AALBORG UNIVERSITET

LOW-COST AND THE GREENEST CHOICE?

CONSUMERS' PERCEPTIONS OF WIZZ AIR'S SUSTAINABILITY COMMUNICATION

HOW DOES WIZZ AIR'S SUSTAINABILITY COMMUNICATION AS A LOW-COST AIRLINE AFFECT ITS RECEIVERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE AIRLINE'S CREDIBILITY?

SUPERVISOR: LISE-LOTTE HOLMGREEN
CHARACTERS WITH SPACE: 191767
AUTHOR: 20182596

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to examine how consumers perceive the low-cost airline Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication regarding credibility. As climate change has become an increased topic of discussion in society, consumers tend to pursue more sustainable and green services (Deloitte.com, n.d.). Moreover, the travel industry is also increasing as people travel and fly everywhere (Roser and Herre 2017). Because of this, airline companies have begun increasing their focus on sustainability, aiming to meet their stakeholders' expectations. The increased focus on sustainability and the increased level of travel activity and flying presents a paradox, as airplanes are one of the transport methods with the highest emissions yet communicate about environmental sustainability initiatives (Eid et al. 2022, 1; Fan et al. 2018, 673). Therefore, examining and analyzing how consumers perceive low-cost airlines' sustainability communication is interesting. In 2022, the low-cost airline Wizz Air launched its campaign 'Fly the Greenest' as it presents itself as the greenest choice (aWizz Air, n. d.). Thereby, Wizz Air has been chosen as a case in this thesis to explore consumers' perception of this communication.

Through a qualitative method of eight semi-structured interviews, the interviewees' attitudes and perceptions of low-cost airlines and Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication are analyzed through a critical discourse analysis. Based on the three-dimensional model by Fairclough, the analysis consists of the social context, discursive dimension, and text analysis, which all together creates a coherent understanding of why the interviewees possess the attitudes and perceptions they have. This method allows for an in-depth analysis of the individuals' answers.

This research found that while most of the interviewees believe that implementing environmental sustainability initiatives can contribute to a positive corporate image, they are skeptical about Wizz Air's communication and do not find it credible. The main reasons for this lie within the interviewees' perceptions that airlines, in general, are climate-damaging. They also find it questionable how low-cost airlines, which are also found to have a bad reputation, can afford sustainable initiatives as this is perceived as more expensive. Moreover, several interviewees emphasize that Wizz Air has the power to communicate on its own website and that a company always wants to appear positive. Therefore, this also affects the credibility, as they question whether it is all true. Some interviewees also draw upon their background knowledge of greenwashing, supporting their doubts about Wizz Air. While a few

respondents find Wizz Air's communication about environmental sustainability to portray the airline more positively, the research shows how a company's CSR communication is not always received as desired. Moreover, the social context in which the text appears affects the interviewees' perceptions towards Wizz Air's communication, as they draw upon dominant discourses, such as sustainability, which also results in the majority of interviewees questioning Wizz Air's communication about its environmental communication and finding it untrustworthy.

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1. Introduction

The wish for a greener world and sustainable alternatives is getting more attention than ever in the 21st century. The world and society are becoming increasingly conscious of climate change, seeking to choose and create eco-friendly choices. Many companies and industries seek to brand themselves as sustainable as possible to meet their stakeholders' expectations and demands, enhance their corporate social responsibility, and create a sustainable and credible image (Park et al. 2022, 359-360). One industry affecting the environment increasingly with carbon dioxide emissions is the airline industry, which is also why airlines are forced to focus on sustainable initiatives to be favorable to stakeholders (Jalalian, Gholami, and Ramezanian 2019, 261). The low-cost airline, Wizz Air, presents itself as the greenest choice for flying together with "7 reasons why Wizz Air is the greenest choice" (aWizz Air, n. d.). Nevertheless, low-cost airlines, such as Wizz Air, present services where costs are down at all levels such as providing low airline fares combined with only the most necessary service to customers, which in many cases causes bad customer satisfaction within this industry (Baker 2013, 67). The paradox intensifies as a low-cost airline like Wizz Air presents itself as the greenest choice while being one of the cheapest low-cost airlines in Europe (Zhang et al. 2023, 1). Questions arise about how Wizz Air can present itself as a sustainable choice combined with being a low-cost airline (dWizz Air, n. d.), as sustainable products are often more expensive (Sana 2020, 1; Epstein, Buhovac, and Yuthas 2015, 39). Therefore, this study aims to investigate consumers' perceptions of sustainability communication by low-cost airlines, specifically with Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication as a case, knowing the terms of low-cost airlines. By conducting interviews, this study seeks to explore the consumers' perceptions and thoughts towards the paradox of the sustainability communication by Wizz Air, to understand the receivers' understanding of credible communication, getting knowledge into their thoughts towards questions like: What does it mean to consumers' perception if airlines brand themselves as sustainable knowing the airlines are low-cost? And is it credible for a low-cost airline like Wizz Air to be the greenest choice, as the company states, or is it unreliable?

This thesis will be divided into sections to provide a manageable overview. The thesis starts with the section of the Philosophy of Science to specify my view as a researcher and as an underlying building block for the chosen theory and method. Next, the Theoretical Fields are presented with the Literature Review and the chosen Theory given to provide an understanding of this field of research together with

relevant terms for the method and analysis. Terms and studies within corporate communication and CSR will be described, and furthermore, the theoretical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis by Fairclough will be presented. What is more, Considerations of Methodology is accounted for to understand the methodological approach within the analysis of the data. Within this section, a presentation of data, methods, and considerations are presented. As interviews will be conducted, it is necessary to account for the data selection and methodology in detail. Furthermore, the Analysis is given to investigate the consumers' perceptions of low-cost airlines, such as Wizz Air's sustainability communication based on Fairclough's three-dimensional model. The Analysis will provide an analysis and discussion of the findings, together with a sub-conclusion and discussion of the analysis. This section is followed by a Discussion to discuss considerations when doing interviews, such as the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee. At last, the thesis will end with a Conclusion, to sum up the findings answering the research question.

1.2 Research Question

How does Wizz Air's sustainability communication as a low-cost airline affect its receivers' perceptions of the airline's credibility?

1.3 Presentation of Case: Wizz Air

It is essential to present the case of this research, which is Wizz Air, to understand the consumers' perception of this specific airline. Within the creation of the thesis statement, Wizz Air was chosen as a case as this low-cost airline presents itself on its website with a set of sustainability initiatives together with its campaign "7 reasons why Wizz Air is the greenest choice" (aWizz Air, n. d.), which correspond interestingly with my research intentions of examining consumers' perception of low-cost airlines' sustainability communication. Below, a presentation of Wizz Air, as well as its sustainability communication, are accounted for, to gain insight into this specific case.

Wizz Air is a low-cost airline established in 2003 in Hungary (dWizz Air, n.d.). The company aims to keep its fares affordable to every traveler, as well as being environmentally responsible, stating how it commits to "[...] keeping in mind the social, economic and environmental impact of our operations." (eWizz Air, n.d.). In 2019, the airline passed over 200 million passengers, and in 2020 it won as the best

low-cost airline in Europe. The airline has more than 5550 employees, 1100 routes, 190 airports, and 151 aircrafts. On its 'About us' website, Wizz Air states: "[...] in 15 years we've defied the odds, becoming Europe's fastest growing and greenest airlines." (dWizz Air, n.d.). What is more, the company presents its five values: 'Inclusivity', 'Positivity', 'Dedication', 'Integrity', and 'Sustainability' (dWizz Air, n.d.). As it is the last value, 'Sustainability', which is the primary focus within this thesis, a presentation of Wizz Air's sustainability focus is accounted for.

Wizz Air's focus on sustainability is high on its agenda, presenting its initiative called 'Wizz Cares' on its Sustainability site with 'People', 'Environment', 'Economy', and 'Governance' as its main care focus groups (eWizz Air, n.d.). On its Sustainability site, the airline states how "[...] Sustainability is in our DNA." (eWizz Air, n.d.), together with elaborating sections of each care focus group. Within the section of 'Environment', Wizz Air explains how it wants to be the greenest within the airline industry, as environmental responsibility is essential to focus on as a company. To show responsibility, the company presents several environmental initiatives, such as a carbon offsetting program, and it shows transparent measures of its carbon emission (eWizz Air, n.d.). What is more, in early 2022, Wizz Air launched a campaign called 'Fly the Greenest': "Dear Customers, When you don't need to fly, please, don't. But when you do, fly the greenest." (aWizz Air, n.d.). The campaign presents seven reasons why Wizz Air is a traveler's greenest choice being:

1. "A passenger travelling with us will have a CO2 footprint of only 55.2 grams per kilometre on average, which is the lowest among our major competitors."
2. "We don't fly half-empty planes to avoid unnecessary pollution."
3. "We don't have business class seating, another example of needless emissions."
4. "We only fly direct routes. One take-off, one landing, no connecting flights, no ectra fuel-burn."
5. "We use the most modern and best-in-class engines and aircraft, crucial for low emissions."
6. "We have one of the youngest fleets in the world among airlines with 100+ aircraft."
7. "On top of all this, none of our routes have a direct train alternative under four hours."
   (aWizz Air, n.d.)

The seven reasons presented in the campaign are Wizz Air's presentation of why you should fly with this airline, as it presents itself as environmentally responsible (aWizz Air, n.d.). Wizz Air as a low-cost airline and its sustainability communication and campaign will be the case for this thesis, and from this presentation, it is evident how the airline's core missions are to offer the lowest fares while being the

greenest choice (aWizzAir, n.d. + eWizz Air, n.d.). The chosen case will be further accounted for in section 4.2.1.2.1.

1.4 Definition of a Low-Cost Airline

Through this thesis, low-cost airlines are mentioned several times. As Wizz Air is low-cost and will be the case of this research study, it is relevant to account for the definition of a low-cost airline, to understand the terms and conditions of the low-cost airline industry. In 1978, Southwest Airlines was the first to be low-cost, and it reached high profitability and success with this business model (Diaconu 2012, 342). The success of Southwest Airline's low-cost model affected other American airlines to become low-cost as well, and as Europe wanted to be able to compete with American airlines, they embraced the low-cost models as well around the start of 1990s (Diaconu 2012, 342; Dobruszkes 2013, 75). Over the years, low-cost airlines have grown in terms of flights and passengers and covered 32.5% of flights in Europe in 2022 (Eurocontrol 2022). Low-cost airlines are often described as: "…a no-frills, discount or budget carrier [...] offering generally low fares in exchange for eliminating many traditional passenger services." (Baker 2013, 67). While low-cost airlines' services are often non-existing or underperforming, it provides cheap fares, which are attractive to many passengers compared with traditional or high-cost airlines that provide more expensive fares but also a higher service level (Baker 2013, 68). The most known characteristics of a low-cost airline are low prices to stay competitive, one type of aircraft to save costs and minimize maintenance, recruitment of employees with a lower salary, and minimum cabin services, such as limited space between seats for passengers' legs and no free food (Akpur and Zengin 2019, 80). Through the characteristics of a low-cost airline, it is evident how this business model's priority is to keep its fares at the lowest by reducing elements, such as cabin service and salary for employees.

The following section will present the Philosophy of Science to account for my view as a researcher. This is evident to account for, as this will influence the following sections, for instance the chosen method for this thesis.

2. Philosophy of Science and Research Design

This section will present social constructivism as the philosophy of science to account for my viewpoints and scientific beliefs as a researcher throughout this thesis, as well as the Research Design to present an overview of how the different sections affect each other, as well as how the sections align with my view as a researcher.

2.1 The Perspectives of Social Constructivism

The social constructivist viewpoint presents how a given phenomenon is shaped and affected by humans rather than independently existing (Collin 2022, 454), which is why collaboration with other people helps create our understanding of our world (Holm 2018, 146). Researchers Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann touch upon the social constructivist viewpoint and argue that there is an "[...] agreement to the effect that the sociology of knowledge is concerned with the relationship between human thought and the social context within which it arises." (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 24). This implies how knowledge is shaped by the given social contexts the human is located in as well as the human's thoughts and, moreover, these affect each other. In short, knowledge is socially constructed through interaction with others (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 24). As reality is a social construction, this theory of science also indicates how phenomena can change through time as they are socially constructed (Collin 2022, 454). An example is gender, as social constructivists believe gender is a social construct rather than a physiological reality. Gender is socially determined, where gender and the difference of gender can be perceived differently from culture to culture; however, be perceived as 'natural' or 'normal' for that given culture (Collin 2022, 455-456). Social constructivists often have a critical viewpoint in analyses, as researchers see that a given phenomenon can be changed as it is a social construct (Collin 2022, 456-457). Finn Collin describes how social constructivism can be viewed on an individual level, where reality is a product of human subjective actions, or on a societal level, where social interactions and processes construct reality (Collin 2014, 421). An individual's knowledge and reality are affected by the different social interactions and groups one participates in. This means that while knowledge can be viewed as a social construct where it is shared in social interactions, it is also interpreted on an individual level with individual perceptions, which have been influenced through these different social interactions (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 105).

Social constructivists believe that language is an important phenomenon where people can communicate and interact with each other (Holm 2018, 145; Collin 2022, 499 + 501; Berger and Luckmann 1967, 88). Language is understood as metaphorical, suggesting that language is constructing reality and is used to create meaning in interactions. Holm describes it as humans understanding each other through common language games, socially constructed through communication (Holm 2018, 145). As an example, a radio might be perceived as a music device within some cultural societies, while it might be perceived as a magical box within another; it depends on one's socially constructed knowledge (Holm 2018, 145-146). Collin also states how the ability to speak is not a social construction; however, language can be perceived as a social construction since an individual is raised with some given language environment, which the individual will learn to use. This suggests that language is a social construction which is shaped by the individual's social and cultural context (Collin 2022, 499). Berger and Luckmann emphasize how language is "…essential for any understanding of the reality of everyday life." (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 88), as language is a common and shared phenomenon (Holm 2018, 146).

Within social constructivism, two elements are relevant to present: the epistemological point of view and the ontological point of view (Collin 2022, 458). These are presented below.

2.1.1 The Epistemological and Ontological Point of View

The epistemological point of view deals with knowledge and how knowledge and recognition are "[...] constructed by social processes." (translated from Danish) (Collin 2022, 458). Knowledge is constructed and gathered in different social practices, and Collin states how knowledge does not necessarily have to be true; it rather has to be recognized as true knowledge in the given society because it has been decided by the social processes (Collin 2022, 458). What is more, the "[...] epistemological position [...] is on the understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants…" (Bryman 2012, 380), which indicates that the understanding and view of the social world is created through the participant's perception of the word and that an individual's perception of the world is a result of social interactions (Bryman 2012, 380). Therefore, the epistemological stance as a researcher in this thesis focuses on the interviewees' thoughts, actions, and attitudes as a result of social processes.

The ontological point of view presents the meaning that certain aspects of reality, such as money (Holm 2018, 141), are socially constructed (Collin 2022, 458). As socially constructed knowledge from

different social interactions and situations develops to reality, knowledge is objectivated and individuals find themselves living and interacting within this reality (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 136). As an example, money is just a piece of metal in its physical form; nonetheless, society has agreed upon that it is money, which is assigned value, and now it is decided that money is valuable, which society behaves after (Holm 2018, 141).

The epistemological and ontological points of view can be brought together to understand social constructivism, as "Socially constructed »knowledge« or beliefs act back on the human and social reality that shaped that »knowledge« in the first place itself." (translated from Danish) (Collin 2022, 460). Continuing with the example of gender, if women in a given society get "known" to be weak, then that given society will treat women as weak, which, furthermore, will result in women perceiving themselves as weak in the end. Collin describes this as "…»knowledge« creates its own object." (Collin 2022, 460). This is also why social constructivism in the Humanities believes that knowledge cannot be 'closed' to new phenomena, but rather open, as new knowledge always will arise within research to describe new categories of technology, philosophy, science, etc. (Collin 2022, 468).

The social constructivist viewpoint as a researcher in this thesis will help gain insight into the individuals' communication, how they construct their reality, and understand their views, thoughts, and feelings upon the case of low-cost airlines, such as Wizz Air, in connection with sustainability communication. As knowledge and reality are constructed in society, it is not certain that Wizz Air and its receivers perceive the same reality. This is why the consumers might interpret Wizz Air's communication in other ways than the airline does and attend to. It is relevant to notice how my interpretation of the data will affect the analysis and findings as these are my interpretations as a researcher with a social constructivist viewpoint. This is also why this research is not made to conclude one specific reality for all low-cost airlines and consumers but rather provide an analysis of Wizz Air's sustainability communication together with certain interviewees' interpretations to understand these exact individuals in this specific case, and what knowledge they draw upon.

2.2 The Research Design

This research design will present the connections between the sections of this research to understand how the sections affect each other and are interrelated. As social constructivism is the philosophy of science,

it is relevant to present my considerations and account for the chosen theory and method and how these sections align with my view as a researcher. Furthermore, this is important to understand how the research question will be examined and answered through the choices of theory and empirical data.

The theory section will present a literature review to present this research area's existing and relevant literature. In the review, the concepts of image, reputation, sustainability, and CSR will be presented and discussed in relation to earlier studies. Moreover, the chosen theory of critical discourse analysis will be accounted for as Fairclough's CDA and three-dimensional model work as the theoretical framework within this thesis. The research method of the thesis will be qualitative semi-structured interviews and will consist of eight semi-structured interviews. To analyze the data, interviews are coded to provide an overview of and across the data. The elements of methods will be elaborated in section 4, as interviews consist of several elements, both before, during, and after. This is also why the interviews follow Kvale and Brinkmann's seven stages of an interview to secure an understandable and thorough method review. Moreover, the interviews are analyzed based on Fairclough's three-dimensional model. Through the critical discourse analysis of the interviews, the analysis will provide insights into the interviewees' perceptions of low-cost airlines and Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication in relation to credibility. These elements also align with my view as a social constructivist, as the aim is to get an insight into how the interviewees construct their perceptions, meanings, and attitudes toward Wizz Air. Afterward, the discussion will provide a critical discussion of the considerations which the researcher must consider when interviewing, such as the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee, and how this might affect the answers, analysis, and results. The conclusion will end the thesis, answering the research question based on the critical discourse analysis of the interviews. Through the different sections of this thesis, they all affect each other and are interrelated, which I have illustrated in my own illustration below (See Figure 1).

Figure 1: Own illustration of Research Design

3. Presentation of Theoretical Fields

3.1 Literature Review

This section will present relevant concepts and literature for this study: Image and reputation, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), sustainability, and credibility. Image and reputation are presented to help understand how Wizz Air's environmental initiatives and communication are part of creating its image and how image and reputation are perceived and created by stakeholders. CSR is accounted for to understand what responsibilities Wizz Air meets and communicates regarding its environmental responsibility, and how consumers receive this. Furthermore, sustainability is essential to present as it is incorporated in CSR and relevant to account for the consumers' perception of the concept and Wizz Air. At last, credibility is essential to account for to understand how and if consumers perceive Wizz Air's environmental CSR initiatives as credible or untrustworthy. Together, these concepts will provide a general understanding of the literature, which will be presented concerning previous studies of airlines' environmental communication and the consumers' perceptions of this.

