Irresponsible Responsibility – Selling Cancersticks in the Age of Responsibility

- An analysis of British American Tobacco’s CSR communication in the 2009 sustainability report and how they seek to construct their organisation as socially responsible in the search for organizational legitimacy.

Signe Skovby Ahm, 288039

Supervisor: Irene Quist Mortensen

Bachelor Thesis, spring 2011
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Summary

In the present business environment more and more business’ engage in CSR activities (Institute of Business Ethics, 2011 p. 4). Theorists argue that the increasing engagement is founded on increasing stakeholder expectations (Matten & Crane, cited in Palazzo & Richter, 2005 p. 390). However, some industries face challenges when trying to comply with these increased expectations, because how does a company, whose core product harms the consumer, engage in CSR? There is a widespread skepticism towards the tobacco industry and their engagement in CSR because of past attempts to manipulate with the perception of the harmfulness of their products (Palazzo & Richter, 2005).

Due to the paradox of the will to do good by the means of CSR and the lethal nature of their products it is interesting to examine how British American Tobacco (BAT) handle this controversy and how they construct themselves as socially responsible.

The empirical data for investigation is the Sustainability Report 2009 (appendix 1) published by BAT, but with a linguistic focus on the Chief Executive’s Overview. The methodological approach for examining the text is the Social Constructivist approach facilitating an analysis based on interactions and especially language (Burr, 2003).

Approaching this thesis statement from a social constructivist point of view facilitates an understanding of how British American tobacco makes use of their linguistic resources, by the means of a critical discourse analysis, in order to construct a reality of the organization as socially responsible despite the contradicting nature of their products.

This analysis build on Schwartz and Carrolls Three-domain model to CSR which is valuable when mapping CSR activities when business integrate society’s expectations which is in thread with the reason for increased CSR activity given in the first paragraph combined with BAT’s own orientation towards their CSR strategy and stakeholder engagement. Several theorists argue that CSR has a strong link to stakeholders. The sustainability report has a strong stakeholder orientation and in order to understand the motivations of BAT in accordance to their communicative and practical choices a stakeholder mapping and communication analysis is important. The stakeholder analysis is used for mapping which stakeholders BAT perceives as their most important.
BAT handles the controversy of their business by seeking to construct the organisation as socially responsible. BAT does this through an extensive stakeholder awareness and -addressing and their linguistic choices. The outcomes of the analysis indicates that BAT focuses at several different CSR dimensions and addresses these activities towards stakeholders who have the power to impose their will on the organization.

The major linguistic influencers are the organizational attribution of responsibility and the discursive choices. In the overview there is a high degree of interdiscursivity. The main discourses drawn on are a stakeholder discourse, a business strategic discourse, a devotion discourse, a sustainability discourse and an interview discourse.

Communicating their CSR initiatives by the means of the devotion discourse BAT shows their stakeholders their seriousness towards their strategy and positions themselves as a responsible business.

On the other hand BAT also handles the controversy by repressing the tobacco discourse. When repressing this discourse BAT reconstructs the reality of the controversial business through a ‘normalization process’ but also distancing them from the past and repositioning them as socially responsible.

In order to communicate with their stakeholders BAT makes use of a two-way asymmetrical communication approach in the sustainability report which means that the report is sender oriented with an unequal power distribution in favor of BAT which also allows BAT to control the communication which again limits the organizational transparency.

It can be argued that the sustainability report is heavily influenced by a recognition of the economic effects when taking on CSR initiatives and complying with stakeholders’ expectations.

Through the analysis it becomes evident that BAT has a reactive behavior towards CSR since they respond to the will of the consumers and stakeholders. Hence the overall goal of the sustainability report is to comply with stakeholder expectation and get the stakeholders to ascribe the cooperation a higher value due to the good social activities.

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1. Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is not a fairly new concept in the modern business world, but recently the field has become of greater interest to many companies. Today more and more companies engage and report about their CSR activities. In 2010 81% of all FTSE100 companies had a standalone CSR report (Institute of Business Ethics, 2011 p. 4). Matten and Crane argues that the increase in reporting and initiatives is due to the rising expectations businesses have met from their stakeholders in recent years concerning their societal responsibilities (Cited in Palazzo & Richter, 2005 p. 390). Morsing and Schultz stresses that CSR communication is considered important by the general public (2006 p. 146).

But what happens if an industry whose core product harms the consumer starts to engage in CSR? Tobacco companies have started to position themselves as good corporate citizens, which have to do with transparency and accountability (Palazzo & Richter, 2005 p. 387). Palazzo and Richter questions whether tobacco companies, who cannot live up to one of the simplest rules of CSR, *primum non nocere* meaning *first do no harm*, can achieve a status as a good corporate citizenship (2005).

Even the World Health Organisation has questioned the possibility for tobacco companies to make use of CSR because of the ‘inherent contradiction’ (Palazzo & Richter, 2005 p. 388).

