shops or indoor shopping.

The first fully enclosed shopping mall was designed and built over 50 years ago. The architect was Victor Gruen, who originally came from Austria. When the Nazis came to power he had to emigrate to the United States. There he was able to realise his vision of an enclosed shopping mall: the Southdale Center in Edina, Minnesota, opened in 1956. Gruen's concept began to spread throughout the USA and the rest of the world: more and more shopping malls were built.

On the one hand, the customers can enjoy the luxury of shopping indoors, with a huge variety of stores, large parking garages, and the combination of shopping with leisure (most malls also have cinemas, restaurants, theme parks, etc.). On the other hand, however, the shopping centres have also brought along big changes in the structure of towns and cities. Many of the smaller retail outlets, especially in the downtown area, were forced to close. They lost their customers to the new centres, which were built in the suburbs and could therefore only be reached by car.

Larger and larger

Meanwhile, shopping malls have become larger and larger. The biggest shopping mall in the world is Berjaya Times Square in Kuala Lumpur (700,000m²). Beijing's Golden Resources Mall is the world's second largest shopping centre (600,000 m²). Dubai Mall is the largest mall in the Middle East; the Metro Centre near Newcastle upon Tyne (UK) is the largest shopping centre in Europe.



fully enclosed = voll-
ständig unter Dach

retail outlets = Einzel-
suburb = Außenbezirk
Stadttrand

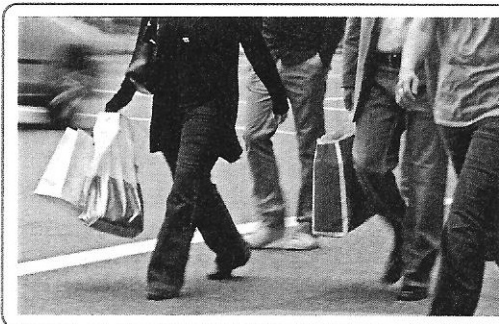
(Open Worlds English III, 2012: 160)

E4

10. Read the commentary from a newspaper.

King Customer?

Consumers and their behaviour were the subject of detailed studies even before the words "market research" entered our vocabulary. Why do we buy certain things and ignore others? Why – under certain circumstances – do we decide to buy something that we might not even feel a need for? Unfortunately for the business world, yet fortunately for us consumers, the code has not yet been fully deciphered. Although consumer surveys, interviews, observations and analyses have given marketing and sales experts a lot of clues about our shopping behaviour, there is still a grey zone that refuses to unveil its secrets, and that even the most sophisticated instruments fail to disclose: customers make erratic buying decisions, i.e. they buy something without a reason. "Just because..." would be the only correct answer. And that's not a good answer for the analysts. But maybe that's a vital element of the magic of shopping.



A.C. Onsumer

(Open Worlds English III, 2012: 163)

Dave Barry (born 1947)
is an American author
and columnist.

3 Are You Still Buying or Already Shopping?

"Once again, we come to the Holiday Season, a deeply religious time that each of us observes, in his own way, by going to the mall of his choice."

(Dave Barry)

12. Read the text about the future of shopping malls; then do the tasks below with a partner.

steer = führen, leiten
experiential = empirisch

atrium = Eingangshalle
hallway = Gang

capture = fesseln
arouse = stimulieren

showroom = Ausstellungsraum

With new technologies, more and more consumers have taken to online shopping and exploiting the possibilities of accessing mobile content via their smartphones or tablet PCs. The economic recession and other social trends have also contributed to a change in shopping behaviour. More and more people do their shopping with a list: they grab the things they need and are out again.

- 5 In order to prevent ghost malls, developers and owners of shopping malls have responded to these changes in various ways. Downloadable apps are used to contact visitors as they enter the mall and inform about what is going on in the mall or special promotional activities. Provided their apps are open, shoppers can even be steered to the stores of their choice or can contact the store to reserve certain products for pick-up.
- 10 Another way developers have taken advantage of new trends is by developing shopping malls into experiential places where consumers are invited to come not primarily to buy goods but to experience the atmosphere and the lifestyle. Some shopping complexes are no longer called shopping malls, but are advertised as lifestyle centers. Whereas in the past malls were openly meant for consumption, the focus now is on offering a place away from home and work, a so-called third place, where the people can browse, do some window-shopping, relax, enjoy the atmosphere, the events, the entertainment and the attractions and get emotionally engaged.
- 15 A huge gate at the entrance of the mall and a spacious atrium might give visitors the impression of entering a temple, and carefully planned and designed hallways can steer them to the different areas of the mall. Artificial ponds and waterfalls with chill areas can serve to slow down consumers. Spectacular installations capture and fascinate them while classy showrooms can arouse interest and invite them to try out the latest products in a cool environment. Architecture, music, lighting, smells and even the temperature within a mall trigger certain emotions and put prospective customers into a certain mood.
- 20 Consumers are aroused or calmed down; they smell, see, hear and touch, using all their senses to experience the mall. According to Christian Mikunda, an Austrian expert on shopping mall design, the malls of the future will increasingly work with emotions to put consumers in the right mood for shopping. With regard to architecture, they will have to stand out and be visible from far away. They will have to function as landmarks and tourist attractions which offer entertainment and sensory experiences to make customers want to stay – and consume.
- 25

(adapted from: Brand Lands, Hot Spots and Cool Spaces; Christian Mikunda)

(Open Worlds English III, 2012: 164)

Track 28: Ethical issues

... and so I think that a different type of consumer is beginning to emerge: a consumer that places more emphasis on ethical issues than things like price, brand name or availability. Let's first find a good definition of ethical consumerism, which is often also called ethical shopping or green consumerism. Ethical consumerism means that before the customer makes a decision to buy something, he or she takes ethical standards into account and will only purchase a product or service if certain ethical standards have been fulfilled. Consumers can act in two ways: either they refuse to buy certain products – in other words they boycott them – or they can do something called *positive buying*, which means they only buy ethical products.

Now, what do these ethical standards actually refer to? I want to divide them into three categories:

Number one: the company itself. Questions like "How is the company organised internally?", "How do they treat their workforce?", "Is the pay fair?", and "Are men and women treated equally?" play an important role here. We know many examples of companies that have lost customers because they failed to meet these standards. Using child labour in Indonesia to produce clothes and shoes is one example.