3.1.1 Corporate Communication, Image, and Reputation

Corporate communication has been used within companies for many years, and since the early 1990s, the focus on stakeholders and their impact has increased (Cornelissen 2020, 11). It is essential for companies to create and maintain a favorable image and reputation, as they depend on stakeholders' perceptions (Cornelissen 2020, 3 + 8). A company must be favorable towards its stakeholders, and to do so, "[...] organizations need to go to great lengths to integrate all their communication, from brochures and advertising campaigns to websites, in tone, themes, visuals and logos." (Cornelissen 2020, 8). Corporate communication is an essential focus point within companies, and they need to combine it within every aspect, such as their tone in communication and choices of campaigns. Within corporate communication, three concepts are crucial: Identity, image, and reputation (Cornelissen 2020, 8). A corporate identity is a company's profile, how it portrays itself towards its stakeholders, and how it wants to be perceived. Simply put, a corporate identity is the company's representation of itself (Cornelissen 2020, 8). Nonetheless, as this thesis focuses on stakeholders' attitudes and perceptions of communication, image and reputation will be the focus concepts described, and the two concepts will be accounted for below.

This thesis will mention 'stakeholders' referring to 'consumers' several times, which is an external stakeholder group[1]. Companies need to be favorable to their stakeholders, as the companies depend on the stakeholders' perceptions (Cornelissen 2020, 2 + 66). Within this thesis, the consumers' evaluation and perception are the focus point. Through previous research, it has been found that consumers as stakeholders "[...] are key stakeholders who determine the success of a business" (Nam and Hwang 2019, 393); therefore, it is crucial that a company stays favorable to consumers (Nam and Hwang 2019, 393; Alniacik, Alniacik, and Genc 2011, 242).

3.1.1.1 Image

Image is one of the concepts within corporate communication, as a company's image is an essential part of its relation to stakeholders. Cornelissen describes a corporate image as "The way a company is

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[1]Coombs and Holladay draw on Edward Freemans' definition of a stakeholder: "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of organizational objectives." (Coombs and Holladay 2012, 5). Shortly, this means that a stakeholder is someone who is influenced by and involved within a company, someone who 'holds' a 'stake' (Coombs and Holladay 2012, 5).

perceived…" (Cornelissen 2020, 282) by stakeholders regarding signals and messages from the company. This means that a company's image is formed by the perception of stakeholders based on its actions, such as its communication, advertisements, and more (Cornelissen 2020, 282). Furthermore, it is relevant to understand how the stakeholder's perception also can be influenced by previous events from the company (also known as reputation) and the individual's attitudes. Furthermore, the individual stakeholder's attitude and perception of a company's image can change over time based on the company's communication. Therefore, it is essential to note that it is a dynamic construct that can change through time (Cornelissen 2020, 282 + 7). This also means that the corporate image is built upon stakeholders' perceptions of the communicative actions of the company, which can be different from individual to individual. Cornelissen describes the corporate image as the symbolic dimension in a company's communication, as it provides stakeholders to recognize and remember the specific company. By this, image is not what the company itself communicates but rather how the stakeholders perceive and understand the company's communication (Cornelissen 2020, 87).

Increased research has been made on consumer perception of corporate sustainability communication, also within the airline industry. It is relevant to present literature on consumers' opinions to examine and understand how they perceive airlines' sustainability communication in terms of image. Seen from a social constructivist viewpoint, consumers are considered active participants in constructing their perceptions and recognition of communication, such as sustainability communication. As many customers of the airline industry are aware of the climate consequences when flying, however, continue to use the transportation method, airlines can communicate and focus more on their green image to become and stay favorable within the industry (Mayer, Ryley, and Gillingwater 2012, 180; Wittmer and Wegelin 2012, 89; Hwang and Lyu 2019, 437).

Through a quantitative research study, 612 air travelers were presented to 12 different airlines (Mayer, Ryley, and Gillingwater 2012, 181). The respondents showed their attitude towards the different airlines in regard to their green image, and the results showed how respondents distinguish between the airlines' green images, which indicates "[...] it is possible for airlines to differentiate themselves from their competitors based on their environmental image." (Mayer, Ryley, and Gillingwater 2012, 184). A green image is understood here as "[...] perceptions of a brand in a consumer's mind that is linked to environmental commitments [...]" (Mayer, Ryley, and Gillingwater 2012, 180). Moreover, Mayer et al. found that low-cost airlines are not necessarily viewed with another environmental image than full-

service airlines if only their sustainability communication is clear, which again supports the fact that airlines can create their own green image towards their customers. The communicated green image by airlines is essential, as one of the elements in the survey showed that customers believe a positive attitude toward an airline's environmental communication helps show a climate-friendly and green image (Mayer, Ryley, and Gillingwater 2012, 184). Through this research, the importance of clear sustainability communication by airlines, low-cost or full-service, is recognized to affect their customers' views regarding credibility and sustainability. Newer research on the connection between airlines' customer satisfaction and environmental responsibility also shows how "… being environmentally responsible can benefit airlines…" (Baumeister et al. 2022, 94), which was found through the study of 1170 responses from Finnair customers (Baumeister et al. 2022, 92). They found that customer satisfaction is associated with the environmental responsibility the airline is taking, which, furthermore, can provide repurchases (Baumeister et al. 2022, 94).

3.1.1.2 Reputation

Reputation is another relevant concept as it lies close to image, and Watson and Kitchen (2008, in Carroll 2013) believe that the corporate image presents the corporate reputation. This means that the images stakeholders recognize within a specific company contribute to the reputation and perceptions of the given company (Carroll 2013, 56). Even though corporate image and corporate reputation are close, the concepts are not the same. While the corporate image is the perception of a company's communicative actions, for instance, advertisements (Cornelissen 2020, 282), a corporate reputation is more focused on stakeholders' collective perceptions of previous behaviors by the company. Moreover, reputation deals with the trust and feelings a stakeholder has towards a specific company (Carroll 2013, 15). In short, stakeholders hold the power in a company's reputation, as Schaiger states that "[...] reputation is more influenced by perceptions rather than real knowledge." (Carroll 2013, 56). This means the stakeholders' perceptions create and construct a company's reputation (Carroll 2013, 56). Furthermore, Hatch and Schultz support these descriptions of reputation:

> […] corporate reputation emerges from the aggregated perceptions (corporate images) stakeholders form and use to communicate with one another about the organization's ability to fulfill their expectations. (Hatch and Schultz 2008, 231).

The reputation is constructed by the perceptions of stakeholders, and therefore, reputation and image are social constructions (Carroll 2013, 186). As this thesis aims to understand consumers' perceptions of low-cost airlines, this perspective of corporate reputation will help to understand the consumers' attitudes towards this industry and the case of Wizz Air. This definition of reputation captures the aspects of how the stakeholders' perceptions are crucial in maintaining a positive reputation as a company. Moreover, the definition acknowledges how reputation can be viewed as a social construction, which is created and developed between stakeholders (Carroll 2013, 186).

As stated above, a company's reputation can affect customer loyalty and behavior (Carroll 2013, 15). Several research studies indicate that airlines' CSR initiatives, primarily environmental responsibility, positively affect customers' perception of an airline's reputation (Asatryan and Asamoah 2014, 14; Park 2019, 215; Hagmann, Semeijn, and Vallenga 2015, 44-45). Asatryan and Asamoah conducted a study in 2014 analyzing customer loyalty and behavior in the airline industry in connection with CSR. Through their statistical analysis of a quantitative survey of 500 respondents, the researchers found that "… CSR does have a significant impact on societies and the attitude of the consumers towards the firm and its brand." (Asatryan and Asamoah 2014, 14), and companies in the airline industry can gain value and trust within their customers, together with staying competitive within the market, by implementing CSR initiatives (Asatryan and Asamoah 2014, 5 + 14). Another study by Hagmann et al. also supports this, which presents the influence of airlines' green images toward customers (Hagmann, Semeijn, and Vallenga 2015, 40). Through a questionnaire with 394 respondents, the researchers found that customers have different perceptions of airlines considering their green image. This supports the importance of airlines communicating clearly about their environmental CSR initiatives to be favorable to their customers. The findings show that airlines must increase their focus on a green image to stay competitive and differentiate themselves (Hagmann, Semeijn, and Vallenga 2015, 44-45). The research articles indicate that airline CSR communication has a significant role in the consumers' perception of an airline's sustainability, green image, and credibility.

3.1.1.1.1 Credibility and Reputation

Credibility is essential to understand how companies' communication can create credibility and trustworthiness among its stakeholders. Source credibility is relevant to touch upon when researching

consumers' attitudes and perceptions and can also be connected to the abovementioned definition of corporate reputation. Source credibility "[...] imply a communicator's positive characteristics that affect the receiver's acceptance of a message." (Ohanian 1990, 41). This means that if the source, in this thesis, either low-cost airlines in general or Wizz Air specifically, are perceived with high credibility, then stakeholders, such as customers, are more likely to accept the communicated messages positively (Ohanian 1990, 41; Zhang et al. 2019, 716). On the other hand, a company with low credibility is more likely to meet doubtful stakeholders (Zhang et al. 2019, 717).

Furthermore, the stakeholders' preceding knowledge of a company and motivation to understand the communicated messages also affect the level of perceived credibility of a source (Zhang et al. 2019, 717). Through a qualitative study by Zhang et al. in 2019, the researchers examined the trustworthiness of a CSR initiative, voluntary carbon offsetting products, by airlines. Even though the airlines' intention of this implemented initiative was to create a perception of being environmentally responsible, they found that customers often find these untrustworthy (Zhang 2019, 715). The qualitative interviews of airline travelers show: "[...] the mistrust of voluntary carbon offsetting schemes was one of the major issues influencing respondents' initial attitudes…" (Zhang 2019, 725). Even though companies implement CSR initiatives it is not necessarily given that customers trust a company. Furthermore, mistrusting a company's environmental communication can lead to a bad reputation, while trusting a company's environmental communication can benefit its reputation (Zhang 2019, 725).

An often-discussed concept within the area of environmental sustainability is greenwashing. Greenwashing happens when companies either state how their products are climate-friendly without being so or when "[...] an organization has a public "green" front while it continues to harm the environment with its other actions and products." (Coombs and Holladay 2012, 74). Therefore, it is crucial that businesses are transparent and honest within their green communication to avoid misunderstandings which can lead to a bad reputation among stakeholders (Coombs and Holladay 2012, 74). As with the study by Zhang et al., customers can find environmental communication untrustworthy, even though the airlines' intentions are the opposite (Zhang 2019, 715). In another qualitative study by Baumeister and Onkila, 12 interviews of airline experts were made to investigate the eco-labeling of airlines. Eco-labeling in this context regarded how airlines informed consumers about environmental initiatives and climate-friendly choices (Baumeister and Onkila 2017, 1368-1370). The interviewees' answers showed how "[...] environmental communication might easily be perceived as greenwashing

[...] the environmental responsibility of airlines [...] should be simple and easy to understand for everyone." (Baumeister and Onkila 2017, 1372). These results showed it is essential that airlines communicate about environmental initiatives as clearly as possible to avoid misunderstandings and negative reputations, such as greenwashing (Baumeister and Onkila 2017, 1372).

From the abovementioned research, it is evident that the source communicating a given message can be viewed as credible or untrustworthy depending on the individual's perception of the source, motivation, and previous knowledge within the given field. This review of corporate communication, image, and reputation in relation to previous studies presents an overview and understanding of how essential consumers' perceptions of a company's communication are. The following section will present Corporate Social Responsibility, as this relates to how a company can obtain a favorable image and reputation among stakeholders through its communication and actions.

3.1.2. Corporate Social Responsibility

In relation to corporate image and reputation, a presentation of CSR and sustainability is relevant, as these concepts interact with each other within a company and its stakeholders' perceptions. CSR activities can be implemented in a company's communication to meet stakeholders' expectations of responsibility, which can enhance a company's image and reputation (Coombs and Holladay 2012, 8). It is relevant to account for CSR to understand how the consumers perceive these CSR activities and communication implemented by Wizz Air and how these perceptions affect Wizz Air's image and reputation. Through time, CSR has been defined in many ways, as it is rather complex to set one definition. In the 1950s, Howard Bowen described the concept as the first scholar (Matten and Moon 2008, 405; Coombs and Holladay 2012, 6; Carroll 2021, 1259) and focused on what responsibilities businessmen were expected to fulfill in society (Carroll 2021, 1259). Still, some of Bowen's angles of CSR are relevant and recognizable in newer CSR perspectives today, which deal with how a company can take business actions and decisions to benefit society (Bowen, Bowen, and Gond 2013, xvii). Since Bowens' perspectives on CSR in the 1950s, the phenomenon has gained an enormous amount of attention from companies and society (Carroll 2021, 1264), and several commissions and scholars have provided definitions. Carroll emphasizes how "The social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time." (Schwartz and Carroll 2003, 503), and this understanding of CSR is further given in Carroll's 'Pyramid

of Corporate Social Responsibility', which researchers and theorists have used through many years (Schwartz and Carroll 2003, 503). Coombs and Holladay present a more recent definition of CSR:

> CSR is the voluntary actions that a corporation implements as it pursues its mission and fulfills its perceived obligations to stakeholders, including employees, communities, the environment, and society as a whole. (Coombs and Holladay 2012, 8)

This definition of CSR focuses on the environment, profit, and people (also called the 'triple bottom line'), as well as how it is a voluntary act. This definition provides a clear framework of CSR, as it clearly covers the aspects of voluntary actions, stakeholders, the environment, and society, which all contribute to an overall understanding of CSR as a concept. What is more, Coombs and Holladay state how CSR activities must also align with the company's mission: "The mission is what the organization does to provide products and services that meet others' needs." (Coombs and Holladay 2012, 8). This means that an organization needs to consider its mission in its CSR communication to meet and acknowledge its stakeholders' needs (Coombs and Holladay 2012, 8). Moreover, the voluntary aspect of CSR has been shared among others, such as The European Commission (Coombs and Holladay 2012, 8; Carroll 1979, 498).

As Coombs and Holladay state how the implemented CSR activities must align with the company's mission (Coombs and Holladay 2012, 8), Schmeltz also finds how a company's CSR initiatives must connect with its core business and identity (also called 'strategic fit') to avoid challenges and misunderstandings from stakeholders (Schmeltz 2017, 48). For instance, these challenges imply the intentions behind the CSR communication and credibility concerns (Schmeltz 2017, 48; Morsing, Schultz, and Nielsen 2008, 97). In 2017, a study by Schmeltz investigated young consumers' perceptions of corporate CSR and its relation to the triple fit. Schmeltz found that young consumers "…are indeed interested in corporate CSR messaging." (Schmeltz 2017, 61); however, it also depends on their personal interests and relevance. 84,1% agreed that CSR is an essential part of a company to engage with (Schmeltz 2017, 58), and moreover, 54,5% agreed that a company implements CSR because of moral responsibility, and not of voluntary causes (Schmeltz 2017, 60). This supports the fact that CSR initiatives are essential for a company to meet its stakeholders' expectations and demands; however, they

should be communicated thoroughly and in compliance with the company's mission (Schmeltz 2017, 58 + 60-61).

3.1.2.1 Sustainable Development

When touching upon CSR, sustainability is one of the most discussed concepts and has been a focus within businesses since the 2000s (Carroll 2021, 1266-1667). One aspect of CSR "[...] includes broader corporate initiatives designed to reduce the negative impacts of operations (e.g. the consumption of resources [...] and increase the positive impacts (e.g., [...] sustainability…" (Coombs and Holladay 2012, 22), and supports the fact that CSR and sustainability are interrelated (Carroll 2021, 1266-1667; Coombs and Holladay 2012, 22). Sustainability is a complex concept to define, as scholars have had many different interpretations and understandings of the term (Purvis, Mao, and Robinson 2019, 681; Moore et al. 2017, 1). The Brundtland Commission was the first to define sustainability and sustainable development in 1987 and defined it as "[...] the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations." (Mondini 2019, 129). Already then, sustainability was described with a long-term perspective, where people and companies needed to consider the consequences for the future while meeting the needs and demands of the present society (Mondini 2019, 129; Huttmanová and Valentiny 2019, 290). Since then, 17 sustainable goals have been developed by the UN with the aim of leading to sustainability (Huttmanová and Valentiny 2019, 289). Moreover, sustainability has been recognized with three different pillars: social, economic, and environmental (Purvis, Mao, and Robinson 2019, 681; Boyer et al. 2016, 2). Within this thesis, it is relevant to state that the area of sustainability analyzed is environmental sustainability.

3.1.2.2 Environmental Responsibility and Sustainability in the Airline Industry

Since the 1980s, climate change has had an increased focus in society, and companies' environmental responsibility has become an increased expectation among customers (Choi and Ng 2011, 269; Cowper-Smith and de Grosbois 2011, 59). As customers' expectations towards more climate-friendly initiatives increase, companies seek to meet their customers with an increased focus on sustainability communication (Reilly and Larya 2018, 621). Within the airline industry, sustainability communication is increasing as society is concerned about climate change and the environment (Eid et al. 2022, 1). This is due to air transportation being one of the most polluting and climate-damaging travel modes

(Aminzadegan et al. 2022, 2516), and, thereby, "Air emission reduction plays a significant part in supporting sustainable development." (Fan et al. 2018, 673). Therefore, the airline industry has begun implementing environmental initiatives increasingly in recent years (Baumeister 2020, 2010), as customers continue to travel by air, even though being aware of the consequences (Brouwer, Brander, and Beikering 2008, 304).

3.1.3 The Connection between Price, Low-cost Airlines, and Sustainability

It is relevant to account for the connection and challenge between price and sustainability within companies and their products to understand why the paradox might exist between being low-cost and climate friendly. Environmentally friendly services and green products are often more expensive than non-green and regular (Sana 2020, 1; Epstein, Buhovac, and Yuthas 2015, 39). Environmentally friendly products regard "[...] environmental friendliness in the green manufacturing process, low emissions in use, recyclability, and so on." (Hong, Wang, and Yu 2018, 1). In short, products that contribute to a greener future (Hong, Wang, and Yu 2018, 1). Epstein et al. found how many companies struggle to balance the environmental, social, and financial aspects simultaneously, as the companies seek to focus on sustainable initiatives while also wanting to create financial profit. This can be challenging, as "[...] the use of environmentally preferred materials is a "win" for the environment, but that use also increases the costs ("lose" for the company)." (Epstein, Buhovac, and Yuthas 2015, 39). Companies often need to pay more for the environmentally friendly alternative, which is in most stakeholders' favor; however, it is a more costly choice (Epstein, Buhovac, and Yuthas 2015, 37-39). This also results in consumers perceiving green and environmentally friendly products as "[...] more expensive in comparison to the alternative products." (D'Souza, Taghian, and Lamb 2006, 167). Moreover, this consumer perception was also found in a study by Gleim et al., who, based on 330 respondents, found that the most significant barrier for customers to purchase green products was the perception of a higher price (Gleim et al. 2013, 47). This research area presents the challenge for companies regarding being environmentally responsible and, at the same time, being able to present low-cost products and services.