Because of this grand scepticism Palazzo and Richter argues that it seems like the CSR reporting in the tobacco sector is more difficult than in other industries because different approaches than the mainstream are needed (2005 p. 392). While CSR activities normally seek to gain public respect or reputation the tobacco industry have to make use of this strategy merely to exist (2005 p. 396).

1.1 Problem statement

On the basis of the past strategies of the tobacco industry trying to manipulate with the harmful nature of their products (Palazzo & Richter, 2005) and the paradox in providing health-threatening products combined with corporate social responsibly efforts this thesis seek to answer the following research question:
'On the basis of the general skepticism towards certain sectors providing unhealthy products, the objective of this thesis is to investigate how British American Tobacco handles this controversy by the means of Corporate Social Responsibility communication’.

On the basis of this thesis question it will be examined how British American Tobacco (BAT) handles the controversy between CSR and the harmful nature of their products. This is done on the basis of the linguistic tools BAT makes use of when communicating their CSR efforts. Furthermore I will look into the reasons for their communicative and practical choices and how BAT seeks to construct their organization as socially responsible despite the global skepticism. The empirical data used for this investigation is the Sustainability Report 2009 (appendix 1). BAT have received several awards for their sustainability reports and have, according to Francesco, advanced experience in CSR and are very likely to establish a trend for CSR in their industry (2006 p. 76).

The Chief Executive’s Overview (appendix 2) will make the foundation for the discursive analysis but the entire report will be used as a reference for the activity mapping and stakeholder analysis.

The case of the tobacco industry involving in CSR activities is interesting because of the controversy between the harmful nature of the products combined with the classical saying ‘first do no harm’ (Palazzo & Richter, 2005 p. 388) which is the minimum CSR criterion. Furthermore many stakeholders have a critical view on the so-called ‘sin industry’ which includes industries which produce alcohol, weapons, tobacco etc. (Morsing M., 2006 p. 136).

British American Tobacco is interesting because it was the first organization in the industry to start reporting on the CSR initiatives and has, in recent years, received several awards for their sustainability reports.

1.2 Delimitations
The Sustainability Report 2009 is very extensive therefore only chosen parts from the report that will make the foundation for an analysis.

In order for a company to build a strong CSR profile an inclusion of brand identity and image is an essential part. However, this thesis focuses on the linguistic elements of the sustainability report and the social construction of the information in the report. The linguistic elements in the text establish
the communicative event and the base for social interaction between the company and its stakeholders. Hence, including branding would move the thesis away from the communicative approach taken into a marketing approach which would be a different thesis.

1.3 Structure

In the following section the structure and flow of this thesis is explained. In order to answer the thesis statement this thesis is divided into 5 parts starting by framing the area leading to a linguistic analysis and finished up with a conclusion.

Chapter two presents British American Tobacco. This presentation includes the organisational reach, their approach to CSR and their approach to reporting the CSR efforts. It also includes a brief look into their motivations for CSR. The purpose of this chapter is to bring attention to the contextual factors in which the report was made. This chapter forms a relevant base when analysing how the organisation communicates their CSR efforts since the efforts is founded on the context.

Chapter three provides an insight into the scientific approach of social constructivism used for this thesis combined with the research method used to analyse the empirical data. Furthermore the empirical data is investigated and it is explained how it is used in this thesis.

The fourth chapter provides the foundation for the field of CSR looking into the historical and contextual uses of CSR. This chapter function as a background knowledge section mapping the field of this thesis and providing the foundation of the CSR and stakeholder analytical tools presented in chapter four.

Taking starting point in the empirical data in the form of a non-financial report, this section also serves to provide a brief overview over what non-financial reports are and what they include.

Chapter five provides an elaboration of the analytical tools used to determine how BAT communicate their CSR policy.

The first analytical tool examined is the Three-domain model of CSR presented by Schwartz and Carroll. This model is useful for mapping CSR activities into three main categories; economic, legal and ethical. The model also provides a conceptualization for overlapping domains.
Many theorists argue that stakeholders are essential in CSR communication. The theoretical framework for CSR communication is based on Morsing and Schultz’s, 2006, interpretation of Grunig and Hunt’s, 1984, view on Public Relations.

In order to map these stakeholder, as to examine the vital groups for the organisation, Mitchell and Agle’s stakeholder mapping is used.

The last analytical tool used is the critical discourse analysis, CDA, examined by Norman Fairclough. CDA provides a framework for analyzing BAT’s CSR communication based on a social constructivist approach to knowledge. Discursive practice is used to examine the way the language is used to build successful accounts for the sender (Burr, 2003 p. 63).

This discursive analysis builds on M.A.K Hallidays register analysis which consists of a textual analysis based on the ideational, interpersonal and textual resources.

The sixth chapter contains the analysis itself of the Chief Executive’s Overview (appendix 2) from the sustainability report. The analysis will draw on references from the entire report but focus the linguistic analysis on the overview.