Number two: environmental issues, the main questions being: "What is the relationship to nature and wildlife?" Are resources exploited without thinking of the consequences to our environment – you may have heard of the eco-footprint – or does a company invest in renewable energy, recycling and similar issues? "Are products tested on animals?" And so on. McDonald's has always had to fight the image of being responsible for destroying rain forests or producing a lot of waste.

And finally number three: business ethics. The fundamental questions here are: "What business practises does a certain company apply? What are their strategies?" "Are they only interested in maximising their profits, no matter what that means to farmers, suppliers, or other businesses, or do they try to treat their business partners fairly?" The Fairtrade certification is a famous example of this: products with this certificate follow the standards I mentioned earlier.

Other factors that may influence buying decisions nowadays are questions like: "Are the products local or have they been imported?" "Do they contain only natural ingredients or are there artificial ingredients or additives?", and "Has the food been grown organically?"

The main reason for this rise in ethic-based consumerism is obvious: increased awareness because more information about business practices is available to us. We simply know more, and better still: we want to find out more. We have become responsible consumers!

Ethical consumerism is not a revolutionary development that will change the nature of businesses overnight. To my mind, it is an evolution: a slow but gradual process that will eventually change the corporate social responsibility of enterprises.

Thank you very much for your attention.
(Applause)

(Open Worlds English II, 2012: online tapescript, <http://www.wissenistmanz.at/sbx>)

Feeding the World

A

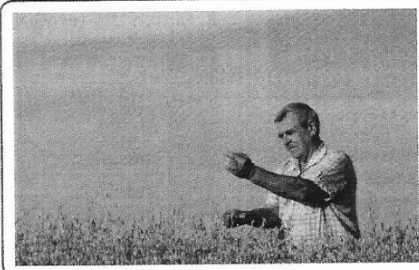
hunters and gatherers =
Jäger und Sammler

5

Food and food production has been at the very center of human existence forever. From our beginnings as hunters and gatherers to our adaptation to a farming lifestyle, we have always depended on a sufficient supply of food. It has been the basis for social stability and cultural development.

10

Thus, food shortages have always been accompanied by social unrest: wars have been fought over food, kings and rulers have been overthrown because their people were starving and famines frequently led to a slow-down of cultural and artistic developments. In the 21st century not much has changed: there are still famines, 925 million people around the world are starving and every day thousands of people die because of malnutrition and food shortage. The only thing which has changed, however, is that nowadays famines do not usually affect the Western industrialized nations.



15

B

yield = Ertrag
perish = hier: verderben

20

These nations have been able to develop the technological know-how and have the necessary means to produce enough food for the people living there. Large-scale agriculture has mostly replaced small farming, which has made the production of food less cost- and labor-intensive. Due to elaborate agro-technology, the industrialized production of food requires less energy and fewer resources to maximize yields, which even results in an overproduction of food in most Western countries. Therefore, large quantities of food are thrown away every day or perish in warehouses and in order to stay competitive most Western countries have decided to subsidize their agricultural industries.

C

density = Dichte

25

So where is the problem if there is enough food for everyone, you might ask yourself. Feeding the world might look easy on a theoretical level. On a practical level, though, there are huge problems that aren't easy to get rid of. First, low-tech agriculture often goes along with a high population den-

arable = bebaubar

30

sity. Successful large-scale food production, however, requires a certain combination of resources, such as arable land, water, energy and of course money, as well as a high level of technological know-how and organization. Unfortunately, all or some of these requirements are simply lacking in the countries which are most affected by a food shortage. In addition, corruption, conflicts and social instability make it even more difficult to provide enough food for the starving people in African, South-East Asian and Central American countries. Moreover, the developing countries that could produce food crops primarily tend to focus on cash crops which can be exported and which are often used to feed livestock or even to produce biofuels in industrialized nations. The search for renewable and clean energy sources has led to a rising production of cash crops at the expense of food crops, the price of which has been rising particularly in less and least developed countries.

livestock = Vieh
at the expense of =
auf Kosten von

35

D

LDCs = less developed
countries

40

There are several other factors which are linked with the general increase in global food prices: first, it is the direct result of the economic crisis. A second factor linked with rising food prices is the global dominance of multinational agro-businesses such as Monsanto and Pioneer. These companies have been granted patents for many seeds and plants such as melons, tomatoes and broccoli, which in turn has made it more expensive for farmers to purchase seeds. Finally, agricultural subsidies in Western countries have made competition even more difficult for developing nations.

45

So the irony behind this is that whereas an increasing number of Westerners suffer from food-related illnesses such as diabetes and heart-conditions, which are often due to overeating, people in LDCs pay more for food and have less of it.

(Open Worlds English IV/V, 2013:26-27)

6 Shop and click

In an online survey entitled "Are you an e-shopaholic?" people between 10 and 80 responded. Here are some of their statements.

5

Usually I don't order things online. I prefer cash, you know. But, under some circumstances I have to order via the internet. I bought all my audio-equipment, for example, as well as my computer and some other things I needed online. The reason for buying online was mainly the price, I saved around 20-30% on audio and about 15% on computer equipment. The other reason was that I found no local retailers for my audio needs (turntables, mixer, amplifier, speakers...)

Chris, 20



10

I must admit, I love it – I order everything online, I subscribe to at least 10 newsletters, and I buy everything online – from toothpaste to underwear. And I am an ebay addict and I always bid on something ... always.

Pete, 32



15

I am an early adopter. That's it. Where can an early adopter get the latest gadget? On the internet. So I guess that's the answer to your question. So of course – I order online – and I pay for special delivery. After all, I need it fast.

Diana, 38



(TechCon 3, 2008: 13)

Buy Nothing Day

by Janice Carstairs

5

The concept of a car-free day has already taken hold of many European cities. However, the rampant consumerism which affects all of us, especially before the holidays, is often discussed privately, but has not yet entered the public space. In Vancouver, Canada, the situation is somewhat different. The artist Ted Dave

10

founded an informal protest day which has been promoted by the Canadian magazine Adbusters. The people who take part in this day simply do

not buy anything for 24 hours. This event should make people in the First World countries more aware of their often wasteful habits.



15

20

In the United States and Canada this day is often observed on the Friday after American Thanksgiving. As this day falls at the end of

November and is normally a day off, it has traditionally been one of the major shopping days of the holiday season. Some people feel
15 that by staying away from the shops and the sales on this day brings back the real spirit of Thanksgiving, which focuses on friends and family and not how much we can manage to cram into our shopping trolleys. "I actually enjoy
30 spending the day just with my family and not fighting the crowds at the stores," says software developer Paula Edwards.