Furthermore, low-cost airlines have been described as more environmentally damaging than regular airlines, as the low-cost fares encourage travelers to fly cheap with them, as low-cost airlines "[...] are promoting behavioral changes that are accentuating the negative impact of aviation on the environment." (Graham and Shaw 2008, 1449) and "[...] low-cost air transport model is ultimately

unsustainable in environmental terms…" (Graham and Shaw 2008, 1449). In short, the low fares of low-cost airlines promote the opportunity for travelers to fly more often, which results in higher carbon dioxide emissions and climate damage (Graham and Shaw 2008, 1449).

To explore the paradox between price and sustainability within the airline industry, several research articles have found that price is the most important factor for travelers (McLachlan, James, and Hampson 2018, 753; Çabuk et al. 2019, 245). McLachlan et al. found that even though passengers are aware of the environmental issues when flying, they still pursue low-cost airlines for the lowest fares (McLachlan, James, and Hampson 2018, 753). However, the researchers still underline how airlines should continue to focus on environmental initiatives for many reasons, one being reputation (McLachlan, James, and Hampson 2018, 740 + 753).

The studies have presented relevant research within the areas of airlines' sustainability communication, consumers' perceptions of this, and the connection between price and green services. The research articles show that airlines, low-cost or full-service, focus on communicating a green image to stay competitive and be favorable within the aviation industry; to uphold a good image and reputation. Still, it is unclear if customers believe a company's CSR communication. However, even though much quantitative research has been done concerning sustainability issues when flying, not much qualitative research has been made focusing on consumers' perceptions of low-cost airlines' sustainability communication, which is why this is relevant to explore. Moreover, more research needs to examine consumers' perception of the paradox that lies within low-cost airlines' sustainability communication about being the greenest choice even though being a low-cost airline within one of the most polluting travel modes.

Within this thesis of investigating consumers' perceptions, it is interesting to research whether they think of greenwashing regarding Wizz Air's green communication. Through this study of low-cost airlines and Wizz Air, it is interesting to examine customers' perceptions of its image and reputation based on its environmental communication, initiatives, and the customers' prior knowledge of the low-cost industry. Furthermore, this leads to the aspect of investigating the perceived credibility, as this is a rather important aspect when researching Wizz Air's consumers' perspectives of its communication. This is also why this research study examines consumers' perception of Wizz Air regarding credibility and trustworthiness, as most previous research shows how low-cost and high-environmentally friendly services do not align.

The focus lies within how consumers perceive, recognize, and construct perceptions and an image of Wizz Air rather than focusing on Wizz Air's own communicative created image.

The following section will present the theoretical framework for this thesis, being critical discourse analysis. This will provide an insight into how the analysis will be analyzed and why this specific framework has been chosen.

3.2 Theoretical Framework - CDA

Within this section, Norman Fairclough's theory of critical discourse analysis, CDA, and three-dimensional framework will be presented. Discourse analysis is an approach to studying language and communication concerning social changes and context (Fairclough 1992, 8). As a closely related concept CDA will be used in this thesis to analyze the empirical data, as this approach is fitting to research the perceptions of consumers, analyzing how consumers use language to construct their attitudes towards low-cost airlines, Wizz Air, and its environmental initiatives, and which discourses they draw on. Therefore, a presentation of discourse, specifically CDA, will be presented, as well as Fairclough's three-dimensional framework, which will serve as a base for the analysis of the empirical data. Within this, it will be argued why Fairclough and the critical aspect are relevant specifically within this thesis. At last, a section is presented to account for how CDA will be used and relevant to use.

3.2.1 Discourse and Critical Discourse Analysis

As briefly stated, Fairclough's CDA and three-dimensional framework has been chosen for this thesis. In the 1990s, CDA was established by scientists such as Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak, and Teun van Dijk (Horsbøl and Raudaskoski 2016, 60). Different approaches to discourse analysis have elaborated since then, such as Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, discursive psychology, and critical discourse analysis, which all are similar in being committed to social constructivism (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 2 + 5). Fairclough's approach to CDA has been chosen as he presents his strong inputs, such as his approach being deeply text-based (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 65), and his approach can be defined as:

> … discourse is an important form of social practice which both reproduces and changes knowledge, identities and social relations including power relations, and at the same time is

also shaped by other social practices and structures. Thus discourse is in a dialectical relationship with other social dimensions. (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 65)

It is relevant to notice how Fairclough's approach concentrates on how discourses are able to shape and reshape knowledge, social relationships, and power, while also being shaped by social practices. To Fairclough, the text analysis is crucial; nonetheless, his approach also focuses on how the text analysis cannot be a discourse analysis on its own, it needs to be connected with social analysis; an interdisciplinary aspect (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 65). Fairclough's elaboration of CDA will be presented in more detail below.

Firstly, discourse is a relevant term to define. Discourse is presented in different ways by social scientists; nonetheless, the term can be agreed to deal with meaning-making (Fairclough, Mulderrig, and Wodak 2013, 2). Fairclough presents discourse as "[...] language viewed in a certain way, as a part of social process (part of social life) which is related to other parts." (Fairclough 2015, 7). Discourse can be understood as language, however, with the noticeable aspect that language is affected and related to other parts of social life (Fairclough 2015, 7). Moreover, Fairclough presents discourse as "[...] *a way of speaking which gives meaning to experiences from a particular perspective.*" (italics in original text) (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 67) and indicates how discourse and language are not seen as neutral but as shaped by social reality and social practices, and what shapes social reality (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 67; Fairclough 1992, 63; Horsbøl and Raudaskoski 2016, 63). That language is not seen as neutral implies how knowledge is defined by certain interests and goals by using it; thereby, it is shaped by the social practices and reality. In short, language is never neutral within CDA, as it is always seen with its underlying specific interests in using it. This also means that language can be used to promote specific interests, where CDA challenges this aspect and provides a critical stance (Fairclough 1992, 63; Horsbøl and Raudaskoski 2016, 63).

CDA is a method that critiques and interprets discourses (Fairclough 2015, 9), and has been used in social sciences for several years (Fairclough, Mulderrig, and Wodak 2013, 2). Fairclough defines CDA as:

CDA combines **critique** of discourse and **explanation** of how it figures within and contributes to the existing social reality, as a basis for **action** to change that existing reality in particular respects. (bold in original text) (Fairclough 2015, 6)

Within this definition, it is essential to not only critique discourses but also understand and explain how discourses exist in relation to social reality (Fairclough 2015, 6). The critique and explanation element in CDA is a crucial element, as it aims to explain relations between different discourses and society, such as social institutions and power relations (Fairclough 2015, 7). Furthermore, to obtain this critical and explanatory level in CDA, it is crucial to ask why-questions, such as: "[...] why is the discourse like this?" (Fairclough 2015, 7). For instance, which realities are the individual presented to, and what possibilities are there to change this reality? (Fairclough 2015, 6-7). This is also why the characteristics within CDA are the focus on society, language, and its relation, together with the critical viewpoint (Fairclough, Mulderrig, and Wodak 2013, 2).

Within CDA, some key concepts are crucial to present. Some of them are ideology, hegemony, and power. Power is central within the critical aspect of CDA, as the language here is seen as a provider of power relations, which means that language is not neutral or innocent but instead filled with power. This also indicates how the use of language, such as the use of certain concepts, words, and expressions, can be viewed as ideological when used to express certain realities and viewpoints "[...] which serves specific interests." (translated from Danish) (Horsbøl and Raudaskoski 2016, 63). This means that language always carries some power relation, always serves an interest, and the critical aspect comes to show (Horsbøl and Raudaskoski 2016, 63). It is necessary to consider that what one individual tells about in one way can also be told in another way, contributing to another perspective. In short, it is crucial to consider how it is always under the influence of some particular interest, which again underlines how CDA does not view language as neutral (Fairclough 1992, 62-63; Horsbøl and Raudaskoski 2016, 63).

Fairclough specifies how there is power in discourses but also behind discourses. It is essential to notice "[...] how people with power shape 'the order of discourse' as well as the social order in general." (Fairclough 2015, 3). Moreover, power can also be concerned with how power, for instance, in interviews, is carried out in a particular interaction (Fairclough 2015, 3). Ideology and hegemony will be explained further within the review of Fairclough's model within social practice.

To analyze how language is used, Fairclough presents a three-dimensional model of discourse analysis (Fairclough 1992, 4). The three-dimensional model is helpful as a framework for discourse analysis and "[...] is based on [...] the principle that texts can never be understood or analyzed in isolation." (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 70). Therefore, this model connects to CDA in how text is not

understood as text alone but always understood with reference to social contexts and other texts, which is why the three-dimensional model considers all aspects (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 70). The model consists of text, discursive practice, and social practice (Fairclough 1992, 4):

> My three-dimensional approach enables relationships between discursive and social change to be assessed, and detailed properties of texts to be related systematically to social properties of discursive events as instances of social practice. (Fairclough 1992, 8)

Fairclough created the three-dimensional framework, as he believed that a given discourse could be observed as a text, a discursive practice, and social practice (Fairclough 1992, 4), which combines the three elements. Therefore, the three dimensions are interrelated and intertwined, which is illustrated in Figure 2 (Fairclough 1992, 73). Fairclough's model as a CDA approach is relevant to analyze discourses and language in texts (Fairclough 1992, 72-73). Nonetheless, it is essential to state that Fairclough, since then, has abandoned the model. The model has been criticized for the distinctions between the three dimensions not being clear, for instance, the difference between the discursive dimension and social practice. Now, Fairclough does not distinguish between discourse and social practice anymore but connects text with social practice (Horsbøl and Raudaskoski 2016, 73). Still, the three-dimensional model will be maintained within this thesis, but with a "[...] independent work of interpretation." (translated from Danish) (Horsbøl and Raudaskoski 2016, 73). This model will serve as a base for the data analysis, as I believe it provides a systematic framework of the dimensions analyzed thoroughly. Furthermore, this will provide a clear and consistent way to analyze the interviewees' perceptions and will provide insight into how the different dimensions are interrelated. The three elements will be further elaborated below, where thoughts and considerations towards the relevancy of the different elements are accounted for.
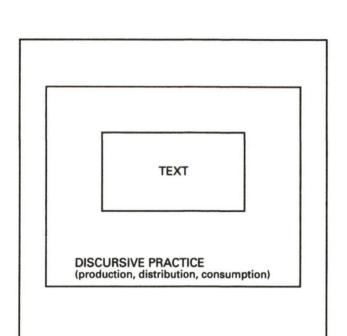
Figure 2: Fairclough's three-dimensional model (Fairclough 1992, 73)

3.2.1.1 Dimension of Text

The first element is 'Text': "By a detailed analysis of the linguistic characteristics of a text [...] it is possible to cast light on how discourses are activated textually[...]" (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 83), and furthermore, this will provide a specific interpretation (Fairclough 1992, 4; Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 83). This dimension is also presented as the 'Description' and 'Interpretation' in discourse analysis since these words spoken or written show an attitude toward a subject (Fairclough 2010, 133). When analyzing the textual element, Fairclough presents four different features that can be looked at: vocabulary, grammar, structure, and cohesion (Fairclough 1992, 75).

Within vocabulary, one can look at the use of individual words, metaphors, synonyms, formal or informal words, value-laden words, and more. When looking at grammar, the focus lies on word elements such as modal verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. The structure is about "What larger-scale structures does the text have?" (Fairclough 2015, 130), and last, cohesion deals with the link between sentences and how they are composed together, such as the use of repeated words (Fairclough 2015, 129-130 + 195; Fairclough 1992, 75-77; Simpson and Mayr 2010, 54).

Within this thesis, the dimension of the text is relevant to look at concerning the spoken words in the empirical data. A textual analysis of the words spoken by the consumers will help gain insight into the perceptions of the consumers; and the underlying discourses, which will provide an insight into the question: Why do the interviewees express themselves with the words they do? Therefore, the textual dimension will be a crucial focal point in the analysis. Nonetheless, as there are several different elements to focus on within the textual dimension, the elements relevant to this thesis will be presented here.

Modality is one of the elements that will be analyzed, as it is relevant to examine how the interviewees commit themselves to their attitudes and truth. Furthermore, analyzing modality "[...] involves the many ways in which attitudes can be expressed [...] signaling factuality, degrees of certainty or doubt, vagueness, possibility…" (Fairclough 2003, 165). Therefore, modality in the textual dimension can be used to analyze certain attitudes and how they are expressed by individuals (Fairclough 2003, 165). Within modality, different categories are found. 'Knowledge exchange', called 'epistemic modality', concerns statements or questions. Statements show the individuals' degree of commitment to the truth. 'Assert' is the degree of certainty, for instance, 'Airplanes are environmentally damaging'. 'Modalize' is expressing a lower degree of commitment, for instance, 'Airplanes may be environmentally damaging'. Lastly, 'Deny' is the degree of denial, for instance, 'Airplanes are not environmentally damaging' (Fairclough 2003, 167). Questions are also found within knowledge exchange, which is the individual's elicitation "[...] of other's commitment to truth." (Fairclough 2003, 167). Within questions, three degrees are found: 'Non-modalized positive' (such as 'Are airplanes environmentally damaging?'), 'modalized' (such as 'Could airplanes be environmentally damaging?'), and lastly, 'non-modalized negative' (such as 'Are airplanes not environmentally damaging?') (Fairclough 2003, 167). Another category within modality is 'activity exchange', also called 'deontic modality', and covers 'demand' (which is the individual's commitment to responsibility) and 'offer' (which is the individual's commitment to action) (Fairclough 2003, 168). These will not be elaborated further, as activity is not relevant in this context. Within this thesis, the knowledge exchange within modality will be the focus. It is relevant to notice while modal verbs such as will, can, and must marks modality, they can also be through statements without modal verbs, such as the individual committing to truth, for instance, 'Airplanes are seen as environmentally damaging' (Fairclough 2003, 168). Moreover, markers of modality can also be participial adjectives, adverbs, and "[...] mental process clauses such as 'I think'."

(Fairclough 2003, 170). Modality in the textual dimension is, therefore, a tool to analyze an individual's linguistic features to cover their commitments to truth.

By looking into the modality of the interviewees' answers, the analysis will cover their commitments to truth and the level of commitment, such as how committed they are to Wizz Air's sustainability communication. This is being analyzed based on their use of linguistic features such as modal verbs, adjectives, and mental process clauses. Moreover, metaphors will also be analyzed in this dimension to uncover how the interviewees express their attitudes through a few words that say a lot about their perceptions. Furthermore, adjectives are analyzed as these can help cover the interviewees' reception of Wizz Air's communication. These elements will help provide insight into how the interviewees use linguistic elements to express their attitudes.

3.2.1.2 Dimension of Discursive Practice

The second element is 'Discursive Practice', and "[...] specifies the nature of text production, distribution and consumption in society." (Simpson and Mayr 2010, 54). Moreover, the discursive dimension is also described as the 'Interpretation' and 'Explanation' within discourse analysis (Fairclough 2010, 133). This dimension deals with how language is shaped by social practices, and Fairclough highlights how the processes of the production, distribution, and consumption of texts are affected by social factors and "[...] varies between different types of discourse [...]" (Fairclough 1992, 78). The processes of production, distribution, and consumption of language happening in social interactions are different within different discourses. Shortly, as individuals with different social backgrounds, text, being written or spoken, will always be interpreted and perceived in different ways (Fairclough 1992, 78). The discursive practice focuses on how a text is produced, how it is distributed, and how it is consumed. This also means that the process in which we speak of a given subject can change our view of this subject, which is why Fairclough argues that language is not neutral as it often shows attitudes (Simpson and Mayr 2010, 54; Fairclough 1992, 63 + 78). Moreover, it is central to the fact that text can be interpreted differently, as it is affected by the context and the individual interpreting the text (Fairclough 1992, 28). Within this thesis, it is interesting to investigate which social contexts the interviewees are affected by and how these affect their attitudes.

Fairclough believes that the analysis should consist of a micro- and a macro-analysis within the discursive practice to understand the discourses and language fully. Within the micro-analysis, an

analysis of the participants' interpretation and production of text "[...] on the basis of their members' resources." (Fairclough 1992, 85) are made. The members' resources, MR, are described as an individual's common sense, which has been socially and ideologically shaped (Fairclough 2015, 57), also called an individual's background knowledge (Fairclough 2015, 155). As briefly mentioned above, this means that the individual has his/her own social background, beliefs, and knowledge, affecting text interpretation and production (Fairclough 2015, 57).

On the other hand, Fairclough argues that the micro-analysis must be integrated with the macro-analysis "[...] in order to know the nature of the members' resources (including orders of discourse) that is being drawn upon in order to produce and interpret text [...]" (Fairclough 1992, 85). The micro- and macro-analysis are intertwined within the dimension of the discursive practice (Fairclough 1992, 85-86). Moreover, Fairclough includes the order of discourse in the abovementioned quote, which refers to the term 'interdiscursivity'. This term will be explained later in the elaboration of the discursive level. In short, this dimension focuses on the connection between social practices and language. Moreover, the discursive practice points out the essential considerations one must make concerning the cultural and social context where text is interpreted and produced (Fairclough 1992, 85-86).

Within the discursive practice, 'coherence' and 'intertextuality' are crucial terms to define (Fairclough 1992, 75). Coherence deals with how "[...] a text only makes sense to someone who makes sense of it […] depends again upon the nature of the interpretative principles that are being drawn upon." (Fairclough 1992, 84). Within the element of coherence, the focus lies on the interpreter and how the interpreter understands and perceives the written or spoken text based on the interpreter's MR. This means that the understanding of a text depends on the interpreter's interpretation, which can differentiate between individuals. For instance, the senders' perceptions might be one, and the receivers' perceptions and interpretations might differ (Fairclough 1992, 84). As an example, in this thesis, the perception of sustainability and its importance might be different from the interviewee and me and by interpreting the interviewee's answers based on his/her MR, I interpret it with my MR. This is also why Fairclough describes coherence as "[...] a property of interpretations." (Fairclough 1992, 84). Intertextuality is another element within the discursive practice. Fairclough explains how a single text does not create the interpretation; however, the interpretation is made of the single text together with other texts the interpreter has in his/her MR. This means that the interpreter draws on other texts and legitimizes a specific understanding when drawing on what others have said (Fairclough 1992, 85). Moreover,

intertextuality can be divided into 'interdiscursivity' and 'manifest intertextuality'. Intertextuality indicates how an individual uses words that have been used other times by other people, as Fairclough states how "[...] all communicative events draw on earlier events." (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 73). This means that the individual's text, written or spoken, will always be influenced by the individual's prior events (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 73). Within intertextuality, manifest intertextuality is the "[...] presence of other texts in a text." (Fairclough 1992, 10). In short, in one specific text, other texts are present (Fairclough 1992, 10). Moreover, Interdiscursivity deals with the use of already settled discourses in a text (Fairclough 1992, 85 + 10): "Interdiscursivity occurs when different discourses and genres are articulated together in a communicative event." (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 73). Interdiscursivity is when different discourses merge and interact with each other to create meaning (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 73).