In thread with the scientific approach of social constructivism the main challenge of this section is to examine the CSR communication in terms of the construction of a reality of BAT as socially responsible.

As stated above this section will include a CSR activity mapping analysis, stakeholder mapping and communication analysis and finished off with a critical discourse analysis putting the report into a social context explaining the communicative choices from a view of the contemporary society.

The last chapter sums up the thesis and provides concluding finding and comments based on the previous chapters.

2. Presentation of British American tobacco

In this chapter BAT is introduced briefly by the means of their history, global reach and approach to CSR reporting.

BAT is one of the largest tobacco companies in the world with products sold in more than 180 countries. Their more than 200 different brands ensured a sale of more than 708 billion cigarettes in 2010 (British American Tobacco, 2011).
The company was established in 1902 and is ‘born international’ meaning that the company from
the very beginning operated in several continents. The product range includes cigarettes, cigars,
cigarillos, roll-your-own tobacco, pipe tobacco and smokeless Swedish-style snus. The major
brands are Dunhill, Kent, Lucky Strike and Pall Mall (British American Tobacco, 2011 pp. 04, 06).
The first CSR report in the tobacco industry was published by BAT in 2001-2002 (Palazzo &
Richter, 2005 p. 392). BAT argues that because the nature of their products pose a risk to the
consumer it is even more important that the business is managed responsible according to R&D,
manufacturing and marketing (British American Tobacco, 2011 p. 05). They further state that they
seek to reach their commercial goals in ways consistent with the changing expectations of a modern
tobacco company by involving stakeholders (British American Tobacco, 2011 p. 01).
The long-term strategy of the group is to achieve leadership in the global tobacco industry by the
means of a winning organization, growth, productivity and responsibility (British American
Tobacco, 2011 p. 02).
BAT emphasizes that they do not attempt to boost the number of smokers, but focuses on offering
quality brands to existing smokers obtaining a higher marked share at the expense of their
competitors, and only to those aware of the risks (British American Tobacco, 2011 pp. 03, 07).
BAT has received several awards for their sustainability reports and is a highly prominent company
in CSR engagement and rhetoric.

3. Method
The following paragraph will address the scientific method used to examine the empirical data.
First the scientific approach is presented and afterwards the empirical data, how it is chosen and
why.

3.1 Scientific approach

*Social constructivism*

In order to examine the sustainability report from British American Tobacco, a qualititative approach
has been chosen with point of departure in social constructivism in terms of knowledge creation.
According to social constructivists’ knowledge is constructed between people in their daily
interactions. Therefore truth is also historically and culturally determined and not a product of
objective observations (Burr, 2003 pp. 4-5) and all knowledge is created on the basis of one
perspective or another (Burr, 2003 p. 6). Therefore all interactions, especially language, are of great interest in the social constructivist orientation to knowledge (Burr, 2003 p. 4).

As mentioned previously, language is of great interest in social constructivism with particular concern for discursive practice which refers to the interactants use of language and discourse in their interactions when building specific accounts or statements (Burr, 2003 pp. 16-17).

Approaching this thesis statement from a social constructivist point of view facilitates an understanding of how British American tobacco makes use of their linguistic resources in order to construct a reality of the organization as socially responsible despite the contradicting nature of their products.

3.2 Research Method
In line with the social constructive approach to this thesis, the research method is based on a qualitative approach.

This qualitative approach will be based on a CSR activity mapping, a stakeholder mapping and communication analysis along with a critical discourse analysis.

The chief executive’s overview (British American Tobacco, p. 2) from the sustainability report have been chosen as empirical data for the in-depth critical discourse analysis. This section of the report seeks to serve as an overview of the following report and as a strong indicator for BAT’s relation to CSR. Therefore this section includes some important information about the communicative approach and represents the rest of the report.

The CSR activity mapping and stakeholder mapping and communication strategy analysis is partly based on the chief executives overview but combined with information from the rest of the report. These three major analytical tools are used to determine how BAT makes use of different strategies and focuses in order to construct BAT as a socially responsible organization despite the harmful nature of the products and to deal with the controversy between the field of CSR and the nature of their products and what their motivations for these engagements are.

4. The concept of CSR and notions on sustainability reports
This chapter provides a foundation for the field of CSR and sustainability reports. The chapter begins with a brief overview about the historical and contextual uses of CSR ended with a short reference on the importance of stakeholder relations in CSR.
The latter part of the chapter provides a brief introduction to the content and uses of non-financial reports. This section seeks to provide a basic understanding of the empirical data used in the analysis.

Overall this chapter seeks to map the field of this thesis providing background knowledge of the field of CSR combined with information about non-financial reports.