In Canada there have been successful Buy Nothing Days. In 2005 high school students in
35 Montreal brought items to school which were in good condition, but which they simply didn't need anymore. They held a type of bazaar at lunch time and students could get coupons for the items they had brought. Then they could use
40 the coupons to get items which other students were willing to part with. All in all, it was a type of swap shop and the students were able to demonstrate that they could acquire new things for themselves without spending money
45 on them. As Jonas Wright remarked, "I couldn't believe that I found two CDs I had always wanted right there at my school. What a great idea!"

In Bristol, UK, a group of BND participants turned a shopping area into a free shop, a kids'
50 area and a place to have a bite to eat for free. There were musicians playing instruments made of recycled materials and some people even made up words to Christmas carols emphasizing the idea of anti-consumerism and went into the
55 shops to sing them. "It was such a fun day and so much less stressful than running from shop to shop," commented high school student Helen Jones, "I even joined in with the singing and the people in the shops seemed to be amused with
60 our performance."

In Taiwan, there was a great Buy Nothing Day in 2005. The group BND Friends met and there were familiar faces as well as new ones who enthusiastically joined in. They set up on the
65 pavement in front of a large shopping mall in the

upscale east district of Taipei. In previous years the BND Friends marched along a route which included using public space. This time, however, they held a debate on the use of public space which took place between the event organisers and representatives of the private sector. "Today's cities have so little room and are very crowded," one of the organisers said. "Therefore we feel it is important to discuss who can use public spaces and when they can use them."

In Anchorage, Alaska, a protest at a shopping mall in November is quite a challenge. As the group tried to protest inside the mall the security guards asked them to leave. So they stayed outside, braving the -12 degree weather for about three hours. In this time they passed out flyers and talked to people about consumerism and the dangers it can present for our society. About halfway through the protest the local news station showed up to film them. Comments from people watching the demonstration ranged from "I can't imagine not buying gifts during the holiday season." to "Wonderful idea. I'm not buying anything today." All in all, a very successful if very cold event.

Not everyone is in favour of Buy Nothing Day, of course. The large chain stores and retailers feel that one day is not going to make a big difference in their bottom line. The smaller shops, however, often depend on the holiday season to keep their businesses going. "The mom and pop shops in small towns have enough of a challenge keeping up with the big guys," says Darin Smith of Leeds, Connecticut. "How can we survive if customers are encouraged to stay away?" he asks.

This issue obviously has two sides to it. Taking a day to reflect on what we actually need and what is necessary for us is not at all a bad idea. However, putting small shops out of business can't be the goal either. Perhaps a compromise between the two groups can be reached. I, for one, am curious about what will happen next year when BND rolls around again.

(TechCon 3, 2008: 23-24)

6 To give or not to give

Tapescript – Teacher's CD, track 5

Announcer: Unit 3 – Gift crazy. To give or not to give. Speaker 1

Woman: Last year I couldn't believe my friend Johanna. We have always bought each other little gifts at Christmas and it was something I really looked forward to. Even if it was just a bar of chocolate or a paperback book it was great. This year, when the group of us got together to exchange gifts, she gave each of us an envelope. Inside was a card from a charity. She had made donations for us instead of buying us gifts. I was really offended. She could have asked me. I think it was a terrible idea and one day I'm going to discuss this issue with her. I think gift-giving is important because it shows that you care.

Announcer: Speaker 2

Man: This year was the first year I was together with my girlfriend for my birthday. We arranged to go out for a meal together and at the restaurant she handed me a box. I was so excited and I couldn't wait to open it, so I tore the wrapping paper off right at the table. Instead of something more romantic like cologne or even a watch she had bought me a memory card for my computer. I was so disappointed. Don't women know that we do not only like practical gifts but also romantic ones? I think that next year I will have to give her some ideas before my birthday and not let her think of something that she thinks I like.

Announcer: Speaker 3

Young man: My girlfriend and I are students and we are not on any grants. We both earn a little bit of money in our part-time jobs, but it's still not enough to buy each other something fancy and expensive. This year we decided that instead of buying really silly things for each other at the holidays, we would do something special together. We have arranged a short trip to the mountains where we can ski and stay at a friend's lodge. We are going to bring our sleeping bags and food and I think it will be the best gift ever!

Announcer: Speaker 4

Girl: My mum doesn't have much money and birthdays are difficult for her because we are three kids. But she is so creative and a techno geek – she is great at the computer, and she has a good sense of humour. Two years ago she made us two computer year-planners with pictures of the whole family and our friends. Last year she made each of us a voucher book. I got a cool one – there were ten vouchers for lifts (mum said she would take me somewhere and pick me up again), 10 vouchers for my favourite pizza, and 5 for her delicious lasagne. It was the best gift any of us have ever received. I wonder what she will think of next year!

Announcer: Speaker 5

Boy: Every year at the holidays we spend so much time looking for gifts which everyone in the family will like. We always spend Christmas Day with about 8 or 10 cousins and all our aunts and uncles, so this means lots of shopping for presents. However, sometimes we buy someone the same thing that someone else has bought or give them a gift they already have or don't really like. This year we just decided to do a "No gift" Christmas. We are just going to come together and eat and talk and we think that will be much better than getting gifts we don't know what to do with.

Announcer: Speaker 6

Woman: Don't tell anyone, but I am a regifter. I know that regifting is not considered to be nice, but in my job I get so many things I don't need – vases, fancy pens, sweaters, memory sticks – they are not cheap, some are really sophisticated, but I don't need them. So what I do is collect everything and give them to people for Christmas or their birthdays. I can save a lot of money this way, but I also like the idea of recycling things rather than just throwing them away.

(TechCon 3, Teacher's Book, 2008: 16-17)

4 Have you ever thought about food miles?

Tapescript – Teacher's CD, track 13 (Listening also on students' CD/CD-ROM)

Announcer: Unit 7 – Ships and shipping. Have you ever thought about food miles?

Speaker 1:

Last month I spent a fortnight's holiday with my family in Crieff in Scotland. It took us over 12 hours to get there. We were all exhausted by the time we arrived and I popped into the local Somerfield to pick up some supplies for our rented cottage.