The discursive practice can help gain an insight into the connection of the discourses and the interviewees' MR regarding production, distribution, and consumption. What is more, in CDA, it is relevant to notice how the interpreter obtains a big part of the understanding of the text, which is why it is relevant to look at the sender-receiver relationship within the dimension of discourse; to look at which discourses are drawn on. It is relevant to examine whether the interviewees draw on previous experiences and perceptions of discourses, such as their understanding of sustainability and the low-cost industry, when expressing their attitudes in the interviews regarding Wizz Air. Lastly, the discursive dimension is also where the social context is connected, linking social practice with the text (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 69).

3.2.1.3 Dimension of Social Practice

The third dimension in Fairclough's model is the social practice, which "[...] deals with issues important for social analysis, such as the power relations and ideological struggles that discourses (re)produce, challenge or transform in some way." (Simpson and Mayr 2010, 54). This means that language is associated with power (Simpson and Mayr 2010, 54). Moreover, this dimension is described as 'Explanation', which aims to explain and analyze the connection between discursive and social processes. In short, the analysis of language in social practice and context aims to explain how language forms social structures by analyzing how language is used in society and social contexts. This means that the social context is defined through other social practices (Fairclough 2010, 132-133).

Within this dimension, ideology and hegemony are two essential concepts related to social practice (Fairclough 1992, 86). Fairclough presents his view on ideology:

> I shall understand ideologies to be significations/constructions of reality [...] which are built into various dimensions of the forms/meanings of discursive practices, and which contribute to the production, re-production or transformation of relations of domination. (Fairclough 1992, 87)

Fairclough portrays the idea that ideologies are created and built in distinct practices of communication in society, which are then produced or changed in relation to domination. Ideologies cannot be viewed as neutral but rather as shaped by domination and power relations. In short, ideologies deal with the production, reproduction, and transformation of power relations (Fairclough 1992, 87; Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 75). Furthermore, Fairclough touches upon the aspect of discursive practices, in how ideologies are produced through discursive dimensions, for instance, individuals' vocabulary, which then contribute to the interpretation of reality (Fairclough 1992, 87). Moreover, these ideologies can change in society through time (Fairclough 1992, 87), and it is essential to notice how ideology is connected with power relations, as ideologies are promoted through hegemonic discourses that this is how the world should be understood (Fairclough 2015, 107). This leads to the other relevant concept within the social practice, which is hegemony and can be described as " [...] the power over society as a whole of one of the fundamental economically-defined classes in alliance with other social forces, but it is never achieved more than partially and temporarily…" (Fairclough 1992, 92). Fairclough points out how hegemony can be understood as power and power relations in discourses and society, which are able to change through time and contribute to discursive change (Fairclough 1992, 92): "[...] discursive change takes place when discursive elements are articulated in new ways." (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 76). Moreover, hegemony can be considered as different social groups' power over one another (Fairclough 1992, 92).

Within this thesis, it is believed that the socially constructed discourses are situated in agreement with hegemony and its hegemonic level in society. Furthermore, the hegemonic level affects how different discourses are viewed and perceived by society and how different attitudes and perceptions are made based on power relations. This is also why the dimension of social practice in Fairclough's three-dimensional model is relevant to look at to examine what is going on outside of the interviews, to later

analyze the interviewees' perspectives and attitudes towards the different discourses in the discursive dimension. Within this thesis, it is interesting to consider the social context regarding the rising concern of sustainability, climate, and the planet's future, also relating to airplanes' CO2 emissions.

3.2.1.4 Using CDA in this Thesis

Within this thesis, CDA and the three-dimensional model by Fairclough are fitting, as the aim is to study the interviewees' perceptions through their language and attitudes towards the low-cost industry, Wizz Air, and environmental communication. My interest lies in analyzing how interviewees use language to construct their perceptions and why. As I aim to investigate their perceptions, I am convinced that the different elements of CDA can help me to analyze which expressions the interviewees use to consider and evaluate and how they express themselves emotionally, for instance, through adjectives. By using CDA, I will be able to identify if the interviewees draw on their own previous experiences and knowledge of the area of sustainability and the airline industry when expressing their attitudes towards Wizz Air's credibility. The critical aspect is essential when using CDA to analyze the interviewees' language. Here, the critical aspect will be used to investigate how the interviewees construct their perceptions, and with the aspect that Wizz Air also wishes to create a specific perception. CDA will be used to investigate Wizz Air's environmental communication by dividing the parts, which look appealing from the outside, and explore whether the interviewees believe in it, what discourses they draw upon, and what they consider when answering the questions. As stated at the beginning of this CDA section, Fairclough also argues how language cannot be seen as neutral, which is a rather interesting aspect within this thesis to consider how the interviewees interpret Wizz Air's communication. In short, CDA will help me to understand how the interviewees construe and understand the environmental communication by Wizz Air with a critical stance. Therefore, it is crucial to notice how I am not only interested in how the interviewees construct their perceptions but that they do it as a consumer and that I look at how they also construct their perception of Wizz Air. Moreover, it is essential to notice power relations and that Wizz Air also has a particular interest, which they try to legitimize through the way they communicate about themselves and their sustainability initiatives. Through analyzing the social, discursive, and textual dimensions, I will be able to gain insight into why the interviewees possess the perceptions they do based on the social context and their members' resources, which, furthermore, will be reflected in the textual analysis, when analyzing which linguistic elements the interviewees use, and why. This is also why the framework will

be used in the order of social practice at first, to establish the social context outside of the interviews, then the discursive practice to analyze which discourses the interviewees draw upon and why, and lastly, the textual analysis. The following section will present the methodology to understand how the empirical data has been collected, and the considerations made within these to obtain relevant and useful data for the analysis.

4. Considerations of Methodology

This following section presents methodology to create an understanding and outline of the approach used in this research to collect the data. The section provides an account of qualitative research and an in-depth description of semi-structured interviews as the data collection method. Moreover, CDA analysis and coding as data analysis are presented to outline how the data from the interviews was analyzed to achieve relevant results. These elements of the method will provide a collected presentation and understanding of how this research has been conducted and account for the validity and reliability of this study. This method section is divided into sections presenting qualitative research, data collection method, and the different stages within the semi-structured interview. Considerations of the chosen research method in relation to the philosophy of science will also be given. All these elements in the methodology section contribute to an understanding and credibility of the findings and results in this thesis, as it presents a detailed description of how the research was managed.

4.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is applied, as this is a relevant research method that aligns with my viewpoints as a researcher. This research strategy is concerned with words and the detailed interpretation of these instead of numbers and quantification (Bryman 2012, 36). Qualitative research "[...] has rejected the practices [...] of the natural scientific model [...] in preference for an emphasis in the ways in which individuals interpret their social world…" (Bryman 2012, 32). As this research is concerned with interpreting individuals and their perceptions, qualitative research is fitting. Moreover, social reality can change through time and through individuals' foundations of new interpretations and social interactions (Bryman 2012, 36 + 380). This means that qualitative research seeks to "[...] understand, describe and sometimes explain social phenomena." (Kvale 2007, x) and "[...] unpick how people construct the world around

them." (Kvale 2007, x). Within this specific thesis, qualitative research is relevant as the study aims to understand individuals' interpretations and perspectives of Wizz Air's sustainability communication, as a low-cost airline, through language.

4.2 Data Collection Method

One of the most used data collection methods within qualitative research is interviews, as this method is relevant for achieving in-depth knowledge of the interviewees' perceptions and thoughts through a flexible approach (Bryman 2012, 469). Moreover, Kvale underlines how the interview is "[...] an inter-view where knowledge is constructed in the inter-action between the interviewer and the interviewee." (Kvale 2007, 1). For this research, qualitative interviews were chosen as the data collection method as the aim is to investigate and understand how consumers perceive low-cost airlines' sustainability communication regarding credibility. This is also why the qualitative interview is an appropriate method, rather than a quantitative research method, such as questionnaires, as my research intentions do not lie within collecting numbers as data (Bryman 2012, 160), but lie within the collection and understanding of words spoken through interaction instead (Bryman 2012, 380).

4.2.1 The Semi-Structured Interview

The qualitative interview can be conducted in various forms, such as unstructured and semi-structured. The form of the interview decides how flexible and free the answers from the interviewees are (Bryman 2012, 471). Semi-structured interviews were used in this research, as this is a flexible approach to collecting the interviewees' perceptions and attitudes through questions from a prepared interview guide. Still, the interviewee can freely express themselves, which also results in follow-up questions from the interviewer (Bryman 2012, 471). Shortly put, the semi-structured interview "[...] attempts to understand themes of the lived daily world from the subjects' own perspectives." (Kvale 2007, 10). The reason for choosing semi-structured rather than unstructured interviews lie within the interest in following up with questions to deeply understand the interviewees' perceptions and beliefs about specific topics of this research.

Within this thesis, the semi-structured interview method follows Svend Brinkmann and Steinar Kvale's seven stages of interviews, as these stages present an understandable overview of my qualitative

semi-structured interview process as a researcher (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 97). Following the seven stages will also provide less chaos and more structure to the interview method. Moreover, the seven stages will provide an in-depth review of this method approach, contributing to the trustworthiness of the data and results. The seven stages are: 'Thematizing', 'Designing', 'Interviewing', 'Transcribing', 'Analyzing', 'Verifying', and 'Reporting' (Kvale 2007, 36-37). In the following, the seven stages are presented concerning my approach.

4.2.1.1 Thematizing

The first stage of the interview is 'Thematizing', which concerns the 'why', 'what', and 'how' within the research study (Kvale 2007, 37). Moreover, this stage concerns aspects that must be considered before conducting the interviews (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 105). Within the 'why' lies the presentation of the purpose and aim of the study. It is essential to present what the subject of this research is (Kvale 2007, 38), which was done in the 'Introduction' of the topic field and the interest within sustainability, low-cost airlines' communication, and consumers' perceptions. Next, the 'what' was presented within the section of 'Theoretical Fields' to account for concepts and theories within the topic to create an overall understanding of the research area (Kvale 2007, 39). Furthermore, it is necessary to account for 'how' the research will be conducted (Kvale 2007, 41), which is done within this method section. Kvale and Brinkmann state that there are no standard rules when doing interviews; however, it is necessary to describe how the individual interview research has been done concerning specific choices within the different stages of the interview research (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 99). This is also why the following stages will present the approaches for this method and interview research.

4.2.1.2 Designing

'Designing' is the second stage and deals with how the interview is designed in terms of interviewee selection (Kvale 2007, 41); how the procedures are planned. This is also where the 'how' is central (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 109).

4.2.1.2.1 Considerations of the chosen case

As presented in the introduction, Wizz Air is the chosen case of this thesis, as the low-cost airline provides a significant focus on environmental communication and initiatives, such as their campaign 'Fly

the Greenest': "Dear Customers, When you don't need to fly, please, don't. But when you do, fly the greenest." (aWizz Air, n.d.). Still, based on the literature review, low prices and high climate-friendly products do not correspond well, as green products and services are often perceived as more expensive (Sana 2020, 1; Epstein, Buhovac, and Yuthas 2015, 39). Therefore, Wizz Air was found to be an interesting and relevant case for this thesis to research how consumers then perceive this low-cost airline's communication about sustainability initiatives while being low-cost. As stated in the introduction, low-cost airlines have grown in the airline industry and covered 32.5% of flights in 2022 around Europe (Eurocontrol 2022), indicating that there are many different low-cost airlines to choose from. In 2017, Ryanair, easyJet, Vueling, Pegasus Airlines, and Wizz Air were the low-cost airlines with the most passengers in Europe (Bakır, Akan, and Durmaz 2019, 114). Still, Wizz Air was found to be the most appealing low-cost airline based on their campaign's high focus on sustainability (aWizz Air, n.d.). Moreover, I found that much research was conducted on Ryanair, which is also why I wanted to research a more untouched airline, an airline that has not received the same attention. This was also done as I was concerned that choosing Ryanair would affect the interviewees' perceptions of its communication negatively, as Ryanair has received significant criticism over the years compared to Wizz Air (Hoffmann 2022, 11). When reviewing the elaborated interview guide down below, a presentation of the chosen websites from Wizz Air will be presented.

4.2.1.2.2 Considerations of Interviewees

When choosing the interviewees for this thesis, purposive sampling was selected as some criteria had to be fulfilled (Lewis-Beck, Bryman, and Liao 2004). Purposive sampling "[...] is the deliberate seeking out of participants with particular characteristics, according to the needs of the developing analysis [...]" (Lewis-Beck, Bryman, and Liao 2004). Purposive sampling was chosen as I believe this method can provide the most informative data and perspectives. Nevertheless, the chosen criteria for the interviewees might open to some bias, which is also why the criteria are presented and considered thoroughly below. The interviewees were chosen based on several considerations and criteria. The main criteria for the interviewees were that they were using airplanes as a transport method to ensure that they could provide insights and information about their experiences and attitudes towards this subject area.

One other consideration was the age group. In a recent survey from 2019, Dicther et al. examined the attitudes toward carbon-neutral flying in relation to age (see Figure 3). The survey showed how the

age group 25-34 years old obtains the highest percentage within three of the statements: 'Really worried about climate change', 'Aviation should definitely become carbon neutral', and 'Willing to pay >$20 for carbon-neutral flight' (Dichter et al. 2020). Based on the survey, the interviewees chosen for this study lie within the age group of 25-34. This was done as this age group is the most worried about climate change as well as interested in carbon-neutral flights (Dichter et al. 2020).

Attitudes toward carbon-neutral flying, by age group, % of respondents

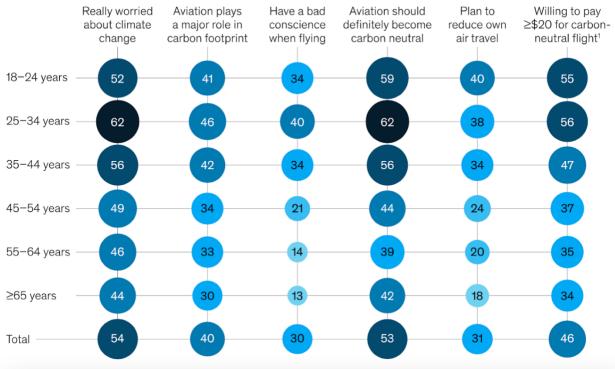|	Really worried about climate change	Aviation plays a major role in carbon footprint	Have a bad conscience when flying	Aviation should definitely become carbon neutral	Plan to reduce own air travel	Willing to pay ≥$20 for carbon-neutral flight[1]
18−24 years	52	41	34	59	40	55
25−34 years	62	46	40	62	38	56
35−44 years	56	42	34	56	34	47
45−54 years	49	34	21	44	24	37
55−64 years	46	33	14	39	20	35
≥65 years	44	30	13	42	18	34
Total	54	40	30	53	31	46

Figure 3: (Dichter et al. 2020) Clean Sky Service. Attitudes toward carbon-neutral flying, by age group.

Another consideration for choosing the interviewees was their location. As Wizz Air is a European company (dWizzAir), it was relevant to interview European consumers as these are Wizz Air's primary customers. What is more, it was important for me as a researcher that the interviewees were located in Jylland, as I wanted to conduct the interviews face-to-face. I believe this provides the best and most natural base for an interview based on my previous projects using interviews as data.

A third consideration for choosing the interviewees was how many times a year they used an airplane as a travel mode, as I believe that the respondents have to be using airplanes as transport at least once a year to provide answers and perceptions in the interview, as the interview is based on the understanding of flying as transport. Moreover, I had to consider whether the interviewees had flown with Wizz Air

before or just with a low-cost airline. I decided that the interviewees had to have flown with low-cost airlines before to have had experiences with this; however, it was not a demand that the low-cost airline was Wizz Air as the interviewees were presented with specific web pages within the interview.

The number of interviewees also had to be considered. Kvale and Brinkmann argue that the number of interviews can be challenging to settle and that it "[...] tends to be either too small or too large." (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 113). In this thesis, it was important for me to have enough data to answer my research question from the interviewees' perspectives. Nonetheless, too many respondents would provide me with too much data ending with a more superficial analysis instead of an in-depth one. Moreover, Mark Saunders argues that there are no rules to how many interviewees to choose (Saunders 2012). Still, established in other literature, Saunders has created some guidance to the number of interviewee participants. Here, it is suggested that homogeneous groups (participants with similar characteristics) should be around 4-12 participants, while heterogeneous groups (participants with distinct characteristics) should be around 12-30 participants (Saunders 2012). Within this thesis, heterogeneous participants have been chosen based on the presented criteria. Therefore, the chosen number of interviewees for the empirical data in this thesis is eight, as this is enough to provide different insights into consumers' attitudes, but not too many, which might cause a lack of overview.

Kære jer! Jeg er igang med mit speciale på AAU, som omhandler lavpris-flyselskaber, bæredygtighed og kommunikation. Jeg søger i den forbindelse interview-personer til semi-strukturerede interviews á ca. 40 minutters varighed. Er du derfor mellem 25 og 34 år, bruger fly som transportmiddel mindst én gang om året, samt har benyttet dig af lavprisflyselskaber, vil du kunne være en hjælpende hånd til min specialeskrivning. Interviews vil blive afholdt fysisk omkring Aalborg. Kontakt mig gerne her over LinkedIn, hvis du kunne have interesse i at deltage. Med venlig hilsen, Charlotte
10. semester, International Virksomhedskommunikation Engelsk

Synes godt om   Kommenter

Figure 4: LinkedIn post searching for participants.

The interviewees fitting within the criteria were found through my LinkedIn. I posted a LinkedIn post with information about the thesis subject, the criteria, and that they could contact me if interested (see Figure 4). As I am familiar with all my connections on LinkedIn, the interviewees were all acquaintances who knew me to varying degrees. When interviewing acquaintances, one must consider the opportunities and consequences of this as it can affect the results. The researcher must be attentive to pre-existing knowledge or contextual information when interviewing acquaintances (Roiha and Iikkanen 2022, 8). Nonetheless, interviewing acquaintances gives the opportunity to gain a more natural and relaxed conversation with more emotional answers (Roiha and Iikkanen 2022, 3). This is also why I found LinkedIn as a fitting platform to gather interviewees, rather than Facebook, as Facebook is a place for

my closest friends. In this case, LinkedIn could provide me with interviewees that fit within the criteria, still without being friends. Furthermore, a short presentation of the eight interviewees will be accounted for down below:

- Anne-Sofie:
    - 26 years old
    - Fly 2-3 times a year
    - Has flown with low-cost airlines such as Ryanair and Wizz Air
- Jesper:
    - 27 years old
    - Fly 2 times a year
    - Has flown with low-cost airlines such as Wizz Air and Thomas Cook
- Stine:
    - 26 years old
    - Fly 2-3 times a year
    - Has flown with low-cost airlines such as Ryanair
- Amalie:
    - 25 years old
    - Fly 3-4 times a year
    - Has flown with low-cost airlines such as Ryanair
- Sofie:
    - 25 years old
    - Fly 3-5 times a year
    - Has flown with low-cost airlines such as Ryanair and Volotea
- Simon:
    - 28 years old
    - Fly 4-6 times a year
    - Has flown with low-cost airlines such as Vueling and Ryanair
- Lasse:
    - 25 years old
    - Fly 3-5 times a year

- o   Has flown with low-cost airlines such as Wizz Air and Ryanair
- Tanya:
  - o   26 years old
  - o   Fly 2 times a year
  - o   Has flown with low-cost airlines such as Ryanair

The interviewees were asked if they wanted to stay completely anonymous, for example, being called Interviewee 1; nonetheless, they were all comfortable with being named by their first name in this thesis. Therefore, the interviewees in the analysis will be referred to with their first names, such as 'Lasse' and 'Jesper'.