As stated in the introduction, the notion of CSR is not a fairly new concept in the modern business world. In fact Corporate Social Responsibility is a production of industrialization (May, Cheney, & Roper, 2007), (Schwartz & Carroll, 2004). When companies started to grow bigger and created monopolies it caused a public debate about their appropriateness which again caused companies to develop education, recreation etc. programs for their employees (May et al., 2007 p. 4). At this point of time the actions were as much about legitimating as community and public service (Roland Marchand cited in May et al., 2007 p. 4).

Today there is a general agreement that CSR is concerned with ‘the organization’s status and activities with respect to its perceived societal obligations’ (Brown & Dacin cited in Beckmann S.C., Morsing M., Reisch L., 2006 p. 17). Hence CSR is the expression of a ‘voluntary effort by which the firm complies with ethical standards, as opposed to purely economic or legal imperatives (Jones, 1980 & Carroll, 1999, cited in Kakabadse, Rozuel, & Lee-Davies, 2005 p. 283). These efforts and perceived obligations are based on society’s expectations and these expectations have dramatically increased over the years (Kakabadse et al., 2005 pp. 178, 284)

Several authors have pointed out CSR as a diffuse and contextual approach with several different definitions and concepts. The concept of sustainability is often used in relation to CSR and relevant here because it forms the name of the empirical data: 2009 Sustainability Report. The concept refers to that a business shall not just seek short-term profits but a multitude of goals which all adds up to the business’ survival in a changing environment (Kakabadse et al., 2005 p. 283). To understand the word in its purest sense without a context, the New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thoughts is used. In here the word ‘sustainability’ is defined as a managerial practice designed to ensure that the exploitation of resources is done in such a manner ‘that it protects the resource base for future generations’ (Bullock & Trombley, 1999 p. 849). Another definition is provided by Longman’s dictionary explaining that sustainability is about being able to continue for a long time (Mayor & et
al., 2006 p. 1561). Hence the CSR activities are those that lead to sustainable development meaning that CSR and sustainability is a process and not an outcome.

However, many theorists argue that the basic motivation for organizations to engage in CSR activities is the economic dimension. This is e.g. expressed in Joep Cornelissens’ notion: ‘CSR initiatives are related to reputational returns and an overall better financial performance’ (Cornelissen, 2008 p. 44).

Many of these theories highlight the importance of stakeholder relations. E.g. states Homann & Blome-Drees in their ‘modern’ dialogue based concept that ‘accepting responsibility means to give answers to inquiries of internal and external stakeholders, to give account for business behavior, and to develop a culture of transparency, reliability, and trustworthiness in a dialogue on equal terms of sovereign partners’ (Beckmann S.C., Morsing M., Reisch L., 2006).

According to Francesco, ‘sustainability reports are the tools companies commonly use to formalize a firm’s position on CSR (2006 p. 73) and are often produced as a result of an accountability process, which relates to a process of becoming an open and responsive organization (2006 p. 76). Sustainability reports are reports that integrates social, economic and environmental issues into a document (Francesco, 2006 p. 76)

Sustainability reports are written in retro perspective and are primarily written about past performance, but the reports help stakeholders understand a company’s growth perspective. According to Owen and O’Dwyer sustainability reports often address two major issues; the examination of the environmental and social and the examination of stakeholder engagement and dialogue procedures (Owen, O’Dwyer, 2008 p. 396). Owen and O’Dwyer argues that the identification of stakeholders is important since these are the expected users of the report and they are the reference point for many decision when preparing the report (2008, p. 394).

To sum up it can be said that CSR is a diffuse and contextual concept. However the general agreement is that it is concerned with societal obligations and long term stakeholder relations. The perspective on CSR in this thesis takes starting point in the term ‘sustainability’ which concerns a continuing process with focus on future quality. These efforts are often, as in the case of this thesis, expressed through a sustainability report which is a tool used to formalize a firm’s position on CSR (Francesco, 2006 p. 73).
5. Analytical tools

This chapter includes an examination of the analytical tools used to determine how BAT communicates their CSR policy.

The first analytical tool is the Three-domain model of CSR elaborated by Schwartz and Carroll. This model is useful for mapping CSR activities into three main categories; economic, legal and ethical.

As stated in the previous chapter it is argued that stakeholders are essential in CSR communication. These stakeholders can be mapped according to Mitchell, Agle and Wood’s Venn diagram about ‘The Principle of Who and What Really Counts’ (1997 p. 864) in terms of power, legitimacy and urgency.

The theoretical framework for CSR communication is based on Morsing and Schultz’s, 2006, interpretation of Grunig and Hunt’s, 1984, view on Public Relations.

The last analytical tool used is the critical discourse analysis (CDA) examined by Norman Fairclough. CDA provides a framework for analyzing BAT’s CSR communication based on a social constructivist approach to knowledge. Discursive analysis is used to examine the way the language is used to build successful accounts for the sender (Burr, 2003 p. 63).

This discursive analysis builds on M.A.K Hallidays register analysis which consists of a textual analysis based on the ideational, interpersonal and textual resources.