- 5 I was amazed to find local raspberries (which were grown behind our cottage in Scotland) on sale in the shop, but they had been packaged in transparent plastic boxes in Bristol where we live. I guess this is because Somerfield are a Bristol company, but wouldn't it have been much more sensible to package those raspberries where they had grown? The fruit had travelled about 840 miles to be packed into little containers, before being sold a couple of miles from their origin. This is ridiculous. We don't understand how this can pay, and just imagine the harm this does to our environment.

Speaker 2:

- 10 I love good porridge or cereal – and I want to have good milk! That's why I have been a regular customer at Sainsbury's for their delicious Jersey milk. Only recently I found out through a BBC programme that my Jersey milk is from Graham's dairy farm in Stirling in Scotland, where it is also bottled. The milk comes from Mr Graham's own herd of Jersey cows and other farms in the Scottish Lowlands. The milk is then transported by a transport company to Redditch in Warwickshire where it is stored in a cold store rented
15 by Highgrove Food Distribution Ltd. The milk is then transported daily to the supermarket warehouse hubs and then on to the actual supermarket, causing needless energy to be consumed at Redditch to keep the milk chilled.

- This means that milk from cows in Scotland is not only transported to Cornwall and the south east of England, but also sold in Scotland again, not a mile from Graham's dairy farm after having made a 600-mile
20 round trip via Redditch. The unnecessary CO₂ emissions from the lorries transporting this milk are not good for the environment.

(TechCon 3, Teacher's Book, 2008: 31)

Tapescript– Teacher’s CD, track 19

Announcer: Extra listening unit 3. A Year of Nothing New.

Joe: So, are you really going to do this?

Kathy: Why not? Do you really think it is going to be so difficult?

Joe: Yes, I do.

5 Kathy: All we are going to do is not buy new things for the next year. How hard can that be?

Joe: We’ll see what you say at the end of the year.

Announcer: Kathy and several of her friends decided over dinner one evening to help the planet and not buy any new products for a whole year. Now, at the end of the year they are going to tell us about their experiences. I, for one, am very curious about how the experiment went.

10 Joe: So, Kathy, how did the year go? Was it fun?

Kathy: I don’t think that fun is the exact word I would use. It was challenging, interesting, and in some ways more difficult, but in other ways easier than we expected.

Joe: What were some of the challenging parts?

15 Kathy: Well, my cell phone broke and I was surprised how much I missed it. After all, I lived without a cell phone for years but since I got my first one, I have really become dependent on it. But as I had agreed not to buy a new one, I just found other ways to make phone calls. There still are public phones, you know, when you need them.

Joe: Any other comments?

20 Kathy: Some of my friends actually found that they felt freer as they didn’t need to plan shopping activities. I never realized how much time I spent in stores comparing prices, looking at new products, reading magazines or looking online for items. Suddenly I had time to do other things.

Joe: Such as?

Kathy: Take a walk in the park, read a book or relax in the bathtub.

Joe: Oh yes, what about products like soap and food?

25 Kathy: We said from the beginning that we could buy food, of course, and anything else that came under the heading of health or safety. So if we needed soap, shampoo or medicine that was not a problem. There are some groups who really are extreme and look through garbage for items, but we didn’t want to do that.

Joe: But what if you really needed something?

30 Kathy: That was the easy part. You would be amazed how many second-hand stores and garage sales there are in the area. We often went to them to buy what we needed or looked in the newspaper and read the ads. People seem to have so much today that they often have to sell almost new products to make room for even newer ones they want to buy. There are also websites which specialize in this particular type of recycling.

Joe: And were there things you just did without like the cell phone?

35 Kathy: Yes, definitely. I used to buy shoes regularly and this year I just wore the ones I had. And do you know what? I didn’t miss the shopping for them at all. And I especially didn’t miss the large credit card bills at the end of the month.

Joe: Anything else interesting that you experienced?

40 Kathy: I surprised myself when I took my computer apart and was able to fix it myself. I never would have tried that earlier. But a friend came and helped me and we got it running again in a few hours. Earlier I just would have bought a new one. I was really proud of myself and now I understand how my computer works as well.

Joe: What did you do at the holidays?

45 Kathy: We gave each other homemade gifts or did little tasks for each other. A friend offered to type all my letters and I cooked for another friend for a week. And I got some of the most beautiful hand-made jewellery and other little gifts. They also mean more to me because I know how much time went into making them.

Joe: What would you say you learned from this experience?

50 Kathy: Lots of my friends use shopping trips as entertainment and I was actually happy to say I didn’t want to go along to the shopping center for the day. I also realized that I can decide for myself and not be influenced by ads and the media. They don’t know what I really need. I feel much more independent.

Joe: So, would you do it again?

Kathy: Absolutely. I just need a few days to buy some essential items that I really do need and then I’m ready to start again for another year!

(TechCon 3, Teacher’s Book, 2008: 51-52)

2 Companies who take a stand



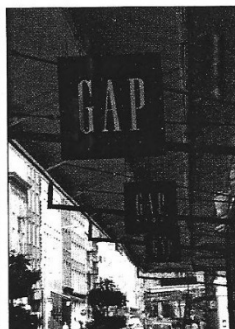
Before reading the article, read the information in the Info box. Discuss with a partner what kind of products Gap, Inc. makes as well as the information about the vendor code of conduct. Say whether you think this is a good idea or not. Then read the first part of the article and while reading mark what you consider the most important facts to be.

Info box:

Code of Vendor Conduct

This is an agreement made with all factories (also called contractors) that make clothing for Gap. They promise to follow international labour laws which apply to the age, safety and health of the workers. In addition, they must protect the environment.

In technical fields, vendor codes are extremely important as they guarantee that outsourced or offshored work meets industry standards. When ordering components or other manufactured or engineered materials, the parent company must be able to ensure quality and compatibility of these products.



Gap, Inc. wins top award for social reporting

In the category of Business Ethics Awards, Gap, Inc. is the clear winner in the category for reporting on social issues. They have taken a huge step forward and, in an unprecedented move, have reported honestly on conditions in their factories. In a report from May 2004, experts and critics of large corporations called the move "historic" and praised Gap for its pioneer work in this field of business ethics. The main focus of the report looked at how

well Gap's suppliers were fulfilling their vendor code. Gap discovered that in Africa, for example, more than half of the factories were using unsafe machinery and in China hazardous materials were not being stored correctly. Although top executives were at first worried about releasing such information, the positive public reaction has indicated that they took the right step. Other companies are sure to follow.