4.2.1.3 Interviewing

The third stage is 'Interviewing', which covers how the interview is conducted and how questions in the interview guide are created. The interviewing stage deals with "[...] the actual process of producing knowledge through an interview." (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 123). As the interviews are semi-structured, an interview guide with questions was prepared before conducting the interviews. As they are semi-structured, topics related to the theoretical framework and concepts were asked without being too direct to gain knowledge of the interviewees' individual beliefs. Furthermore, different follow-up questions were asked in the individual interviews to follow up on the interviewees' perspectives rather than following a strictly structured interview (Kvale 2007, 51). This was done to obtain a flexible approach as the aim was to get the interviewees' perspectives within specific topics, but still with the possibility of new knowledge and statements. An element to consider when creating the interview guide was openness regarding my research question and area. As the thesis aims to reveal the interviewees' perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs of their constructions of low-cost airlines and Wizz Air, the openness was necessary, as well as not telling the purpose of the interview, but instead telling the subject. This was done to avoid influencing them too much (Kvale 2007, 57). The questions and themes of the guide were created based on theoretical concepts, such as image and CSR communication, with topics revolving around the research question. This was done to ensure that the interviewees answered with relevant answers to my research topic and question. This interview guide was made to obtain structure and was divided into different topics (see Appendix A) (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 130), and was elaborated in a specific order, starting with general questions regarding flying as a transport method to

obtain the interviewees' general understanding and attitudes towards this, ending with Wizz Air as a specific case for this thesis. The questions were elaborated in everyday non-academic language to ensure each of the interviewees' understanding (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 131).

Before asking the questions in my elaborated interview guide, I started with a briefing to inform the respondent about the interview subject and ask the interviewees permission to record the interview for later transcription (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 128). In the introductory briefing, it was important not to reveal too much information about the thesis' purpose, as this might influence the interviewees. Moreover, the interviews ended with asking the interviewees if they wanted to tell me anything I did not ask about, as well as ensuring that the individual interviewee had a good and comfortable interview experience (Kvale 2007, 55 + Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 129). The elaborated interview guide with all questions can be seen in Appendix A. The follow-up questions differ from interview to interview and can be read in the individual transcripts (Appendixes B-I). The follow-up questions are different depending on the individual interviewee, as it depends on the individual's answer (Kvale 2007, 64); nonetheless, the follow-up questions within the interviews often dealt with elaborations of their answers.

Another element in the interview guide was the presentation of certain website pages from Wizz Air's corporate website to obtain the interviewees' perceptions and impressions of this. The presented website pages were:

- Wizz Air's official sustainability website-page (eWizz Air, n.d.)
- Wizz Air's 'Fly The Greenest' website-page (aWizzAir, n.d.)
- Wizz Air's 'Choose Today' website-page (cWizzAir, n.d.)

These exact pages were chosen because they provide a general presentation of Wizz Air's sustainability communication on its corporate website with different information about its environmental initiatives. These pages are fitting to present for the interviewees for them to construct their own perceptions of this communication. Wizz Air's 'Fly The Greenest' website page presents the company's latest campaign with seven reasons as to why Wizz Air is the greenest choice (aWizzAir, n.d.). Wizz Air's official sustainability website-page presents the company's overall environmental commitment, for instance, by showing graphs of CO_2 emissions (eWizz Air, n.d.). Finally, Wizz Air's 'Choose Today' website page presents the company's initiatives to make passengers calculate their CO_2 emissions on a flight, and furthermore, giving them the possibility to donate (cWizzAir, n.d.). Moreover, I chose to focus on one specific quote in one of the interview questions used by Wizz Air: "When you don't need to fly, please,

don't. But when you do, fly the greenest." (aWizzAir, n.d.), which occurs in their sustainability campaign. This quote was specifically chosen as the company provides it as an introductory slogan at the top of their campaign site with colored text, which indicates that they wish their audience to read this (aWizzAir, n.d.). Therefore, I found it relevant and interesting to obtain the interviewees' perception of this quote.

A crucial aspect of doing interviews as a social constructivist is that the individual interviews can be perceived as a construction between me, as a researcher, and the interviewee, as a respondent. It is crucial to notice that this can cause bias and, moreover, other answers from the interviewees based on the interview itself. It is essential to note Kvale's statement: "All interviews appear as discourses; interviewers working within a discursive framework will, however, be particularly attentive to specific aspects of the interaction of the interview discourse…" (Kvale 2007, 74). This means that the actual interview conversation is seen as a discourse between me and the interviewee. Moreover, Kvale and Brinkmann argue that the interviewee can be seen as a co-researcher (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 158). This aspect of interviews is essential to consider when doing the critical discourse analysis and analyzing their answers and perceptions.

The interviews were conducted in Danish, as all the interviewees' native language is Danish, and I believe they can answer and express themselves best and most comfortably through a language where they feel sure and relaxed. As the aim is to get insight into the interviewees' attitudes and perceptions, I found it crucial that they were able to express themselves without having to translate their answers into English, which might cause omissions of perceptions. Throughout this thesis, all the quotes are translated into English. Every interview took about 35 minutes to perform, varying from 5-10 minutes depending on the individual interviewees' answers and follow-up questions.

4.2.1.3.1 Interview Quality

Within interviewing, the interview quality is a crucial aspect to consider when doing interviews, as the quality of the individual interviews affects the quality of my analysis (Kvale 2007, 80). Therefore, some aspects had to be considered before and during the interviews. Firstly, the questions in the interview guide were kept short to be clear and specific towards the interviewee, yet long enough to ask the question properly and understandably. Moreover, the shorter questions were aimed at meeting longer answers from the interviewees (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 164). This was followed by follow-up questions to

ensure the understanding of their answers (Kvale 2007, 80), which also contributed to interpreting the interview during the actual interview (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 164). As mentioned above, the interviewer has a crucial part in the interview, which is why it is also essential that I, as an interviewer, act gentle, remembering, interpreting, and open to ensure the quality and outcome of the interviews. Moreover, my knowledge of the thesis and subject helped me steer the interview in the right direction with my interview guide and follow-up questions (Kvale 2007, 81-82).

4.2.1.4 Transcribing

The fourth stage of an interview is 'Transcribing', which deals with transcribing the oral speech from the face-to-face interview into text. As the interview is seen as a social interaction between two individuals, the interviewer and the interviewee, the transcription from oral speech to written text can also be seen as "[...] a series of judgements and decisions." (Kvale 2007, 93) as it shifts from oral discourse to written discourse. The written transcripts can be described as "[...] impoverished, decontextualized renderings of live interview conversation." (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 178). Therefore, it is essential to cover quality considerations and choices made within transcriptions of interviews (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 177). As a start, the interviews for this study were recorded on a voice recorder to ensure the data were saved for transcription and the ability to listen to it endlessly. The interviewees had all agreed to me recording their answers before the recording. I ensured the surroundings were quiet to avoid disturbing elements and to ensure clear audibility for the later transcription. Each interview took about 2,5-3,5 hours to transcribe depending on the interview length and interviewees' answers. The interviews were transcribed verbatim with all the words, such as 'um' and 'hmm', to catch all interviewees' expressions toward the subjects (Kvale 2007, 95). In the transcriptions, a pause is transcribed as [pause]. All the transcripts can be found in Appendixes B-I.

When transcribing interviews, the reliability and validity regarding transcriptions are relevant to consider. The reliability of the transcriptions was made stronger as I listened to the interview recordings several times (Kvale 2007, 98). After having transcribed one whole interview, I listened to the recording once again while reading the written transcript, to ensure all words were captured correctly. As I am the only one writing this thesis, I was not able to ask any co-writer to listen and compare; therefore, I found this method of listening again to be the best method for the reliability of the transcriptions. The validity of transcriptions can be more difficult to ensure in transcriptions as "[...] they are interpretative

constructions that are useful tools for given purposes." (Kvale 2007, 98). This means that when writing oral language into written text, they become interpreted constructions. There is no right approach for a valid transcription; however, the researcher must decide which kind of transcription is the most useful (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 186). Within this thesis, the validity of transcriptions has been considered in how the words by the interviewees have been written down exactly as said.

4.2.1.5 Analyzing

Within the 'Analyzing' stage, it is essential to analyze the interviews rather than narrate them. Kvale and Brinkmann state how: "To analyze means to separate something into parts or elements." (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 193). As the interviews will be analyzed with the three-dimensional model from Fairclough and CDA, as stated in the Theoretical Field, the data from the interviews were coded in Nvivo, as this program allows the researcher to divide transcripts into codes in a manageable and accessible way, as well as allowing for an overview across different interview-transcripts. Coding the transcripts is a method to gain an overview of the large amount of data from the transcripts in a controllable manner (Bryman 2012, 13), as the eight transcripts cover more than 75 pages of text. The transcripts were read through several times, first without coding and then again with considerations of coding (Bryman 2012, 576). The transcripts were both coded with inductive and deductive codes (Bryman 2012, 711-712). The deductive codes were made prior to the coding of the transcripts established on theoretical concepts, such as 'sustainability' and 'reputation' (Bryman 2012, 711), while the inductive codes were made during the repetitional reading of the transcripts, where new codes, such as 'habits' occurred from the data (Bryman 2012, 712). I found that the combination of both deductive and inductive codes allowed for both a flexible and open approach to make sure that I looked for pre-established codes relating to the concepts covered in the theoretical section, but still the openness for new codes and concepts based on the individual interviewees' answers. All codes can be found in Appendix J. The coding of the interviews also allowed for a more manageable overview across the different interviews to notice any similar beliefs and attitudes towards different questions (Bryman 2012, 13). With the interviews coded in Nvivo, the data was more accessible for the CDA, which is found in the 'Analysis' within this thesis. As CDA was thoroughly reviewed in the Theoretical Framework in 3.2, the three-dimensional model by Fairclough has been presented, and this will be the framework for the analysis of the eight interviews.

4.2.1.6 Verifying

'Verifying' is the sixth stage and is essential to consider concerning reliability, validity, and generalizing within interviews and interview knowledge. Kvale refers to objectivity within interviews as "[...] freedom from bias[...]" (Kvale 2007, 120) and deals with how knowledge can be seen as reliable, objective, and without bias from the researcher (Kvale 2007, 120). Within this thesis, it is essential that I, as a researcher, aim to minimize biased perspectives to not affect the interviewees within the interview conversation and in the later analysis of the empirical data.

Trustworthiness within qualitative interviews is essential to a study and its findings, which is where reliability is considered. An element of reliability also regards if the study and interviews can be repeated by other researchers (Kvale 2007, 122). The validity of this specific research is considered, and the interviewees are viewed as truthful with trustworthy answers and perspectives. With the interview guide, other researchers can repeat the study; however, it is unsure that the same answers and data would be expected. It is essential to consider that the interviewees can change their perspectives through time and in different contexts (Kvale 2007, 122). Moreover, it is relevant to notice how the analysis might differ slightly from other researchers doing the same. With the description of the elements analyzed in the theoretical framework and the interview guide a thorough guideline has been presented, still it is necessary to consider that other researchers might have other interpretations of the interview data. This also indicates that replication is not possible, as the researcher's interpretation will vary (Kvale 2007, 122).

Validity is another element that needs to be considered, and it refers to the truth, credibility, and aim of the research. It is essential to reflect on what I want to research and if I am then doing that: "[...] validity pertains to the degree that a method investigates what it is intended to investigate." (Kvale 2007, 122). Through thorough method considerations and choices, validity is considered. Within this thesis, validity is strengthened through the description of method and how I have put everything into practice, such as conducting the interviews with the elaborated interview guide. Through the method section, I have explained thoroughly what I wish to know about and how I aim to investigate this. A concern within this type of research is the interviewees' authenticity within their answers. As a researcher working with this method, questions will arise whether the interviewee answers authentically and truthfully and whether I, as a researcher, understand what the individual interviewee indicates (Kvale and Brinkmann

2009, 228). Despite this, the interviewees' answers will be treated as their truth; nevertheless, it is always crucial to consider this aspect when interviewing. For instance, I am aware that I possess knowledge that they do not, which means that there is a power relationship that can affect the interviewees' answers.

One last element to account for within the 'Verifying' stage is generalization, which questions whether the results can 'say' something in a wider context and be generalized or if the results only apply to the specific study (Kvale 2007, 126). Within this qualitative interview study, the results cannot be generalized into a broader context and to a bigger part of society. Nonetheless, the results show the perspectives of specific individual interviewees, which is also the aim; to analyze their personal beliefs and how they are constructed through discourses and social interactions. Moreover, the research focuses mainly on the case of Wizz Air, and, therefore, it can also be difficult to generalize the findings. Therefore, this method presents both opportunities and limitations, which have been presented in the above-mentioned sections.

4.2.1.7 Reporting

The last stage is 'Reporting' which deals with reporting the seven stages. In this stage, the findings from the interview research and analysis are presented (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 102). Moreover, a crucial aspect in the reporting stage is considered as "The interview report is itself a social construction in which the author's choice of writing style and literary devices provide a specific view on the subjects' lived world." (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 267). This indicates that my choices as a researcher in reporting the findings affect the research and the thesis conclusion. The final report of the thesis and findings should be readable and detailed as the reader must be able to understand the different stages and findings in a manageable way and, moreover, manage to repeat the research based on the detailed method description (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 275).

Within this research, all seven stages are present (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 277). To sum up, 'Thematizing' was presented in the 'Introduction' and 'Presentation of Theoretical Fields'. 'Designing' and 'Interviewing' was reported with considerations of the interview, interview guide, and interviewees. 'Transcribing' dealt with how the interviews have been transcribed and considerations. 'Analyzing' will be present in the 'Analysis' with data from the interviews. Here, it is essential that quotes used in the 'Analysis' are well-evaluated, such as interpreting the quotes, balancing them with the text, and using

the best and most 'saying' (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 279-280). Lastly, 'Verifying' secures the results being considered regarding reliability, validity, and generalizing of the results.

Through this review of qualitative semi-structured interviews in the methodology considerations, interviews as data are a well-considered method to gain knowledge and insight into the interviewees' perspectives, behavior, and attitudes. Through this method section, the different stages of the procedures have been described in detail, such as considerations of interviewee collection, transcription, and interview quality. This detailed review of the method stages contributes to ensuring relevant data within the interviews and findings. Furthermore, the next section will present the 'Analysis' of this thesis based on the interviews and theoretical framework presented earlier.

5. Analysis

In this section, the thesis analysis is presented. Fairclough's three-dimensional model within CDA is applied to analyze the interviewees' perceptions, attitudes, and discourses regarding low-cost airlines, Wizz Air, credibility, and environmental communication. As Fairclough's model consists of three dimensions, the analysis is divided into the social, discursive, and textual dimensions. As a start, the social practice is accounted for to explain what happens in the social context outside of the interviews. Next, this is connected to the discursive dimension to analyze which discourses are a part of this and what the interviews draw upon when expressing themselves. Lastly, the textual analysis will present what can be seen from the interviewees' answers and the use of linguistic elements, such as metaphors. By analyzing the interviews in this order of dimensions, the different elements will help explain why the interviewees have the perceptions they possess and why they express themselves with the words they do. By applying the three-dimensional model, the analysis of the interviewees' perceptions and language usage can cover discourses and power relations within this research area. Lastly, a sub-conclusion and discussion are presented to gather the analytical elements from the three dimensions into one to discuss how they affect each other. As stated in the method section, all quotes used in this thesis have been translated directly from Danish to English, and all transcriptions can be found in Appendixes B-I.

5.1 Social Practice

Within social practice, it is interesting to analyze the discourses and practices in society, looking into hegemony and ideologies. Therefore, exploring what happens outside of the interviews and more what happens within society is relevant. By examining this, it will also be clear how the social practice influences the discursive practice; why the interviewees have the perceptions and attitudes they possess.

5.1.1 Context of the social practice

Firstly, it is relevant to account for the current situation in society, which will help account for why the interviewees answer what they do. Within this, the social context of the rising climate concern in connection with the increase of traveling by air is presented, as this has become a growing focus point within media, news, politics, and society in general.

5.1.1.1 Social Context of Climate Concern and Rise of Travel Activity

It is relevant to account for the social context that the text from Wizz Air is made on the basis of. This can be achieved by presenting the social context of the rising climate concern and its relation to the airline industry, which, furthermore, will be used as a background for understanding the interviewees' perceptions in section 5.2. As was presented in the Literature Review, society is getting more concerned about climate change, which is also why the airline industry has begun focusing increasingly on sustainability communication (Eid et al. 2022, 1). Thereby, looking into the general concern of the climate and connecting it with traveling, it is evident how both media, news, and politics touch upon subjects related to this topic, as it is, and has been increasingly, widely discussed.

5.1.1.1.1 Historic Development

To account for the relevancy of the topic and the increasing focus on climate change, it is relevant to present the historical development of travel activity. In the last 20 years, there has been an enormous increase in travel activity, as we all fly everywhere. The increase in travel has caused more than a doubling of international travelers since the beginning of 2000 (Roser and Herre 2017). While COVID-19 ended many people's ability to travel for some years, the reopening of the world has seen an even more significant surge in travel as many people felt a loss of years during the pandemic. Several travel

agencies agree that 2022 and the years coming are going to become the greatest travel years, as people have a greater travel desire than ever. Furthermore, CNBC draws upon Expedia, who in "[...] a survey of 12,000 travelers in 12 countries, the company found that 65% of respondents are planning to "go big" on their next trip [...]" (Pitrelli 2022). The rise of travelers is also reflected in international destination searching, as a comparison from 2019 to 2022 shows a high increase in several destinations. In short, travel activity has increased in the last decades and seems to continue the rise of travel activity in the future (Pitrelli 2022).

While travel activity has increased, another topic has also increased in the latest years as well: the concern for the environment. Sustainability has become an important focal point for consumers, as they have become more aware of climate change and are now more likely to choose sustainable initiatives. In a survey in 2022 by Deloitte, they found how consumers "[...] have adopted a more sustainable lifestyle in the last 12 months." (Deloitte.com, n.d.). Some of the aspects in which consumers have increased a more sustainable lifestyle in the last few years have been by choosing transports with lower carbon emissions and choosing products with more environmentally sustainable principles (Deloitte.com, n.d.). Sustainability and climate change are, without a doubt, an increased focus point. In a research article from 2021, the subject area is described as: "Undoubtedly, over the past decade climate change has been the most discussed environmental problem." (Jakucionyte-Skodiene and Liobikiene 2021, 1). The concern of climate change is a debated area within society, which has increased in the last years (Jakucionyte-Skodiene and Liobikiene 2021, 1). This is also evident in a research study done by Pew Research Center, which found that climate change concerns have increased since 2013 in many countries (Fagan and Huang 2019).