By using these analytical tools it can be determined which motives that lie behind the individual activity, to whom these activities are addressed and in which manner they are communicated and which discourses BAT draws on to represent themselves as a socially responsible organization.

5.1 Three-domain model of CSR

Schwartz and Carroll (2004) argue that definitions of CSR fall into two main categories. The first school of thought argues that business should only focus on maximizing the profit only constrained by the law and with minimal ethical concern. One of the major theorists in this area is Friedman with his article on ‘the business of business is business’ from 1970 (cited in Crane et. al, 2008 p. 6).

The second school of thought includes a wider range of society obligations. This thesis takes point of departure in the latter school of thought also mentioned in Garriga and Melé’s (2004 p. 57) integrative theories. These theories look at how a business integrates the society’s demands and argues that business’ depends on the society to exist and grow.
This theoretical framework is applicable here since BAT’s own orientation towards CSR has a strong reference towards societal expectations.

On the basis of this school, Schwartz and Carroll have developed a Three-Domain Model (TD model) of CSR. The TD model is a tool for mapping organisational CSR activities according to three major responsibility areas: legal, economic and ethical.

The Venn diagram suggests how each of the domains constitutes a set of organizational characteristics that are useful when analyzing organizations activities (Garriga & Melé, 2004 p. 40).

The economic domain includes activities that have either direct or indirect positive impact on the economy of the organization in the form of maximizing the profit or share value. Schwartz and Carroll states that it is generally expected that ‘the majority of corporate activities will be economic in nature’ (2004 p. 40).

The legal domain of CSR includes the organization’s responsibilities towards the federal, state, and local jurisdictions in terms of legal expectations by society.

In the ethical domain the activities include the ethical responsibilities of an organisation which are expected by the stakeholders and general public.

The assumption of this model, and weaker point, is that the three domains contain the most important aspects of CSR and that these are separable in the ‘pure’ domains. This is often not the case, since Schwartz and Carroll argue that other domains might exist and one activity will almost always have some impact on another (2004 p. 520).

5.2 Stakeholder theory

A characteristic of CSR is the idea about a business’ accountability to various stakeholders (Kakabadse et al., 2005 p. 284), Carroll (1991) states that there is a natural fit between CSR and stakeholders (cited in Kakabadse et al., 2005 p. 288).
According to Freeman (1984) stakeholders are defined ‘as any group who affects or is affected by the achievement’ (cited in Morsing M., 2006 p. 138) If CSR aim at defining which responsibilities a company has, the stakeholder concept concerns the issues of whom to be responsible to.

5.2.1 Stakeholder mapping

Mitchell and Agle provide a framework for stakeholder identification by showing ‘how power and legitimacy interact and, when combined with urgency, create different types of stakeholders with different expected behavioral patterns regarding the firm’ (1997 p. 863). This framework is concerned with ‘The Principle of Who and What Really Counts’ (Mitchell et al., 1997 p. 864). The identification framework works with three stakeholder attributes which identifies the stakeholders in accordance to the company: power, legitimacy and urgency (Mitchell et al., 1997 pp. 865-866). The closer the stakeholder gets to the center of the Venn framework, obtaining more attributes, the more important the stakeholder is in the eyes of the organisation. Hence is the stakeholder position a socially construct which can varies over time. The outer circle consists of stakeholders with just one attribute and are often not included in the organizations stakeholder efforts as these are seen as ‘latent stakeholders’ (Mitchell et al., 1997 p. 874) whereas stakeholders with two or three attributes have greater significance. It should, however be noted, that the major criticism of this model refer to the three attributes and whether they are the most suited for stakeholder mapping. However, this model is used in this thesis since the model provides a good foundation for the importance of the different stakeholders and the explanation for their relation to the organisation (Mitchell et al., 1997 p. 881).

Dominant stakeholders are powerful and legitimate. These often include dominant creditors or investors, government, community leaders, employees and consumers. Dependent stakeholders are those with something at stake but dependent on others to exercise power. This can e.g. be local residents, the environment or animals. The dangerous stakeholders are those with an urgent need and power to influence the organization. These often includes NGO’s but can also include smaller
investors etc. who feel overheard and have an urgent need to raise their voice (Mitchell et al., 1997 pp. 876-878).

The last group of stakeholders is the centerpiece of the framework representing stakeholders possessing all three attributes. According to Mitchell et al it is often the dominant stakeholders who moves into this category as a result of contextual urgent claim. This group of stakeholder shall always have the first priority of the organization (1997 p. 878).

5.2.2 Stakeholder communication strategies

Having introduced a framework for categorizing stakeholders and their power and interest in the organization, this section discusses strategies for communicating with stakeholders.

Grunig and Hunt characterized three modes of communication which can be extended to three types of stakeholder relations according to how organizations strategically engage in CSR communication with their stakeholders. The three strategies are ‘stakeholder information strategy’, ‘stakeholder response strategy’, and ‘stakeholder involvement strategy (Morsing M., 2006 p. 141). These strategies are build on the notion of one-way and two-way communication.