(TechCon 4, 2009: 50)

3 The ongoing story

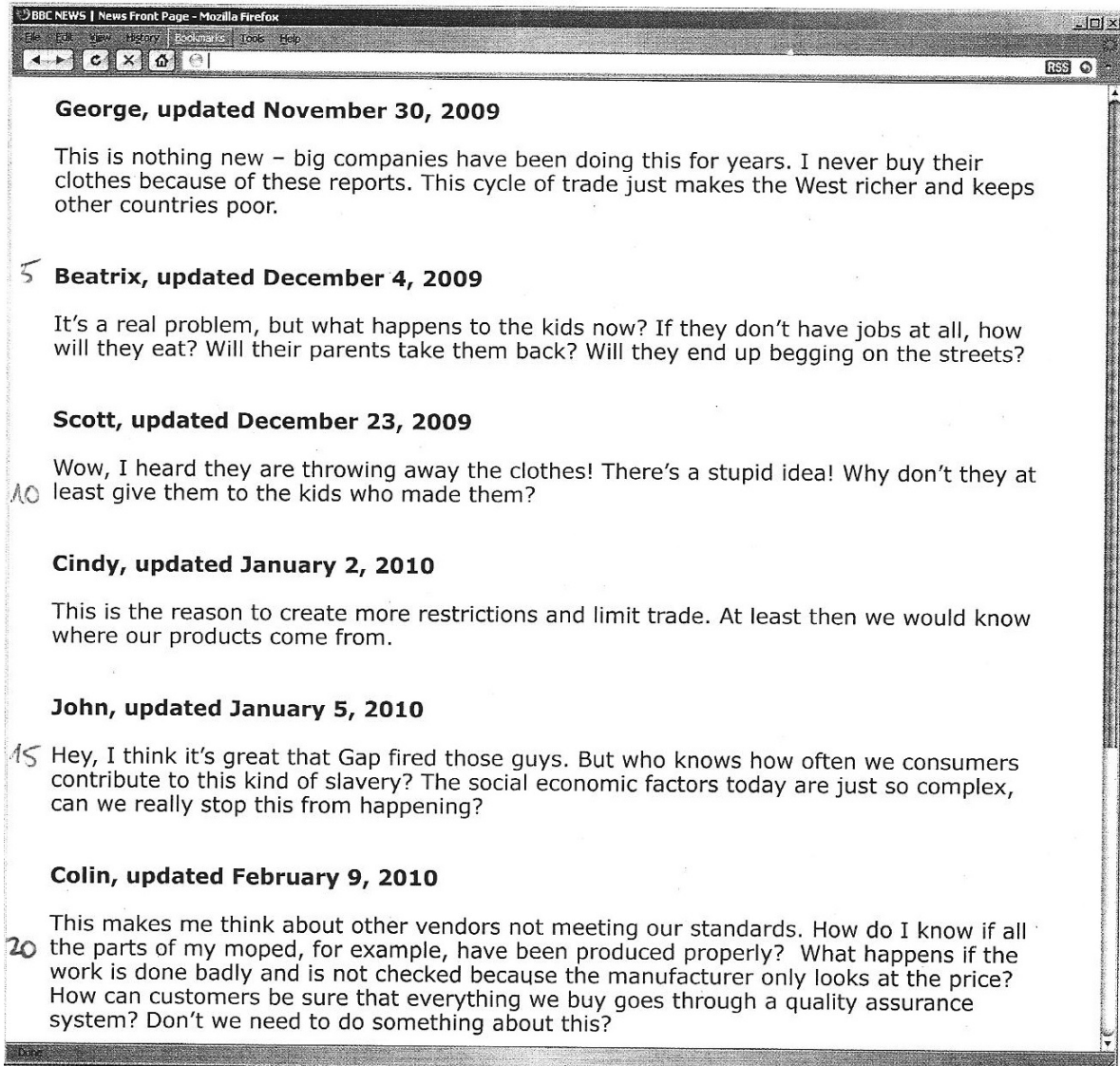
- Gap, Inc. was very pleased about winning the award as this was favourable for the company's image. But then a major problem occurred. What do you think this could have been? Discuss with a partner and come up with suggestions.

Report on child sweatshop damages Gap's ethical image	
5	An investigation by a reporter of the British newspaper <i>The Observer</i> has shocked the business community and caused enormous concern within the Gap corporation.
10	It was discovered that one of their Indian suppliers has been using child labour to produce clothes for Gap. Children as young as ten had been bought by the managers of the factory and were forced to work in dangerous and filthy conditions. In some cases, the children were beaten and made to work sixteen hours a day for no pay. The factory, which was reported to be in a "derelict industrial unit", was producing hand-stitched blouses for Gap Kids stores in the United States and Europe for the Christmas selling period. The blouses were to sell for about \$40.
15	Gap's vendor code is famous and it is corporate policy to stop the abuse of children. If Gap discovers children who contractors force to work, they demand that the children be removed from the workplace, paid their wages and sent to school. They must guarantee jobs for them when they reach the legal working age.
20	The first reaction of the corporation was to fire the Indian supplier. The president of Gap has blamed this abuse on an unauthorized subcontractor and is extremely angry with the vendor who contracted the work. She added that the number of garments the children were said to have made was minimal, but that none of the garments from the particular vendor would make it to store shelves. She went on to say that Gap strictly prohibits child labour. Gap has long had a history of dealing with challenges like this. In 2006 Gap stopped doing business with twenty-three factories because of their code violations. They have a number of people world-wide whose job it is to make sure that contractors follow the Code of Vendor Conduct.
25	
30	
35	

(TechCon 4, 2009: 51)

What are the bloggers saying?

Read the blogs below.



(TechCon 4, 2009: 52)

Gap acts after child labour allegations

The Gap Corporation has announced that it takes the **allegations** of child labour in its supply chain made by an *Observer* reporter very seriously. The company said that it would **terminate contracts** with suppliers that did not meet its standards. Twenty-three suppliers have already lost their contracts because they **violated** Gap's corporate policy.

The clothing produced "in near-slavery conditions" in India has been **withdrawn** from stores and the company is investigating the claims themselves. The company said that it did not know that this order for clothing had been incorrectly subcontracted to a company using child labour.