Nevertheless, as travel and air travel have become an increased activity, this also means that climate and sustainability have become enormous focal points and topics of conversation in this connection, as "Aviation is responsible for a significant portion of tourism-related emissions…" (Cocolas et al. 2020, 319). Even though the airline industry is responsible for emissions and negative environmental impacts, yet more people are expected to travel by air in the future, and this is also why these two areas are often discussed in relation to each other (Cocolas et al. 2020, 319). In a study by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, airplanes as transport mode were the number one transport with the highest emissions in 2015. Since then, these emissions from the airline industry have continued to rise with the increased travel activity. Despite warnings from governments, the United Nations Environment

Programme, the World Meteorological Organization, and others about air travel causing emissions and climate change (Oswald and Ernst 2021, 69), and although air passengers are aware of the negative environmental impacts, the majority are not willing to cut down on their air travel, which can also be described as "flyer's dilemma." (Cocolas et al. 2020, 320). Even though the concern for the environment has increased, people continue traveling regardless of being aware of the emissions and climate change the airline industry causes (Cocolas et al. 2020, 320).

Within the area of the rising climate concern and rising air travel activity, some dominant discourses are linked to these issues. The environment has become a general concern in social practice, which will be further presented below to account for the media, news, and political debate and focus on climate and air travel.

5.1.1.1.2 Media, News, and Politics Setting the Agenda

With the increasing attention towards climate change and increasing travel activity in the later years, different actors within society have begun focusing on many of these aspects, such as politicians, media, and the news. The news media have increased their focus on climate change in recent years and have become a significant source for the public to find information about sustainability and climate. The information covers both ecological and climate science, but also the societal dimension, such as focusing on the fact that people have a responsibility for climate change, as they are both causing it, affected by it, and mindful of it (Hase et al. 2021, 1). Moreover, it has been found that information about climate change can be complicated to understand, and people now tend to find information about it in news media: "By increasing *levels of news media attention* to climate change, news can thus influence public concern about climate change." (Italics in original text) (Hase et al. 2021, 1). This increased media and news coverage of climate change affect people and their perceptions of this (Hase et al. 2021, 1). News and media also aim their attention toward the climate in connection with the airline industry. For instance, BBC published an article called "Should we give up flying for the sake of the climate?" (Timperley 2020), which focuses on the aspect that using airplanes as transport is responsible for large emissions and climate changes, as the whole airline industry "[...] is responsible for around 5 % of global warming." (Timperley 2020). What is more, CNBC points out how every individual needs to focus on bringing down emissions to protect the planet (Jockims 2022). This also supports the research article by Hase et

al. and how news media cover climate science and how humans cause climate change as to say that society also has a responsibility (Hase et al. 2021, 1).

Politicians have also put the environment and sustainability higher on the agenda in recent years, as it shows "[...] an increase in politicization of climate change news coverage between 1985 and 2017." (Chinn, Hart, and Soroka 2020, 123). A research study by Chinn et al. did not only show an increase in the politicization of climate change, but also a decrease in scientist mentions, which indicates how politics and politicians are used increasingly in climate change news. Furthermore, the study also found how political actors are often mentioned in news articles about climate change (Chinn, Hart, and Soroka 2020, 123).

As media and news have increased their focus on climate and sustainability, in general, and within aviation, more attention has also been directed to companies' false green advertisements and greenwashing. As it was found, many companies are now aware that society wants sustainable and green products (Deloitte.com, n.d.), which also motivates the companies to become green and favorable to stakeholders (Mayer, Ryley, and Gillingwater 2012, 180; Wittmer and Wegelin 2012, 89; Hwang and Lyu 2019, 437). Nevertheless, several cases in the news and media have shown how companies are greenwashing. For instance, The Washington Post found that in an E.U. analysis, "[...] 53 percent of green claims made in the European marketplace were dubious." (Birnbaum 2023). The news article also mentions how consumer attitudes towards sustainability and climate change have evolved, which is why the concerns about greenwashing have increased, as consumers are misled by several greenwashing advertisements (Birnbaum 2023).

Based on the presentation of background knowledge of the social practice, the discourses of sustainability and climate change are dominant in society, and therefore it is not surprising if the interviewees also draw upon these. Moreover, it is not surprising that the interviewees will draw upon discourses relating to these, such as greenwashing. Within the following section of discursive practice, examples from the interviews will be drawn upon to link the social practice with the interviewees' attitudes and perceptions.

5.2 Discursive Practice

While the analysis of the social practice consisted of investigating the social context, within the discursive practice, it is interesting to analyze interdiscursivity and how the interviewees draw upon their

members' resources, background knowledge, and discourses to present their attitudes towards Wizz Air and its environmental sustainability communication.

5.2.1 The Interviewees' Increased Concern of Climate Change

As mentioned in the review of social practice in the theoretical framework, the hegemonic level of discourse in society can affect how the specific discourse is perceived. As was presented in 5.1, one discourse that can be described with a high hegemonic level is sustainability and its underlying areas, such as climate change and the environment. As climate change and environmental sustainability have become important within society (Deloitte.com, n.d.), it is also reflected in several of the interviewees' answers and attitudes. For instance, when asking Tanya how much attention she pays to airlines' sustainability communication when she chooses an airline, she mentions: "Well, it has become [pause] I have become more aware of it in the recent years than I have been in the past. Before, I did not think about it at all. But it is becoming more and more important now." (App. I, p. 4, ll. 14-15). Tanya mentioning the rising concern in the latest years also indicates a change, as being climate-friendly is increasingly important to focus on. A reason why we see these types of discourses when we talk about the airline industry and low-cost airlines is most likely because it has become a huge focal point and general concern among citizens, as it was found in the social context of how climate change is an increasingly discussed topic.

5.2.1.1 Media, News, and Politics from the Interviewees' Perceptions

Another interviewee, who shares some of the same perspectives of increasing focus on climate, is Jesper. As Jesper describes his general attitude about sustainability, he states: "Then people also think that it is kind of cool that you buy sustainable, but it is also because this is what is trending [pause] it is very in to be sustainable." (App. E, p. 4, ll. 17-19) and "[...] you hear so much about it in the media." (App. E, p. 4, l. 28). Jesper believes that sustainability is a trending topic, hearing about it in the media and getting affected by this. The quote suggests the media's focus on sustainability is high on the agenda, affecting Jesper's attitude towards sustainable purchases. Describing sustainability as a trend also suggests that Jesper perceives sustainability as a changing discourse, which is at a high level of importance in society. These attitudes from the interviewees indicate how the discourse of climate change and sustainability have become more important in the latest years, which also corresponds with Tanya's statement of

sustainability's increased importance (App. I, p. 4, ll. 14-15). Another interviewee, Anne-Sofie, also mentions social media and the news as sources that affect her perception of low-cost airlines: "Yes, because it is not only my personal opinion, it is also those [pause] my friends and family and social media and what you read in the news, it also supports what you feel." (App. C, p. 10, ll. 2-4). This quote by Anne-Sofie is an example of how her interactions in society, such as her interactions with family and social media, affect her perception of low-cost airlines and her attitude towards these; what she reads in the news and media affects her perceptions. It is not only the media in general that the interviewees draw upon but also political influence. As Lasse indicates: "[...] I think there is such a big pressure from politicians and customers' demands, for that matter, about how everything has to be so green [...]" (App. G, p. 9, ll. 24-24). This quote by Lasse suggests that he perceives politicians as one aspect of why the level of attention towards environmental sustainability has increased. As presented, the rise of politicians mentioned in connection with the climate change debate has risen (Chinn, Hart, and Soroka 2020, 123), which might be why Lasse mentions the political demands.

The quotes from the interviewees and their perceptions of sustainability reflect how sustainability tendencies and discourse are reproduced through language and media news. As Jesper mentioned, the importance of sustainability is heard through the media (App. E, p. 4, l. 28), which helps increase and support the importance of this specific discourse. From the external sources emphasizing the importance of sustainability in society and climate change concerns covered in 5.1, sustainability can be described as a discourse with a high hegemonic level, which suggests that it also contributes to how the interviewees perceive sustainability and how it impacts society. As sustainability has become an increased focus within media and news, debated and discussed as an essential focal point in the last decades, it suggests how it affects the interviewees' perceptions, which will be analyzed more in-depth in relation to Wizz Air in the following section.

5.2.2 The Interviewees' Members' Resources and the Worry of Greenwashing

When analyzing the interviews in the discursive practice, it is interesting to look at what resources the individual interviewee draws upon when expressing their attitude towards and perception of Wizz Air's sustainability communication and credibility. When Sofie describes her perception of Wizz Air's different web pages about sustainability, she mentions how she doubts Wizz Air's communication (App. B, p. 5. l. 17) as she also draws upon her already existing knowledge about fast fashion: "Um, and it is

probably also because I have heard other things, such as fast fashion, where you hear that they say they do all these sustainable things and the environment, but it may not all be true and that it is just talk." (App. B, p. 5. ll. 18-20). Based on existing knowledge from fast fashion companies which communicate about sustainability, Sofie's perception of Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication is affected by this. As Sofie has experienced other companies that promise green initiatives, which is not genuine, this can also be described as a greenwashing discourse, which was also touched upon in the social practice analysis. With Sofie's prior experiences with greenwashing, she is affected by this when reading Wizz Air's initiatives, which results in her skeptical perception. The discourse of greenwashing is present through several of the interviewees' answers, as they express their doubts about low-cost airlines and Wizz Air regarding credibility. When asking Stine about her perception of low-cost airlines and their commitment to environmental sustainability, she mentions: "[...] I just think it is very fake, I think it is just to promote sustainability and because they know people want it." (App. H, p. 5, ll. 6-7). This suggests how Stine is aware of companies' attention towards sustainability as it has become a major focus within society, and how she is skeptical towards sustainability communication like this. Like Stine, who doubts Wizz Air's intentions and calls it fake (App. H, p. 5, ll. 6-7), Anne-Sofie is also skeptical as she draws upon her knowledge from the media: "I feel that a lot of companies write all sorts of things, and it turns out in the news that it's not true." (App. C, p. 7, ll. 17-18). Anne-Sofie draws upon the discourse of greenwashing as she has heard about other companies greenwashing in the news, and this suggests how it affects her view of Wizz Air. It also indicates how the news is a source for Anne-Sofie to obtain information on companies' communication and trustworthiness. Furthermore, Anne-Sofie draws upon a specific example:

> For example, the Copenhagen Cartel, which has just been caught saying that all their swimwear was made from recycled fishing nets, and then it turns out that they only used a milligram of it in their clothes. So, it is also difficult as a consumer to choose something if it is not true [...] It can be difficult to navigate what is and is not true when you honestly cannot know. (App. C, p. 4, ll. 5-10)

This quote from the interviewee reflects the difficulty consumers meet when being met by companies' sustainability communication. As Anne-Sofie specifies, it is difficult to evaluate the credibility of

companies' communication, as she highlights the example of Copenhagen Cartel and its greenwashing, which has misled its customers. She also expresses how she is confused and does not know when you will be able to trust a company's communication. From the social context in 5.1 it became clear how sustainability, climate change, and the flight industry are all aspects that have received increased attention in the last decades, which has also led to an increased focus on companies' intentions and greenwashing, and, furthermore, suggests how these discourses affect society.

Anne-Sofie, also draws upon her knowledge from fashion companies when discussing Wizz Air as both low-cost and sustainable:

> I compare it a bit with, for example, Shein clothes versus the new brand that has gained a lot of popularity, Planet Nusa, where it is that Shein, which is really cheap represents everything that Wizz Air does, whereas Planet Nusa perhaps can be compared a bit to Air France, where your friends talk about it, and everybody knows that Shein clothes and low-cost airlines are cheap, everybody knows that Planet Nusa is a sustainable brand. (App. C, p. 10, ll. 19-23)

The quote is a clear example of Anne-Sofie drawing on her own member's resources as she interprets Wizz Air's text based on her already existing knowledge and social constructions. The interviewee compares the cheap fast-fashion brand Shein with the expensive sustainable fashion brand Planet Nusa and then puts it into perspective with her perception of Wizz Air. The quote suggests how comparisons to other products and prior experiences can affect Anne-Sofie's attitude toward Wizz Air. It shows how sustainability is essential when buying clothes, and the sustainability discourse is evident, which was also found in social practice. Through the quote, she also expresses her perception of the price aspect, as she perceives Shein as a cheap and unsustainable fashion brand. In contrast, Planet Nusa is perceived as more expensive but sustainable. Within Anne-Sofie's reflection and perspective to the fashion industry, she also mentions how her friends talk about it and everyone knows (App. C, p. 10, ll. 21-23), which suggests how important a company's reputation is. While Shein does not have a positive reputation, Planet Nusa is viewed with a positive, sustainable reputation, which affects the consumer's choice when purchasing. What is more, as Anne-Sofie mentions Shein and Wizz Air as similar cheap companies, based on reputations and already existing knowledge, her perception of Wizz Air's environmental communication is affected by this. This results in Anne-Sofie perceiving Wizz Air as a cheap and

unsustainable company. One more interviewee, who draws upon his already existing knowledge from other industries and his experience with Wizz Air, is Jesper, who also touches upon the fashion industry: "It was so cheap, and something called Wizz Air, it is not called Emirates, I know when I go to H&M and buy a t-shirt instead of buying a Hugo Boss t-shirt, I know that quality and price are linked." (App. E, p. 6, ll. 20-22). The quote by Jesper specifies how he compares H&M with Wizz Air and Emirates with Hugo Boss, as he believes that price and quality are connected. It also indicates that Jesper perceives that the consumer achieves more value when buying more expensive products. This perception is used to construe his attitude towards Wizz Air, as he believes that as a low-cost airline, you cannot expect any quality as a customer. Jesper also suggests that Wizz Air does not have the most positive reputation compared to Emirates. Anne-Sofie and Jesper are not the only interviewees who touch upon the price aspect when describing their attitude towards Wizz Air being low-cost and sustainable. Within the discursive practice, it is interesting to examine how the interviewees construct their perceptions of the connection between low-cost airlines, like Wizz Air, and sustainability. Several of the interviewees suggest a discourse about low-cost airlines not being sustainable and not being able to. For instance, Simon mentions: "It is not something where you think it is connected as such. Sustainability and low-cost airlines." (App. F, p. 4, ll. 5-6), Anne-Sofie mentions: "[...] that low-cost cannot make sense that they are sustainable" (App. C, p. 9, ll. 26-27), and Tanya mentions: "[...] so now I do not know why they can still be low price when they care so much about things like sustainability" (App. I, p. 8, ll. 4-6). Common to these quotes is that the interviewees find the two aspects to be contradicting, as their perceptions of low-cost airlines are that they are not sustainable.

5.2.2.1 Emissions as a Focal Point

One debated aspect of sustainability and airplanes as means of transportation is that airplanes emit much CO_2. As emissions have become a significant focus in the news when discussing sustainability and the airline industry (Timperley 2020), this is also reflected in several of the interviewees' answers when drawing on their members' resources. When Lasse is asked about low-cost airlines and their commitment to environmental sustainability, he mentions: "[...] there are many who emphasize it when booking a ticket, the fact that they do not just release a lot of CO_2 without doing anything in the other direction as well." (App. G, p. 4, ll. 21-23). Lasse states how he perceives that low-cost airlines have become more committed as society has become more aware of CO_2 compensations, as with the rising concern for the

environment and climate change. Furthermore, Simon questions how low-cost airlines can charge so little yet still be sustainable, as he also is aware of the price aspect of CO2 compensation and sustainability:

> I find it difficult to see how someone who charges so little money for their tickets can CO2 compensate in any way with what they now get from the flights. Again, I have difficulty seeing how, if they have to pay for fuel and, uh, staff, how do they also have the opportunity to somehow compensate for the CO2 they emit, with the money they receive? I do not understand that. (App. F, p. 4, ll. 8-12)

Simon doubts how a low-cost airline with cheap fares can introduce environmental sustainability initiatives such as CO2 compensation, as he questions how the companies can afford this. As the quote suggests, Simon draws upon his knowledge that CO2 compensation is an important aspect when discussing sustainability and that it is expensive. Furthermore, Tanya draws upon her already existing knowledge of climate and CO2 compensations when discussing her thoughts of Wizz Air offering low fares while communicating sustainability: "[...] they must surely have to pay some climate compensation as they have to may, this must also make the tickets more expensive [...]" (App. I, p. 8, ll. 12-13). Moreover, when Stine answers what her perception of low-cost airlines and their commitment to environmental sustainability is, she states: "Well, my thought is that it sounds a bit fake [pause] how can you be low-cost airline and still think about the environment?" (App. H, p. 5, ll. 1-2). Again, this is an example of an interviewee, who has the perception that low-cost airlines and sustainability do not connect; therefore, it is difficult for Stine to find the communication trustworthy.

As most of the interviewees are not able to connect low-cost airlines and sustainability, this also suggests how it affects the credibility of Wizz Air's communication, as the interviewees already carry the perception that low-cost airlines are not sustainable. One reason is that the interviewees believe sustainability costs more, which does not correspond with Wizz Air being sustainable. This also suggests how already existing perceptions in the interviewees' members' resources affect their attitude towards Wizz Air and its environmental sustainability communication regarding credibility. However, one interviewee, Amalie, states how she believes that low-cost airlines are more sustainable than other airlines: "[...] maybe the low-cost airlines are somehow more sustainable than some of those that cost

more…" (App. D, p. 4, ll. 21-22) and "My immediate perception is that they are more sustainable than others." (App. D, p. 5, l. 13). Compared to the other interviewees, Amalie perceives low-cost airlines as more sustainable than more expensive airlines, as her experiences from both low-cost and high-cost airline experiences have affected her attitude. For instance, Amalie specifies how she has experienced getting headphones on more expensive flights, which she believes are waste and unsustainable (App. D, p. 5, ll. 20-21). Based on her prior experiences, Amalie perceives low-cost as more sustainable, which also might be a reason why it results in her being positive towards Wizz Air's sustainable initiatives (App. D, p. 9, ll. 10-14).