The stakeholder information strategy is an information approach with one-way communication moving from the organization to its stakeholders and is based on ‘telling’ (Morsing M., 2006 pp.142-143).

The stakeholder response strategy is based on a two-way communication approach. The information flows to and from the public. However, the communication is the response strategy is assymetrical which means that there is an imbalance in the communication with one part dominating the communication (Morsing M., 2006 pp. 143-144).

The last strategy is the one of stakeholder involvement. This strategy is a two-way symmetrical communication where the sender and the receiver forms a dialogue and ‘the communication and interpretation of information, ideas, and opinions from those publics to the institution […] bring the two into harmonious adjustment’ (Cutlip & Center, cited in Grunig & Hunt, 1984 p. 42). Using the two-way symmetrical strategy means that the information is created as an exchange between the organization and its public on a basis where the organization and public contributes equally to the process.
The stakeholder relationship is considered to consist of an ‘interactive, mutually engaged and responsive relationship (Andriof et. al cited in Morsing M., 2006 p. 139).

According to Morsing and Schultz organizations are inclined to make use of one-way communication when communicating their CSR activities (2006 p. 146). Based on Andriof et. al and Johnson-Cramer et al.’s notions Morsing and Schultz argue that there is an increasing need to develop two-way communication while one-way communication is still important to form the basis (2006 p. 140).

5.3 Critical discourse analysis
In this thesis the starting point for discourse analysis is taken in Faircloughs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Faircloughs CDA reflects an overall impression of how a text is constructed by the means of linguistic features and how it draws on contexts and the general social practice. Hence the CDA is divided into three parts; the textual dimension, the discursive dimension and the social practice (N. Fairclough, 1995 p. 9).

Fairclough argues that in order to make a discourse analysis attention to the textual form and structure at all levels is required (1995 p. 7). The textual dimension is examined by M.A.K Halliday in his ideational, interpersonal and textual resources. The ideational resources concerns language’s resources for content construction, the interpersonal resources shapes the interaction, and the textual resources enable parts of the text to be linked with other parts in order to create cohesion (Stillar, 1998-1999 p. 20-21).

Fairclough see discourses ‘as ways of representing aspects of the world […] different discourses are different perspectives on the world’ (N. Fairclough, 2003 p. 124). Hence different discourses are used in different social setting meaning that a text is produced in a specific way in a specific social context (Fairclough, 1993 p. 78) and in that way represents a perspective of the world. Fairclough further argues that discourses are ‘socially shaped, but also socially shaping’ (N. Fairclough, 1995 p. 131).

Fairclough also mentions the concepts of interdiscursivity which is the analysis of the mix of discourses which can occur in a text when different styles and genres are drawn upon.

Social dimension looks into the practices of a social context. Social practice includes particular ways of acting, social relations, discourses etc. within a specific social context. Hence social practice refers to the context of the situation, the wider social context etc. (N. Fairclough, 1995 p. 134).
In this chapter the analytical tools for analyzing the empirical data has been examined. In order to understand how BAT constructs their company as socially responsible it is important to map which CSR activities they focus on and how they have determined this by the means of a stakeholder analysis. Furthermore the linguistic elements are important to include in an analysis since these features are used for constructing BAT’s position in a certain worldview.

6. BAT analysis

In the following sections the theory and analytical methods are applied to an analysis of chosen parts of BAT’s 2009 sustainability report. This analysis has to explore which linguistic features the organization makes use of when communicating their CSR activities and to examine how BAT seeks to construct their organization as socially responsible and the motivations for their choices. The first part focuses on BAT’s definition of CSR moving on to the mapping of the major CSR activities and the stakeholder analysis. The last part of this chapter focuses on the CDA and a linguistic and contextual analysis of the communicative event.

The social practice also serves as a summary of the prior analysis since this dimension draws on the entire discourse analysis and the context.

6.1 BAT on CSR

BAT does not define how they understand the word ‘sustainability’ in the report. Looking into the text it becomes evident that the word ‘sustainability’ is mostly used in reference to strategic goals such as ‘sustainability goals’ (overview, p. 1), sustainability agenda (British American Tobacco, p. 5) etc.

More often used than the word ‘sustainability’ is the word ‘responsibility’ which has a meaning of something that one is obliged to due to job or duty (Mayor & et al., 2006 p. 1307) rather than the strive to run an ongoing business.

BAT has two approaches to their CSR strategy. First of all they state that because their products pose a risk for the users they feel an obligation towards responsible business management which includes harm reduction, upholding high standards of corporate conduct, the supply chain, environment and developing employees within a good organizational culture (British American Tobacco, 2010 p. 4-5). Secondly they state that they have a responsibility for their shareholders to
build and maintain a sustainable value (Overview, p. 2, paragraph 1). This is in line with Owen and O’Dwyver’s notion of the two aspects of non-financial reports.