Gap, Inc. planning to introduce "sweatshop free" label

In order to allow customers to find out where their garments have been made, Gap is planning to label its products as "sweatshop free". This is a **bold** move to expose working conditions in the **apparel** industry. One idea is to give consumers the opportunity to **track** their purchases online and to find out the location of the manufacturer. This system is already in place in the carpet industry in India.

Gap has said, "Under no circumstances is it acceptable for children to produce or work on garments" and has acted accordingly.

(TechCon 4, 2009: 53)

Luxury brands online

When luxury brands began going global, they had to find a way to balance their exclusivity with their new availability. Earlier it was easier.

A

5 The internet has changed all this. The spread of e-tailing has now made products available to everyone everywhere and at any time. This was terrifying for the luxury business as it was no longer possible for the manufacturer to have

10 control over the customers' shopping experience. People could no longer be kept out based on criteria set by the seller.

In spite of this, (or perhaps because of it) luxury brands are now beginning to consider what

role the internet can take on for them. "They now see that the internet is an effective distribution channel", says an analyst at a market research company. "Luxury brands have been controlled carefully and the internet is posing a new threat to them."

Brand owners are experiencing for themselves how the internet is affecting their image. They receive spam mails offering knock-offs of their products at extremely low prices.

B

The internet had long been ignored by the luxury producers in the hope that it would turn out to be short-lived. If you look at the websites of the

main luxury brands such as Bang & Olufsen or Patek Philippe, you will see cleverly designed sites, smashing pictures, detailed product descriptions.

20 However, you won't find a shopping cart icon to which you can add your purchases. According to one executive in the business, Europeans thought they didn't need to worry about how technology was affecting their brands as the internet was slower to take hold on the continent than in the US and the UK.

C

Just a few years ago, the idea of selling luxury goods online would have been ignored. But nowadays people rely on the security offered by sites and

40 spend \$ 1,000 online for a watch or an article of clothing. Customers have become accustomed to the convenience of shopping online.

As technology has improved by leaps and bounds, so has the creativity of website designers. Thanks

45 to the fast broadband connections of the Web 2.0 era, luxury brands have begun to offer videos and

a lot of information on their products and the design of their products.

While surfing the net has become more interactive, companies have also had to deal with feedback from their customers through blogs and discussion groups. Other new techniques being learned by the luxury brands range from traditional print media to learning "search engine optimisation", making sure that your site is the first one in the list when someone types in a relevant product or brand name into a search engine.

Luxury brands have also discovered the use of social networking through sites such as Facebook and Twitter. These have led to elite online communities. Luxury customers today are technically savvy and expect the best. They are willing to pay for exclusive products and appreciate the convenience of ordering online. For luxury brands which still have no web presence the time is approaching when they will be forced to rethink their marketing strategies and finally join the 21st century.

(TechCon 4, 2009: 75-76)

3 Luxury watches

Tapescript – Teacher's CD, track 19

Announcer: Unit 10 – Luxury. Brief news flash from the Basel World Watch Fair

I am Sarah Michaels speaking to you today from the Basel World Watch Fair, the largest of its kind in the world. This year more than 300 brands are exhibiting here – from giants that we all know, such as Rolex, to tiny brands that have only been on the market for a short time. In order to compete, you have to be innovative and creative, because creativity can save companies by creating new markets for their products. We have talked to some of these innovative people and their ideas.

- 5 VOGARD, for example, is a rather young brand, but very popular because of its ingenious time zone watches. Michael Vogt, founder of VOGARD, has told us today that VOGARD is the first mechanical watch in the world that enables the wearer to easily change time zones. He said, "All you have to do is simply rotate the bezel either
10 backwards or forwards." This is certainly one of the greatest hits here at the fair, since people are queuing at the VOGARD stand. Those of you at home who are interested in the technical details and specifications can visit the VOGARD website.

- Let's move on to one of the rather well-established watch brands. Maurice Lacroix has been famous for over 50 years. In the last five years, the brand has successfully repositioned itself by streamlining its product range.
15 They have concentrated on the prestigious and rather lucrative mechanical watch sector.

Philippe Merk, CEO of Maurice Lacroix, told us about his strategy and pointed out that one of the most important things when changing a company's positioning is to avoid using any type of "me-too" strategy, meaning you shouldn't copy what others have already done successfully. He also stresses the importance of what he calls a "force of innovation", a strategy which has worked very well for them.

- 20 My piece of advice for you: if you cannot make it to Basel in the next two days, have a look at the website and take an exciting adventure trip into the world of mechanical watches. There you can find out about what we have been observing here at the fair in terms of innovation – such as the first memory function for a mechanical watch. I personally love Lacroix' advertising slogans which include sentences such as "More than 7,200 hours of precision work. More than 200 handcrafted components. More than just a mechanical timepiece."

- 25 One of the things I also asked myself was whether the economic downturn has had any impact on luxury watches. I found out that in times of ever-growing competition some companies have decided to expand into emerging markets such as China and Russia. We will dedicate a special report next Tuesday to luxury brands which have decided to enter these markets.

- To finish up, I would like to mention a very distinctive innovation you might have heard of. We are talking
30 about watches that cost about £ 500,000. That's right, £ 500,000 – and there is a waiting list to own such a timepiece. We have been to Greubel and Forsey's stand and have talked to the company's co-founder Stephen Forsey. He told us that for his company the adventure is all about mechanism and – as he puts it – the

- invention. He said that the company is only able to produce a very small quantity of watches, a few tens of pieces a year. As I think that you probably don't know anybody who owns such a watch, I would highly
35 recommend their website. This is the place for those who like luxury and would love to own such a watch, but even more for those who are interested in technical details and inventions because these are among the most impressive watches, or, let's say – inventions – that I have ever seen ...

(TechCon 4, Teacher's book, 2009: 49-50)

Tapescript– Teacher’s CD, track 27

Announcer: Extra listening unit 10. Millionaires’ fair: presentation

Welcome ladies and gentlemen of the press to our third Millionaires’ fair, this year in Moscow.

I would like to start my brief overview of the next three days with a French proverb: “It is impossible to overdo luxury.”

- 5 Let me start off by telling you about our premises. We are very proud to have the honour of hosting around 200 exhibitors from more than 25 countries at 300 stands. In your press folder you will find a complimentary copy of this year’s Millionaire Catalogue, which provides you with information about our exhibitors. This catalogue is normally for sale, but we are offering it to the press as a special service. We are very happy to have so many of the sophisticated major brands from all over the world and in a variety of fields. These include automotive, retail, technology, travelling, and – of course – fine food, and, last but not least, we must not forget international newspapers and glossies. In the catalogue you will also find a tear-out section with a comprehensive exhibition plan, map of the venue, timetable, useful information about the fair, opening hours, and our entertainment programme.