5.2.3 Power Relation between Wizz Air and The Consumer

While several of the interviewees agree that climate and environmental sustainability are significant in society, several of the interviewees also mention the power relation between being a reader and consumer of Wizz Air's web pages. One interviewee, Lasse, specifies how Wizz Air, as a company, has the power to communicate and write whatever it desires on its own corporate web pages. When asking Lasse what his perception of Wizz Air's quote, "When you don't need to fly, please don't. But when you do, fly the greenest." (aWizz Air, n.d.), is, he mentions:

> I think that they as a company want you to fly. Yes. If nobody flies, then they do not earn any money, and then they go down the drain very quickly. Yes. I just think they have written it because they have to. I think there is such a big pressure from politicians' and customers' demands, for that matter, about how everything has to be so green, and as I mentioned myself in the beginning, I also emphasize it. (App. G, p. 9, ll. 21-25)

This quote suggests that the interviewee's perception of Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication is affected by the fact that Wizz Air has power over its own corporate website. This also relates to the critical aspect of CDA, as language is not seen as neutral but rather with an underlying intention (Horsbøl and Raudaskoski 2016, 63). Through the quote by Lasse, he suggests that Wizz Air only communicates about these environmental initiatives because the company wants to portray itself better in a climate-concerned society because it must, to portray a good corporate image; however, with the underlying intent of getting more customers and thereby more profit as a company. Moreover, the

quote indicates the rising concern for the environment as was also found in the social context. Lasse touches upon the power that Wizz Air hold as a company on its own corporate website: "[...] the thing about wanting to appear much better than you actually are [pause] it is only their outward-facing interface [...] only what they want the user to be able to see [...]" (App. G, p. 6, ll. 20-22). This indicates that it can be difficult for Lasse to evaluate Wizz Air's communication regarding credibility, as he knows that Wizz Air wishes to communicate what the company knows the stakeholders wish to read. The trustworthiness of Wizz Air's communication about its environmental initiatives is challenging to evaluate regarding the airline's sincereness. While Wizz Air's intention is to create a positive corporate image through CSR-initiatives, this is not successful in this case, as Lasse questions the sincerity of Wizz Air. Another interviewee, Jesper, also doubts the sincerity of Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication. For instance, this is specified when Jesper reads Wizz Air's different web pages:

> [...] when you do something like this, is it then because you want to help at all, or is it just because you want to look good as an airline compared to the others? Like look at what we are doing over here, compared to you. Um, I feel like it is more for their own sake than the environment because no matter what people want to fly, um, so this is just another argument as to why you should choose Wizz Air rather than anything else. (App. E, p. 9, ll. 3-8)

Jesper's quote indicates how he questions the reliability of Wizz Air's communication, as he focuses on the aspect that Wizz Air is a company with specific intentions. Jesper recognizes that society continues to travel with airplanes, and as Wizz Air knows this it will communicate the necessary initiatives to be favorable among its customers. This concern also affects credibility, as Jesper underlines how the reader should be aware that this is Wizz Air's own communication, and this must be considered (App. E, p. 10, ll. 17-18). This perception is also supported by Stine, who states: "This is also Wizz Air's own information, and they can decide for themselves what they write [...]" (App. H, p. 8, ll. 11-12). Stine bears in her perception of Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication that the company can decide exactly what it wants on its own website. This affects her attitude towards Wizz Air regarding credibility, as she continues to specify how the airline does not have any other sources which back its claims, such as FN (App. H, p. 8, ll. 9-14). Moving further into Wizz Air's environmental communication, Simon also discusses Wizz Air as a company with a specific desire. When asking him

about Wizz Air's campaign quote of being the greenest choice, he mentions: "It is a good philosophy, and it also makes them sound really convincing as a green airline, um, because they actually discourage flying, but it is also [pause] it sounds a bit like a way of reinforcing their own brand [...]" (App. F, p. 8, ll. 19-21). While he acknowledges taking care and responsibility of the planet, Simon still draws on his knowledge of companies wanting to pursue their primary goal of reinforcing their own brand to then be favorable to stakeholders. Nonetheless, Simon believes that Wizz Air communication about the environment is a positive initiative, yet he still doubts their intention. This suggests that the CSR activities by a company can be perceived as a positive matter by consumers, which can enhance the image and reputation; nevertheless, Simon's quote indicates that CSR communication will not always be perceived without skepticism. This can also be connected to source credibility which was touched upon in the theoretical framework (Ohanian 1990, 41), as Wizz Air is here perceived with little credibility as a source, and thereby it affects the interviewees' acknowledgement and the credibility of Wizz Air's message.

Lasse and Jesper are just some interviewees to express their lack of trust toward Wizz Air. Anne-Sofie reveals a general mistrust towards companies with sustainability communication and initiatives when discussing her doubt about Wizz Air: "[...] When there are so many other companies in the world that just write things that turn out to be false and be untrue. So. it is difficult for me to believe this." (App. C, p. 7, ll. 10-12). This quote suggests how consumers, such as Anne-Sofie, are being skeptical towards companies' sustainability communication, as other companies in society are greenwashing; not doing what they promise within their sustainability initiatives. This quote also provides insight into consumer habits, as Anne-Sofie reveals her attention to the importance of the environment; however, is doubtful when reading this. Sofie is another interviewee who puts Wizz Air into perceptive to companies in general, as she states:

Companies have become so aware that they feel it is a good initiative to think about sustainability, everyone wants to show they are taking into account, because there are more in the world who have started to think about it, um [pause] so that is really what I think, how it is perhaps something they do because you kind of have to [...] (App. B, p. 6, ll. 16-20)

Sofie states how she believes that companies, in general, are aware that sustainability is an essential matter to society, and this is why companies choose to incorporate sustainable initiatives because they feel pressure. This attitude from Sofie also suggests how CSR initiatives from companies are not always perceived as genuine but perceived as with an underlying goal of achieving more customers by communicating what their stakeholders desire. The quote reflects on how it has become more important that companies focus on sustainability, as this is a way for the company to express a positive image toward its stakeholders. Nonetheless, the credibility and trustworthiness of companies' CSR communication are not always necessarily perceived as positive, which also results in this discourse of credibility.

Another factor that affects some of the interviewees' trustworthiness toward Wizz Air is the language aspect. Wizz Air has not translated its environmental sustainability communication into Danish, which supports some interviewees' perception of Wizz Air being untrustworthy. For instance, Anne-Sofie states: "Again, this seems very unreliable." (App. C, p. 11, l. 5), and Sofie mentions: "I definitely think it becomes more frivolous in some way. If they are so concerned about sustainability and being international, and they want to communicate that to everyone, then why not have it in all languages?" (App. B, p. 8, ll. 19-21). Anne-Sofie and Sofie agree that the language aspect affects the credibility, as the interviewees cannot read it in their mother tongue. Nevertheless, most interviewees agree that English has become a well-known language for them which does not affect their understanding of communication (for instance App. G, p. 10, l. 13; App. F, p. 8, l. 29).

Several interviewees' answers in the discursive practice reflect what happens outside of the interviews and in society and suggests how the social practice influences the discursive practice. Through the analysis of the discursive practice, it becomes evident how the interviewees draw on discourses such as sustainability and greenwashing. With the interviewees' members' resources, they use much of their existing knowledge to present their attitudes towards Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication as a low-cost airline. This is done by drawing upon other discourses and experiences, which the interviewees use to support and create their perception of Wizz Air. Furthermore, several interviewees reflect upon the power Wizz Air holds on its own corporate website, which affects the interviewees' perception regarding credibility and sincereness. Moreover, the interdiscursivity is current as the interviewees are influenced by these discourses through the statements they make. Through the

analysis, they draw on different discourses and topics, and they relate to Wizz Air in a particular way as they see the airline as the ones in power. At the same time, they also draw to a great extent on these social discourses, which are also hegemonic. It may well be that Wizz Air has the power to set its own agenda through the text, but this also shows that there are some strong discourses that people listen to and understand, which challenges Wizz Air's communicative strategies.

Through the following analysis of the textual practice, an understanding and presentation of how the social practice affects the textual dimension is accounted for and further analyzed.

5.3 Textual Dimension

Within the textual analysis, the interviewees' words and phrases are analyzed to investigate the attitudes towards low-cost airlines, especially Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication regarding credibility. By looking at modality, conditional clauses, metaphors, and adjectives, the interviewees' different perceptions and opinions will occur within their answers and statements.

5.3.1 Metaphors

When looking at the vocabulary, metaphors are one of the linguistic features to analyze to investigate the interviewees' attitudes towards low-cost airlines and environmental sustainability communication. A metaphor is used to describe low-cost airlines in general by Jesper, who mentions: "[...] it is kind of an old piece of junk [...]" (App. E, p. 2, l. 16). The metaphor 'old piece of junk' that is used to describe low-cost airlines, indicates that Jesper recognizes low-cost airlines as not valuable. The use of the metaphor also implies a negative perception of low-cost airlines, as Jesper describes them as junk, which can be associated with something that is old, wrecked, and useless. By using this metaphor about low-cost airlines, Jesper expresses his view upon these with a few words which signifies much more; he believes that low-cost airlines are without value and wrecked. Another metaphor is used, when asking Jesper, what his perception is in general of low-cost airlines and their commitment to environmental sustainability: "Um, I just do not feel that the two things are connected, I feel that it is yin and yang, black and white." (App. E, p. 6, ll. 6-7). The interviewee uses the metaphor 'yin and yang', which refers to two opposites. In this case, Jesper refers to low-cost airlines and environmental sustainability communication as two opposite concepts that do not match each other. To Jesper, using a metaphor as a

linguistic element helps construct the meaning of the two concepts, and it is a way for the interviewee to show his attitude towards this. Nevertheless, in general, yin and yang create a whole; however, this does not seem to be what Jesper refers to in this case. Instead, he specifies how they are each other's opposites, which is why it suggests that he only uses part of the metaphor. He ends the sentence with "[...] black and white." (App. E, p. 6, ll. 6-7), which is yet another reinforcing way to express his attitude about the two concepts not matching by describing them yet again as opposites. Moreover, another metaphor, 'hot air' is used twice by Jesper, the first time using it within the same question as above: "[...] but it is just a bit of hot air [...]" (App. E, p. 6, l.11), and later again when expressing his attitudes towards Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication concerning credibility: "[...] I really think a lot of it is just hot air [...]" (App. E, p. 10, l.11). The metaphor 'hot air' in the context of Jesper's attitudes towards credibility in Wizz Air's communication about the environment is used to express mistrust towards the airline and its intentions. Using 'hot air' as a metaphor in this context also suggests that Wizz Air's communication is empty of content, meaning that Wizz Air communicates without actually saying something. The metaphor is an expression for the interviewee to explain his skepticism towards the airline's actual intentions, being critical towards Wizz Air's environmental communication, and finding it untrustworthy. Moreover, Jesper is not the only interviewee who uses metaphors to express himself. When looking at Wizz Air's sustainability webpage, Lasse uses the metaphor 'pat on the back' in connection with the interviewee looking at Wizz Air's "Fly the Greenest" campaign and different initiatives: "[...] it may well be, I do not know, a bit of a pat on the back on their own shoulder [...]" (App. G, p. 6, ll. 2-3). Lasse questions some of Wizz Air's initiatives by using the metaphor, indicating how he believes that Wizz Air praises itself for something he does not find as an extraordinary environmental initiative but rather as a general concept for low-cost airlines. One last metaphor that is interesting to analyze is Jesper's use of 'dream scenario' when expressing his thoughts on Wizz Air being the greenest choice as low-cost:

> Then it does not make sense that it requires something more and extra, and then it is cheap. Well that is the dream scenario to all companies, so why has everyone not done it? How has Wizz Air cracked the code compared to others? They cannot [...] (App. E, p. 11, ll. 29-30 + p. 12, ll. 1-2).

This quote suggests how they once again are perceived as opposites and using the metaphor 'dream scenario' about a company that needs to earn money, be sustainable, but also low-cost. Describing it as a 'dream scenario' suggests that it would be the best situation for all companies if they had the opportunity to fulfill all these aspects. From this quote and the use of metaphor, it is also evident how the reader must relate to the full quote to be able to say something about a given metaphor in a given situation. The analysis of the metaphors shows how the interviewees with a few words unfold themselves with a large area of meaning.

5.3.2 Adjectives

Another element within the textual dimension that is relevant to analyze to investigate the interviewees' perceptions and attitudes is adjectives. Throughout the interviews, several interviewees used adjectives to express themselves. When asking Anne-Sofie about her perception of low-cost airlines and their commitment to environmental sustainability, she uses the adjective 'binary': "[...] they are two binary contrasts." (App. C, p. 4, ll. 27-28). The use of the adjective 'binary' in connection with 'contrasts' indicates an emphasizing attitude from Anne-Sofie. She does not find low-cost airlines and environmental commitment coherent, but rather binary contrasts that she cannot combine into one meaningful coherence. Moreover, when asking Stine about the same question, another adjective used is 'fake': "[...] it sounds a bit fake [...]" (App. H, p. 5, l. 1). The use of the adjective 'fake' by Stine indicates that she believes that it cannot be real and that it is false. Stine's perception of low-cost airlines and their commitment to the environment suggests that she does not find these two aspects to correlate well. This also indicates how Stine is critical of this and shows her skepticism with the use of adjectives. In connection with this, diving deeper into Wizz Air's campaign "Fly the Greenest", Sofie uses the adjective 'unrealistic' (App. B, p. 8, ll. 5 + 12). Sofie's perception of Wizz Air's campaign quote, "When you don't need to fly, please don't. But when you do, fly the greenest." (aWizz Air, n.d.), indicates how she is critical and finds the communication and message unreal. Using the adjective 'unrealistic' suggests how Sofie does not find Wizz Air's quote and communication credible, as she describes the quote as something she cannot believe in. Sofie also uses the adjective 'skeptical', when discussing the connection between Wizz Air being low-cost and the greenest: "[...] I am a bit skeptical." (App. B, p. 5, l. 30). This adjective of being skeptical indicates how Sofie is unsure of Wizz Air's communication of being the greenest choice, while also being a low-cost airline. Furthermore, being skeptical also suggests that Sofie

is not convinced of the communication, as her skepticism suggests that she cannot trust Wizz Air completely. Moreover, Lasse describes Wizz Air's communication with the adjective 'pseudo': "[...] then it becomes a bit pseudo [...]" (App. G, p. 5, l. 22). The adjective pseudo suggests that something is not genuine, and within this context, Lasse uses the adjective to show his attitude towards Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication, as he is critical toward being an airline and being green at the same time (App. G, p. 5, l. 21-23). Furthermore, Lasse describes Wizz Air's quote, "When you don't need to fly, please don't. But when you do, fly the greenest." (aWizz Air, n.d.), with the adjective 'bullshit': "[...] maybe a bit of a bullshit quote." (App. G, p. 9, l. 20). With the use of this adjective, it suggests that Lasse believes that Wizz Air's quote is insincere. It is a way for him to express his negative perception of the airline's communication. Several other adjectives are also found. While the above-mentioned adjectives suggest skepticism and a critical stance towards low-cost airlines' and Wizz Air's environmental commitment and communication, other interviewees use adjectives to emphasize their optimism. One interviewee that expresses enthusiasm about Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication is Amalie, who uses the adjective 'cool': "[...] I think it is very cool." (App. D, p. 7, ll. 12-13). Amalie communicates a positive attitude towards Wizz Air's communication by using the adjective cool, which suggests how she is positive toward Wizz Air's communication. Within the same question about the interviewees' thoughts on Wizz Air's different pages, Tanya also expresses a positive attitude through adjectives. For instance, she uses the adjective 'good' several times (App. I, p. 6, l. 9 + 14 + 17 + 18 + 20) about Wizz Air's campaign and green initiatives: "[...] it makes very good sense [...]" (App. I, p. 6, l. 9). For Tanya, Wizz Air's "Fly the Greenest" campaign and initiatives are positively met with her use of the adjective 'good' five times in just one answer. Moreover, Simon also indicates some positive attitude towards Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication: "[...] it provides a more positive image [...]" (App. F, p. 8, l. 2). The interviewee uses the adjective 'positive' and expresses through the phrase that Wizz Air's initiatives and communication about the environment contribute to a better image of Wizz Air than before knowing these (App. F, p. 8, l. 2). With the use of another adjective, Simon also specifies how the CSR initiatives by Wizz Air has affected his view upon the airline in a positive way: "Well, I think it makes them a bit more convincing about low-cost airlines [...]" (App. F, p. 7, l. 21). The use of the adjective 'convincing' indicates that Simon's perception of Wizz Air has improved because of the airline's environmental sustainability communication. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, the image of a company is how it is perceived by the stakeholder, in this case, the

interviewee, and a corporate image is a dynamic construct that is able to change over time (Cornelissen 2020, 282 + 7). This is the case, for instance, within Simon's statement, Wizz Air's communication about the environment provides a more positive image of the airline than before him knowing these.

Through analyzing the adjectives used by the interviewees, it has become evident how they use adjectives to portray their attitudes towards low-cost airlines, Wizz Air, and sustainability. The different adjectives used by the interviewees both show positive and, mostly, negative expressions towards low-cost airlines, Wizz Air, and its credibility regarding its environmental communication.

5.3.3 Statements about Low-cost Airlines and Wizz Air

As stated in the review of Fairclough's three-dimensional model, modality is one element to analyze in the textual dimension to examine the interviewees' commitments to their own truth and beliefs. Moreover, analyzing modality can help get an insight into the interviewees' doubts or certainties about low-cost airlines, especially Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication and commitment. The interviewees' certainties towards the airline industry in connection with the environment and sustainability are expressed several times through assertions, the highest degree of commitment to the truth. This can be seen through statements such as Jesper mentioning: "I know that airplanes pollute no matter what [...]" (App. E, p. 5, l. 8), Anne-Sofie mentioning: "But flying is the worst thing you can do to the environment [...]" (App. C, p. 8, l. 14), and Simon stating: "[...] in general, air travel is not sustainable." (App. F, p. 3, l. 3). Epistemic modality is found through these interviewees' statements, indicating a commitment and high level of certainty. These interviewees announce their certain attitudes toward the airline industry, being committed to their truth about airplanes being environmentally damaging, which reflects the increased sustainability attention within the social context in which the interviewees are influenced by. What is more, Tanya also expresses herself through a specific statement about low-cost airlines and environmental sustainability: "[...] it is not where their focus is. Their focus is just to get as many people through as possible." (App. I, p. 4, l. 24). Tanya's statement indicates how she is sure that low-cost airlines' focus, in general, do not lie within the environment, but rather the focus is on getting as many passengers on their airplanes as possible.

When diving deeper into Wizz Air's different sustainability pages on their corporate website, Stine comments on the "Fly the Greenest'" campaign: "[...] and shows that they look after the planet, hopefully." (App. H, p. 6, ll. 11-12). While stating that she does think Wizz Air's campaign displays that

the company cares for the planet, she ends the phrase with the adverb 'hopefully'. While this is a way for Stine to describe her thoughts, it also indicates the level of commitment to her statement. Using the adverb 'hopefully' signals a hope and wish for her whole phrase to be true. Thereby, it reveals a lower degree of commitment to Wizz Air's communication and a degree of doubt. Another interviewee expressing some doubt about Wizz Air's communication is Anne-Sofie: "Wizz Air may be the greenest choice, but [...]" (App. C, p. 11, l. 1), indicating a lower degree of commitment. The use of 'may' in the phrase signals how Anne-Sofie is not entirely sure about Wizz Air being the greenest choice within the airline industry. Even though the interviewee recognizes Wizz Air's environmental initiatives, Anne-Sofie is not convinced that it is the truth. When asking another interviewee Amalie about her perception of Wizz Air knowing their environmental initiatives as a low-cost airline, she mentions: "[...] they may be sustainable, but [...]" (App. D, p. 9, ll. 1-2). While also recognizing that Wizz Air may be sustainable as an airline, the use of 'may' present a lower degree of commitment. Amalie indicates some doubt in the phrases, not entirely sure that Wizz Air is sustainable. Again, this shows an interviewee who illustrates a doubtful perception of Wizz Air's communication.