The first approach related to the term sustainability and to the definition of Blowfield and Murray: ‘the ability to sustain a high quality of life for current and future generations’ (Blowfield & Murray, 2008 p. 27) and the latter approach to the mere responsibility to provide shareholders with a satisfying profit.

6.2 CSR mapping

In the sustainability report five main categories of CSR are listed. Those include harm reduction, marketplace, supply chain, environment and people and culture. According to BAT these activities are chosen on the basis of an evaluation on importance among business and stakeholders (British American Tobacco, 2010 pp. 7,50).

When mapping the CSR activities of BAT according to Schwartz and Carroll’s three-domain approach to Corporate Social Responsibility it becomes evident that the activities embraces different domains in the diagram.

The environmental concern is categorized as an economic/ethical activity. According to Schwartz and Carroll many ‘green’ and ‘environmental’ activities fall within this category (2004 p. 516). This is often due to that ‘good ethics is good business’ (Schwartz & Carroll, 2004 p. 516). The benefit for the business’s to focus on this matter is often reduced resources and good publicity about an area in great focus around the world.

The activity of people and culture can be categorized within the same category as the environment. The strategy of ‘people and culture’ focuses on attracting the right people which will lead to a higher organizational knowledge but also on managing human rights and diverse cultural backgrounds which lies within the ethical field.

Harm reduction can be categorized in the central part of the model focusing on the economic/legal/ethical concerns. As the economic perspective, BAT has to develop products with future prospect due to an increasing focus on health as the economic perspective. Furthermore their legal motives for developing new less harmful and smokeless products can be the anticipation of changed laws in the future and the increasing prohibition against smoking in restaurants and public places. The approach taken to the ethical dimension is a deontological which is defined as those activities which reflects the organizational obligation (Schwartz & Carroll, 2004 p. 512). Because
the reason, stated by BAT, for taking on this activity is to ‘[…] meet consumer and societal expectations’ (British American Tobacco, 2010 p. 9).

The marketplace activity is also based in the central piece in the domain. BAT highlight the economic concern in the beginning with the Friedman-inspired quote ‘we must compete to be sustainable’ (British American Tobacco, 2010 p. 17). The legal aspect includes the present compliance with the law and the lobbying for even stricter regulations (British American Tobacco, 2010 p. 18). In relation to the ethical principle BAT states that they do not market products to people under the age of 18 and have launched a youth smoking prevention campaign (British American Tobacco, 2010 p. 18).

The last activity stated in the sustainability report is the supply chain management. This activity focuses on the economic/ethical concerns. BAT raises the concern for their farmers by stating that short term profit would be bad for their business (British American Tobacco, 2010 p. 25). And also here a deontological approach to ethics is taken by the means on the quote: ‘Our stakeholders expect us to manage our supply chain responsible […]’ (British American Tobacco, 2010 p. 30).

6.3 Stakeholder analysis

After having identified and mapped the different CSR activities Bat engages in the focus now moved to stakeholder identification. As mentioned in the previous chapter the stakeholder concept concerns the issues of whom to be responsible to. A stakeholder analysis can be taken on to recognize these groups and identify ‘Who and What Really Counts’ (Mitchell et al., 1997 p. 864). This analysis will determine which activities address which stakeholder groups and on the latter part of the section which communicative approach is taken to interact with these.

6.3.1 Stakeholder mapping

The activities listed in the sustainability report mainly address five groups of stakeholders. Those groups include consumers, NGO’s and interest organizations, regulators and governments, employees and shareholders.

Consumers are mainly addressed in the harm reduction section according to their expectations of their performance. The consumers belong to the dominant stakeholder group having power and a legitimate claim over the business. These stakeholders are dominant since they have a legitimate claim on the business, e.g. get the product they expect, and the power to impose their will on the firm since the group includes the costumers.
Another dominant stakeholder group mentioned in different activities is the regulators/governments. This stakeholder group is mentioned in the harm reduction section as a part of ‘societal expectations’ and in the marketplace section. The regulators do also belong to the dominant stakeholder group. This group has a legitimate claim on the business, e.g. wanting them to obey the law, and the power, e.g. in terms of law enforcement, to affect the business.

In the people & culture section BAT refers to their employees as an important stakeholder and addresses the issue of attracting, developing and retaining the right people together with the issue of a good working climate to this stakeholder group. This group belongs to, along with the three previous mentioned, the dominant stakeholder group having a legal claim to the business in terms of their employment relationship and the power to enforce their will.

The last group to mention is the shareholder group highlighted in the beginning of this chapter. BAT mentions this stakeholder group when referring to their responsibility towards this group according to ensure a sustainable value. BAT recognizes directly in the text that it is one of the most important groups and is so because they also hold the position as a dominant stakeholder group.