- 10 In addition, you can purchase the Millionaire Guide at designated areas. This consists of 200 pages dedicated to the best-of-the-best the world has to offer. It is the ultimate guide for the luxury lifestyle and both a wonderful souvenir for those who want to remember the fair and a distinctive present for those who could not come in person. As you know, it includes articles and columns by very well-known and respected journalists, experts on luxurious, fashionable, and glamorous lifestyle. I am very honoured to welcome some of them here today. I would like to take this opportunity to extend a special welcome to Elisaweta Velikhova of the Moscow Times. At this point I would also like to remind you of our panel discussion - tomorrow at 5 pm in the Great Assembly Hall titled The Meaning of Luxury.

- 20 As a little extra, I would like to draw your attention to the booklet which we have added specially for you as a supplement. It gives you an overview of our charity projects as well as our partnerships with charity organisations and the work we have done since last year’s fair. Like last year, 5 percent of the revenue that we generate from our tickets will go directly into a fund. At this point, I would like to stress that the contributions and donations of the exhibitors and visitors have helped the WWF to help preserve our wonderful Russian landscape.

- 25 For more information and extra badges please contact our PR office in Hall A.
And now, if you have any questions, I will be happy to answer them.

(*TechCon 4*, Teacher’s book, 2009: 94)

Reasons to shop

In the UK, bank holidays were originally meant to give most people a day off. However, large shops have taken advantage of people's free time and often have special sales. As many people have the day off, bank holidays are often major shopping days simply because people have time to spend in the shops.

In the US, there are also several important shopping days. The most crucial of these regarding sales turnover takes place in late November, namely the Friday after Thanksgiving. Most people are off work and the shops take advantage of this by having special offers and sales. In some cases, people line up outside the shops hours before they open in order to be the first to buy electronics and other expensive items. This is the first official day of the Christmas shopping season. It is the perfect time of year for bargain hunters and those who want to be the first to buy the latest products.

Other days which are celebrated in a number of countries and encourage shopping are Valentine's Day (cards, chocolate, flowers, or heart-shaped jewellery), Mother's Day (framed family photos, spa vouchers, or dinner at a restaurant) Father's Day (shaving lotion, personalised golf balls, or home movie theatres) and (in the US at least) Administrative Professionals' Day (flowers, sweets, and small gifts given to an assistant by his / her boss).

(TechCon 4, 2009: 85)

6 A successful business

Tapescript – Teacher's CD, track 22

Announcer: Unit 12 – Designer outlets and product management. Listen to the interview.

- Verena: Good afternoon, Ms. Andrews. My name is Verena Ritzmeier and I am working on a project to increase the number of 15 to 20 year olds who come to the designer outlet centre. How important do you feel the 15 to 20 year old group is?
- 5 Ms Andrews: They are very important for us. Earlier we didn't try to target them specifically, but they are increasingly becoming major spenders and leaving them out of our strategy to acquire customers is simply not a good idea.
- Verena: Do you keep track of how many people between 15 and 20 visit the village?
- 10 Ms Andrews: No, we don't. We are planning on having surveys for people to fill in, but we haven't really decided on the best way to do so.
- Verena: How long do they usually stay at the centre?
- Ms Andrews: We estimate that most stays are about two to three hours, but again, this is difficult to say. People often do their shopping and then have something to eat or drink. Of course, it depends on how far people have driven to get to us. If they have come a long distance, they
- 15 tend to stay longer and make it a whole day.
- Verena: Do you have special ways to keep people in the village?
- Ms Andrews: Of course, events are incredibly important for this. We just had a "go-kart" race which brought people in from surrounding areas and of course we hope that they go shopping afterwards. We also have raffles or other opportunities for them to win prizes. In addition, we send out
- 20 coupon booklets or put coupons in newspaper and magazine inserts so that people can get special discounts at certain shops. These are all ways to get people into the centre.
- Verena: What about opening hours? Are these important for this age group?
- Ms Andrews: Well, we haven't really done any research on this. Young people tend to show up after 4 pm. They also come on Saturdays and Sundays although we are not open as long on Sundays.
- 25 Verena: How do young people get to you? Those with driving licenses and cars or mopeds have no problem, but do people also use public transportation?
- Ms Andrews: Absolutely. If you look at the modern shopping centres today, most of them have excellent connections to public transport. Young people especially tend to come by bus or tram although we also have special parking spaces for mopeds.
- Verena: Another question I have is about the selection of shops. How does this work?
- 30 Ms Andrews: Well, it is very important to have a mix of different branches. We have clothing shops for different age groups and styles, shops selling accessories, places to buy electronic goods, cafés, ice cream stands, health food stores, sports goods, kiosks with speciality items, bakeries, fast food places, restaurants, etc. We more or less try to offer what people can also get in a city centre or in their High Street shops as well as the great bargains on designer goods. The advantage we have is that we offer parking, enclosed areas which makes shopping in bad
- 35 weather more comfortable, and of course larger shops with a wider variety of goods.
- Verena: Is there a special strategy for deciding where shops should be?

(TechCon 4, Teacher's book, 2009: 56-57)

Tapescript – Teacher's CD, track 28

Announcer: Extra listening unit 12. Listen to four young people talk about their experiences in shopping centres, outlet villages and on the High Street.

James (British accent)

5 My name is James. I don't know what all the fuss about going shopping is about. When I need clothes I just go to the shops and find what I need. I don't really bother much about school clothes because we wear uniforms anyway, but I often need special items for different sports that I play, for example football or cricket. But we have some great shops outside the city as well as our local High Street and I always find what I need. I also enjoy going to electronics shops to look at the latest products. But I go in, find what I need, and leave again. I would rather meet my friends in a pub or on the football pitch
10 than hang out in a shopping centre or an outlet village all day. That seems really boring to me.

Daniel (American accent)

Hi, I'm Daniel. On weekends when I don't have basketball or hockey practice I really enjoy going to the mall and just hanging out with my friends. We don't spend much money, but we walk around, have something to eat or drink and look around the stores. At our local mall we have a great gag gift
15 store and I love to see what new items they have, but if I really need to buy clothes for school or for sports activities I can do that as well at the mall. We usually combine a mall day with a movie – I think it is great that the mall has got six movie screens – and pizza or Chinese food at the food court. The temperature at the mall is just right – if it's raining I don't have to carry an umbrella around, that's one of the super things about the malls. We don't really have a downtown area where I live so the kids
20 just don't have any reason to go there. But everyone I know goes to the mall, so it's a great free time activity.