The last degree of commitment within statements, 'denial', is also present in some of the interviewees' statements concerning Wizz Air. When asking Sofie specifically into Wizz Air's quote, "When you don't need to fly, please don't. But when you do, fly the greenest." (aWizz Air, n.d.), she mentions: "Because they are not the greenest [...]" (App. B, p. 8, l. 3). This statement indicates how Sofie does not believe Wizz Air, denying the airline's presentation of being the greenest choice. With this phrase, Sofie expresses a rejection, and her attitude towards the airline's communication indicates a strong belief that she is skeptical and does not find it believable.

When analyzing the modality in the interviews, it is also relevant to consider the interviewees' questions, as these also are able to present a specific attitude and commitment. Through the interviews, the interviewees ask a lot of questions that they answer themselves or wonder. Several interviewees use wondering questions when describing their perceptions of Wizz Air and its communication about being the greenest. This is seen as Simon states: "They say they are the greenest airline, but how can I be sure?" (App. F, p. 8, l. 23), indicating how Simon doubts Wizz Air's communication. Another interviewee, Sofie, expresses similar doubts: "[...] but are they the greenest?" (App. B, p. 5, l. 16) and "[...] you are low-cost, so how does this relate to you being the greenest?" (App. B, p. 5, ll. 29-30. Sofie questions whether Wizz Air is the greenest by questioning the airline's communication. Jesper also questions the

low-cost and sustainability aspect: "How can you be so cheap and also be sustainable?" (App. E, p. 11, l. 26), and similarly, Stine questions: "How can you be low-cost and at the same time be green?" (App. H, p. 11, ll. 1-2). Common to all these questions is that the interviewees need more clarification on Wizz Air's communication. They show doubt and are critical about Wizz Air being the greenest, as well as how the airline can provide cheap fares and being low-cost as the greenest airline. The use of these questions indicates that the interviewees are not convinced of the communication. This doubt also shows to a large degree when asking Anne-Sofie what she thinks of the different sustainability pages from Wizz Air, as she, among other things, answers with the question: "How should I as a consumer believe it?" (App. C, p. 7, l. 10). Anne-Sofie's question implies a doubt and indicates that she does not find the communication credible. Furthermore, this indicates how she draws on greenwashing, as was presented in the social context. The use of questions is a linguistic feature relevant to look at within the textual dimension, as questions can indicate and present doubts about the interviewees' perceptions of Wizz Air and its communication, which is evident in the examples mentioned above.

When analyzing modality and a hesitating acknowledgment of what is said, it is also supported by the way some of the interviewees construct their sentences with conditional clauses to signify that for something to be present, something else must also be present. Some of the interviewees use conditional clauses to support their doubts, such as Amalie mentioning: " [...] if they actually do a lot of good for the environment." (App. D, p. 9, l. 28). By using 'if', Amalie indicates some doubt in the phrase, not entirely sure that Wizz Air is sustainable. The same attitude is found within Jesper's perspectives on Wizz Air's web pages: "[...] and if it is true, everything they write here, then it is really cool [...]" (App. E, p. 8, ll. 18-19). Jesper using 'if' in the phrase indicates that he does think it is positive that Wizz Air has implemented these environmental initiatives if it actually does this. Again, this shows an interviewee who illustrates a doubtful perception of Wizz Air's communication and is not sure that he can trust the company. Using conditional clauses is another way for the interviewees to raise doubts about Wizz Air's communication.

As briefly stated in the theoretical framework of textual analysis, within modality, it is also relevant to analyze mental process clauses, as they also can show the interviewees' perceptions and degrees of commitment. Several of the interviewees express themselves with 'I think' before or after their statements, such as Sofie when answering what her perception is of low-cost airlines' commitment to sustainability: "[...] so it is not their first priority, I think." (App. B, p. 4, l. 11). Sofie states how she does

not believe that sustainability is low-cost airlines' biggest priority in general but ends with the mental process clause 'I think'. By adding the 'I think' in her statement, it consists of some level of doubt. Other interviewees also express themselves like this within the same question. For instance, Jesper mentions: "[...] I just think it is difficult to be sustainable when you are polluting [...]" (App. E, p. 6, ll. 7-8), and Simon states: "[...] I think it is just this impression that the low-cost airlines do not really care about much other than sending some people away and making some money." (App. F, p. 4, ll. 6-8). As with Sofie, the use of 'I think' presents what the interviewees believe to be true; however, it suggests that they are not entirely sure. Common to all of these statements is that these interviewees' personal perceptions of low-cost airlines and their commitment to sustainability are two challenging aspects to unite, as the interviewees perceive low-cost airlines to be polluting the environment and prioritizing a high number of passengers rather than prioritizing the climate (App. B, p. 4, l. 11; App. E, p. 6, ll. 7-8; App. F, p. 4, ll. 6-8).

Through the textual dimension analysis of the interviews, several linguistic features have been analyzed to investigate the interviewees' language use to present certain attitudes and perceptions of low-cost airlines, Wizz Air, and its environmental sustainability communication. Several of the interviewees use metaphors and adjectives to describe their attitudes. While most of the metaphors and adjectives used signaled skepticism towards Wizz Air being both low-cost and highly environmentally committed, some interviewees, such as Amalie, Tanya, and Simon, also presented positive attitudes towards Wizz Air's initiatives. Through the analysis of the positive adjectives and phrases, it suggests that Wizz Air succeeds with its CSR communication within a few of the interviewees. Nonetheless, analyzing the modality in the interviewees' statements presents their level of commitment, and it was found that their statements often signaled doubt and skepticism about Wizz Air being the greenest airline. Furthermore, several interviewees signaled wonder and confusion with the use of questions about Wizz Air's communication. This suggests that consumers are still doubtful despite Wizz Air communicating about the environment and sustainability initiatives. This furthermore suggests how the interviewees talk about it in this specific way, because, in the social context, it is presented how these topics are important, and so it reflects in the way they talk about it. Simply, the interviewees use the linguistic elements they use based on the social context in which they are influenced by. It is necessary to underline that this textual analysis of the interviewees' answers has only analyzed some specific linguistic features that can help investigate this thesis' research goal of finding out the interviewees' evaluations of Wizz Air's communication about the

environment, being the greenest choice and at the same time a low-cost airline, and how the respondents perceive this concerning credibility.

5.4 Sub Conclusion and Discussion of CDA

Through the analysis of the three dimensions, the interviewees' perceptions and attitudes have been analyzed on different levels, and it is crucial to notice how the three levels are interconnected, for instance, when the text is analyzed, it is under the influence of the discursive and social practice. The analysis of social practice showed how sustainability and climate change are widely discussed topics in society, for instance through the news, and together with the increase in travel activity, these areas are debated more than ever. Furthermore, these discourses were also reflected upon in the interviewees' answers, suggesting how these sources have influenced the interviewees' perceptions. The analysis of the discursive practice presented how the interviewees draw upon their background knowledge and discourses to account for their perception of Wizz Air's environmental communication regarding credibility. Some of the interviewees draw upon the fashion industry and compare Wizz Air with fast fashion, which furthermore is used by the interviewees to create their perception of the low-cost airline. Several of the interviewees already carry the perception of how low-cost airlines and sustainability do not correspond, which also affects their perception of Wizz Air. Nonetheless, an interviewee, such as Amalie, finds Wizz Air's communication as cool as she already has the perception of how low-cost airlines are more sustainable that high-cost. This also indicates how the interviewees with an already negative perception of low-cost airlines and sustainability do not think positively about Wizz Air's communication. On the contrary, Amalie, who does believe that low-cost airlines are more sustainable, is also a fan of Wizz Air's communication. The power relation of Wizz Air being the communicators on its own webpage was also analyzed, as the interviewees present their concerns that Wizz Air can write whatever it wishes to highlight. Several of the interviewees' answers suggest how it affects the credibility of Wizz Air's communication. Moreover, the interviewees specify how it can be discussed in other ways and with other perspectives, rather than just Wizz Air's perspectives, as the company represents a strong position. Several interviewees also draw upon their concerns of greenwashing, as they have been influenced and affected by what they hear in the news about other companies. This suggests how the social context influences the discursive dimension.

The analysis of the textual dimension presented how the interviewees' use of adjectives and metaphors can display their attitudes. Using metaphors, the interviewees could express themselves with a few words that indicated a large area of meaning. Using adjectives, several of the interviewees expressed skepticism, for instance, by using 'pseudo' and 'unrealistic', while some positive adjectives were also found, such as 'cool'. This suggested how some interviewees found some of Wizz Air's environmental communication were beneficial in creating a positive corporate image, however, most interviewees expressed themselves with linguistic elements that portrayed Wizz Air as untrustworthy and insincere. The modality used in the interviewees' answers reflects how several doubt Wizz Air's communication by using words such as 'may' that indicate a lower level of commitment.

It is essential to notice that what was found in the textual analysis is under the influence of the social and discursive practice, and the only way to explain it is to look at what is going on outside the interviews. Thereby, the three levels are interconnected and influence each other to a great extent, as the interviewees use these specific linguistic elements to express themselves, as they are influenced by what is going on in the social context, such as the increased focus on sustainability and climate concerns. This is also why several of the interviewees' use negatively charged adjectives and metaphors toward Wizz Air's communication, as they draw upon their knowledge from the social context to construct their meaning of Wizz Air. As several of the interviewees in the discursive dimension also draw upon their skepticism about Wizz Air's communication being fake, this suggests how it is influenced by the increased degree of companies greenwashing, and how news and media covers these aspects. The social and discursive dimensions are the levels in which it is possible to draw out explanations for why the interviewees talk about things the way they do, which again evidently indicates how the three levels in the three-dimensional model are interconnected.

As the analysis found different relevant and interesting elements that specify the interviewees' perceptions toward low-cost airlines, especially Wizz Air and its environmental sustainability communication, the following chapter will present a discussion of methodology elements that are fitting to discuss to evaluate the thesis' findings.

6. Discussion

The following section will present a discussion that considers and criticizes different elements from my interviews, interviewees' answers, and analysis. It is relevant to discuss and consider these aspects to

reflect on the thesis' findings and, lastly, the answer to the research question. Considering these aspects will create a discussion of the data and the accuracy of this.

6.1 Considerations of Method

Within this section, considerations of the method will be discussed, such as the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee and the elements within the interview guide which might have affected the interviewees' answers and findings. This is evident to consider some of the different elements and weaknesses of these, as this provides insight into the reliability of the thesis.

6.1.1 The Relationship Between Interviewer and Interviewee

Considering the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewees is relevant when reflecting on their answers and attitudes. Through elaborating the interview guide, several aspects were considered, as explained in section 4.2.1.3. Still, after conducting the interviews and analyzing, it is necessary to consider that when the individual interviewee answers a given question, something might be at stake in reference to what I have mentioned in a previous question or explanation. An example is when the interviewees are informed that we will cover the theme of sustainability and are asked the question: "What is your understanding of sustainability?" (App. A, p. 1). Within this question, my intention, as a researcher, was to get the individual interviewee's general perception of sustainability and what it means to him or her overall. While some interviewees focus on sustainability being the responsibility to make more green choices and to take care of the planet (App. C, p. 3, l. 16-18; App. E, p. 4, ll. 25-27; App. G, p. 3, ll. 26-28; App. I, p. 3, ll. 26-27), half of the interviewees mention the flight industry in their answer (App. H, p. 3, ll. 28-30; App. F, p. 3, ll. 1-3; App. D, p. 4, ll. 3-5; App. B, p. 3, ll. 14-16). For instance, Simon answers the question by only focusing on the airline and transport industry: "Well, I am thinking, among other things, about this, now, now you come to think about it in relation to airplanes [...] in general, air travel is not sustainable." (App. F, p. 3, ll. 1-3). It can be discussed whether the interviewees would have mentioned the flight industry when explaining sustainability in general if I had not introduced it in the beginning. Still, as accounted for in the social context, more people in society are getting aware of climate change, also in connection with the flight industry (Cocolas et al. 2020, 319), which also can be a reason why the interviewees connect the two aspects. If the introduction and previous questions had

not mentioned the flight industry, or if the general sustainability question had been asked as the first question, the interviewees might have had another perspective. Overall, it is necessary to consider this aspect of influencing the interviewee within the interview, which must be considered in the findings; the interviewees might consider what I, as the interviewer, want or wish to hear, rather than their completely unaffected and sincere perceptions. It is also evident to consider that I, as the interviewer, do have the power in the interview, and, therefore, the interviewees might wish to answer what they think I would like to hear. For instance, as it was found in the social context, sustainability has become a hegemonic discourse in society, and more people are choosing sustainable alternatives (Deloitte.com, n.d.; Jakucionyte-Skodiene and Liobikiene 2021, 1), and when the interviewees' answer how much environmental sustainability matters to them (App. A, p. 1), they might answer in a way to appear good, since they know how vital sustainability has become in society. Nevertheless, the interviewees' answers and perceptions are treated as their honest truth; still the credibility of their answers must always be considered.

6.1.2 Other Considerations of Method

The discussion of the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee, and the power relation with this, is not the only consideration that must be taken within the methodology.

Another aspect to think about was the fact that not all the interviewees had flown Wizz Air in advance. A critique of this might be that the interviewees that had been passengers of Wizz Air beforehand already carried a perception of the airline based on their experience with it. In contrast, the interviewees that did not know the airline beforehand only got to present their attitudes towards Wizz Air based on the web pages that were shown during the interview. This difference could affect the results and answers regarding Wizz Air's communication. Thereby, in future similar research, it could be interesting to conduct interviews with interviewees that had all flown with Wizz Air or on the contrary, had never heard about it before. Another aspect relevant is the fact that I, as the researcher, have selected specific elements within the interviews to find results for my research question. Even though the subjective view from me as a researcher was avoided, with a large amount of data from the eighth interviews, some specific elements had to be selected. This is also why it can be discussed whether another researcher would achieve the same results.

Moreover, it is interesting to consider whether I would obtain the same attitudes and perceptions from the interviewees if the thesis had been based on another low-cost airline, such as Ryanair and its environmental communication. In seven out of the eight interviews, Ryanair was mentioned when the interviewees had to describe their perception of low-cost airlines in general (App. B, p. 2, l. 11; App. C, p. 2, l. 22; App. D, p. 2, l. 17; App. F. p. 2, l. 11; App. G, p. 2, l. 7; App. H, p. 2, l. 5; App. I, p. 2, l. 8). This suggests how Ryanair is known to be a low-cost airline within stakeholders. In 2020, Ryanair published an environmental policy called 'Europe's Cleanest & Greenest Airlines Group' stating: "As well as being Europe's favorite airline, with the best customer service, Ryanair is Europe's cleanest, greenest airline." (Ryanair 2020, 2). Based on Ryanair calling itself the cleanest and greenest airline in 2020, it could have been interesting to investigate whether the interviewees' perceptions and attitudes would have been the same as with Wizz Air. Furthermore, this could have provided more insight into the power of the reputation of a specific airline rather than low-cost airlines in general. Furthermore, in future research, it could be interesting to conduct similar research analyzing consumers' perceptions of a high-cost airline's environmental communication regarding credibility, such as Emirates.

Several elements have been critiqued and evaluated with the discussion and considerations of the method. From the considerations of the method, it is evident to evaluate the different stages in the interviews and the interviewees' answers. Nonetheless, while the interview as a method has shown to consist of several evident points of discussion, it is a great method to gain in-depth answers, attitudes, and perceptions from individuals. The following section will present a conclusion to the thesis with these considerations in mind and, lastly, answer the research question.

7. Conclusion

Throughout the thesis, the aim has been to research and find an answer to the research question: 'How does Wizz Air's sustainability communication as a low-cost airline affect its receivers' perception of the airline's credibility?'. From the interviewees' attitudes and perceptions of Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication, it can be concluded that several of the interviewees do believe it is an excellent initiative that an airline focuses on sustainability, as the discourse of sustainability has gained increased attention in the social context; however, most of them doubt Wizz Air's credibility. Several reasons cause the interviewees to doubt. One reason why the interviewees doubt Wizz Air's credibility

is that most already perceive that low-cost airlines are cheap. Therefore, they believe that sustainability is not affordable to these airlines. For instance, this was found in the textual dimension with the use of metaphors and adjectives, such as Jesper using 'yin and yang' to describe his perception of low-cost airlines and their commitment to environmental sustainability. The analysis of the social context established how the travel industry and the focus on climate change and sustainability are increasing in society, which seems to be influencing consumers' mindsets and perceptions; the environment and sustainability are topics that everyone is talking about, for instance in the news and media, and therefore, it has also become an essential factor within consumer choices as they are affected by this. Moreover, the social practice contributed to an understanding of how it affected the discursive practice, creating an understanding of why the interviewees draw on the discourses they draw on. Furthermore, this supports how each element of the dimensions from Fairclough's three-dimensional model wraps around the next and influences which choices are made. In analyzing the discursive dimension, the interviewees draw a lot upon their members' resources and already existing knowledge, which is another factor affecting the perception of Wizz Air's credibility. The interviewees draw upon their experiences from other industries and companies, such as fast fashion, as they perceive that cheap fast-fashion clothing brands are not sustainable. Moreover, several interviewees touch upon greenwashing, which they transfer to their understanding of Wizz Air's communication. This is also why several of them question whether Wizz Air's environmental communication is genuine or unreliable. Furthermore, this perception is supported by the fact that many of the interviewees emphasize how Wizz Air is in power on its own corporate webpage, as the company can write what it wishes to highlight.

Nonetheless, even though most of the interviewees are skeptical about Wizz Air's environmental sustainability communication, a few are positive about it. For instance, Amalie is generally positive due to her prior experiences and already positive existing perception that low-cost airlines are more sustainable than high cost. Furthermore, this indicates how the interviewees' already existing knowledge affects their perceptions of Wizz Air's communication. On the contrary, the interviewees that already had a bad perception of low-cost airlines and their environmental commitment beforehand also seemed to be more critical and skeptical towards the credibility of Wizz Air.

To conclude, the CSR communication from Wizz Air about the environment is, for most interviewees, not accepted as credible based on their already existing knowledge and perception of low-cost products, airlines, and their commitment to the environment. Wizz Air's sustainability

communication as a low-cost airline affects its receivers' perception in a way that leaves the majority skeptical, doubting, and questioning the low-cost airline's credibility. At the same time, only a few interviewees seem to perceive it as positive and provide Wizz Air with a better image. This also indicates how a company's CSR activities are not always received as credible and genuine, as its reputation among stakeholders most likely will affect the perception.

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