Jill (American accent)

I'm Jill and we just came back from Canada where we went to the Edmonton Mall. It was just amazing! We brought our bathing suits and went swimming in the artificial sea. They even have a wave machine,
25 so we imagined we were at the beach. And this was in December with a foot of snow outside! Then we went to the amusement park and my dad and I went on the roller coaster. There is a camera set up to take pictures of people at the scariest part of the ride, so we had to buy it afterwards. My dad looked really funny with his mouth wide open. Then we went to a restaurant in the New Orleans part of the mall to have something to eat. We almost forgot to go shopping, we were so busy watching the ice-skaters at the
30 rink and the other people on the roller coaster. But I did buy a couple of things that I needed and my mom had a great time in one of the designer boutiques. It was a super day and I can't wait to go back again.

Elizabeth (British accent)

My name is Elizabeth and I've seen these large shopping centres on TV in American programmes, but I can't imagine spending the day at one of them. I usually meet my friends in the city and we walk
35 around and look at the shops and get something to eat. We have a great city centre where we live and loads of shopping possibilities. Our shopping centres are further outside the city and then my mum or dad would have to drive me there. I like being independent and just going into the city by myself. If I really need to get something special, then my mum takes me to one of the big shopping centres or outlet villages, but if I just want to look round the shops, I enjoy doing that with my girlfriends. I guess
40 I will have to make a trip to America to see what these malls are really like. I can't imagine that people can spend a whole day in them, but I would like to at least see one for myself.

(TechCon 4, Teacher's book, 2009: 96)

Appendix 2: English abstract

Consumerism has become an increasingly dominant ideology on a global scale with disastrous effects for nature and global social justice. In at least three of the teaching principles of the Austrian ministry of education and women (BMBF), arguments are given to address the connection between consumption behaviour and ecological and social consequences as well as to point out the need to take responsibility as consumers in Austrian classrooms. Despite the growing awareness about the harmful impact of consumerism, however, areas of consumerist culture are popular topics and frequently uncritically represented in ELT books. Ecolinguistics, the eco-discipline of linguistics that is devoted to study the role of language in the context of the ecological crisis, allows a critical and thorough investigation of discursive constructions in the light of ethical concerns such as environmental and global social justice.

The present study examines consumerist discourse (the linguistic representation of excess consumption) in thirty texts selected of three Austrian upper secondary ELT course books from an ecocritical point of view which is well defined by the writer's philosophical and ethical framework, the ecosophy. The most important research questions are: In what ways is consumerism reiterated as hegemonic ideology and/or promoted in the selected texts? In what ways is consumerism criticised in the selected texts? The findings reveal that in the majority of the selected texts, consumerism as hegemonic ideology remains unchallenged and ecological and social consequences are omitted. Only two out of thirty texts are evaluated as beneficial; among other aspects, they advocate a reduction of consumption and include a non-consumerist notion of happiness. Among the texts that include ethical or ecological concerns about the present form of consumerist culture, many are identified as ambivalent discourses when judged against the ecosophy of this paper since their critique remains on a shallow level, not addressing the cultural roots of the ecological crisis and social global injustice connected to consumerism. These results call for the development of checklists for ELT course book content and didactic ecocritical concepts for foreign language teaching which consider issues of ecological and global social justice.

Appendix 3: Zusammenfassung auf Deutsch

Konsumismus als dominante Ideologie findet zunehmend weltweite Verbreitung, die mit zerstörerischen Auswirkungen auf die Natur und auf die globale soziale Gerechtigkeit verbunden ist. In mindestens drei der Unterrichtsprinzipien des Österreichischen Bundesministeriums für Bildung und Frauen (BMBF) werden österreichische Lehrende dazu angehalten, ökologische und soziale Konsequenzen von Konsumverhalten sowie Konsumverantwortung im Unterricht zu thematisieren. Trotz des steigenden Bewusstseins über die schädlichen Folgen des exzessiven Konsums werden verschiedene Bereiche der Konsumkultur häufig und unkritisch in Schulbüchern für das Unterrichtsfach Englisch dargestellt. Die Öko-Disziplin der Sprachwissenschaft, Ökolinquistik, die sich mit der Rolle von Sprache im Zusammenhang mit der menschlich verursachten Umweltkrise beschäftigt, bietet einen wissenschaftlichen Ansatz zur kritischen Untersuchung von Diskursen unter ethischen Gesichtspunkten wie zum Beispiel Gerechtigkeit auf ökologischer und sozialer Ebene.

Die vorliegende Studie untersucht konsumistische Diskurse in dreißig Texten, die aus drei österreichischen Oberstufen-Schulbüchern für das Unterrichtsfach Englisch ausgewählt wurden. Diese Texte werden anhand eines philosophischen und ethischen Rahmenwerks, der sogenannten Ökosophie, evaluiert. Die wichtigsten Forschungsfragen sind: Wie wird Konsumismus in den ausgewählten Texten als hegemoniale Ideologie gestärkt und/oder beworben? Wie wird Konsumismus kritisiert? Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass in der Mehrheit der Texte Konsumismus als hegemoniale Ideologie fortgesetzt und den Konsequenzen für die Natur und für soziale Gerechtigkeit keine Beachtung geschenkt wird. Nur zwei von dreißig Texten werden als günstig beurteilt; u. a. befürworten diese eine Konsumreduktion und vertreten einen nicht-konsumistischen Begriff von Glück. Von den Texten, die ethische oder ökologische Bedenken an der gegenwärtigen Konsumkultur beinhalten, werden die meisten als ambivalente Diskurse bewertet, da ihre Kritik oberflächlich bleibt und die kulturellen Wurzeln der ökologischen und sozialen Missstände, die in Verbindung mit Konsumismus stehen, unbeachtet bleiben. Die Ergebnisse dieser Arbeit zeigen die Notwendigkeit auf, Checklisten für Schulbuchinhalte sowie didaktische ökokritische Konzepte für Fremdsprachenunterricht zu entwickeln, die Aspekte der sozialen und ökologischen Gerechtigkeit berücksichtigen.