All of these groups mentioned above are able to move into the center of the model becoming a definite stakeholder if an urgent claim arises. According to Mitchell et. al. when such a stakeholder’s claim becomes urgent it has to have the highest priority from the organization (Mitchell et al., 1997 p. 878).

Such an urgent claim can e.g. arise if BAT does not obey the law in some instances or consumers find the products unsatisfying.

The last group mentioned explicitly in the report and which BAT directly addresses activities to are NGO’s and interest organizations, such as WHO. Those groups are mentioned in relation to the marketplace section, supply chain, environment and people & culture sections. NGO’s and different interest organizations are latent stakeholders only possessing power to influence the firm and as long as those dormant stakeholders do not have an urgent claim their power remains unused (Mitchell et al., 1997 p. 875).
6.3.2 Stakeholder communication

Having determined consumers, NGO’s and interest organizations, regulators and governments, employees and shareholders as the most important in the sustainability report, the focus in this section is on which communication strategies that are evident in the sustainability report. This section serves to examine how BAT relates and engage with their stakeholders.

Looking into the sustainability report (appendix 1) it becomes clear that BAT strives towards a stakeholder involvement strategy which consists of two-way symmetrical communication in the CSR activities. The rationale of using this approach is that the information is then created as an exchange between the organization and its public on a basis where the organization and public contributes equally to the process, meaning that the audience is active. However, the sustainability report itself, due to its nature, is based on a stakeholder response strategy. The nature of the sustainability report is a document that is written in retro perspective primarily informing about past performance (Francesco, 2006 p. 3).

This approach is also a two-way communication strategy where the information flows to and from the public. However, the communication in the response strategy is assymetrical which means that there is an imbalance in the communication since the two-way communication is used as feedback in order for the company to adjust the CSR initiatives. Hence this approach is still very ‘sender oriented’ since the stakeholders are only responding to the organizational communication and not a part of it (Morsing M., 2006 pp. 143-144).

The sustainability report is sender oriented because the text primarily focuses on how BAT sees CSR and what they did and do. The Chief executive’s overview is based on a one-way communication approach because it is a ‘statement’, but later in the report BAT opens up for stakeholders to engage in the communication by the means of invitations to stakeholders about telling BAT what they think of specific issues, e.g. p. 3 ‘we are always keen to hear stakeholder’ views on our reports […]. You are welcome to e-mail us at sustainability@bat.com’ (British American Tobacco, 2010 e.g. p. 3). Due to this engagement invitation BAT opens up for two-way communication in the form of a stakeholder response strategy. However, the communication is assymetrical because the receivers are not a direct part, but rather responding to the activities.

Even though BAT facilitates two-way communication in the report it is an imbalanced relationship with a power dominance of BAT, which gives BAT a possibility to appear up front and proactive to
their stakeholders since the comments are not disclosed. However, due to their stakeholder dialogue workshop approach (British American Tobacco, 2010 p. 2) BAT shows their stakeholders confidence and adapts a high degree of transparency, which according to Palazzo and Richter is essential when communicating CSR but difficult for the tobacco industry because of the harmful nature of their products (Palazzo & Richter, 2005 p. 392). This means that BAT has not full control over what happens at these workshops session, but is still in control over what is disclosed in their written material such as the sustainability report.

Considering the intensive public debate about smoking and the general sceptisism towards the industry it is understandable that BAT chooses which parts of the stakeholder communication to disclose in the report. Hence, even though Morsing and Beckman highlight the involvement strategy as the ideal approach for stakeholder communication BAT still have the control over the communication because the workshop results are not available as objective information for receivers of the general CSR communication.

6.4 Critical discourse analysis
As explained in chapter four Faircloughs critical discourse analysis is drawn on here to examine the linguistic tools BAT makes use of in the sustainability report. Following the CDA this section is divided into three parts: the textual dimension, the discursive practice and the social practice. The empirical data for this analysis is the Chief Executive’s Overview found in appendix 2.

6.4.1 Textual dimension
The textual dimension is examined by M.A.K Halliday in his ideational, interpersonal and textual resources. The ideational resources concerns language’s resources for content construction, the interpersonal resources shapes the interaction, and the textual resources enable parts of the text to be linked with other parts in order to create cohesion (Stillar, 1998-1999 pp. 20-21).

The first resource highlighted by Halliday is the ideational resources. The Chief executive’s overview has a strong mental-orientation and uses several personal pronouns such aimed at the organization itself such as ‘we’ and ‘our’. E.g. in the first paragraph ‘we believe we can run our business responsibly – and that we must’ a cognitive process type is used because it shows an opinion about the BAT’s mentality towards their business. The personal pronoun ‘we’ representing
BAT is the processor that does the ‘metalizing’ and the cognitive process type ‘believe we can run’ leads to the phenomenon goal responsible business which is being mentalized. Several cognitive process types are used in the overview, such as, believe, aim and see (all from paragraph 1), which allows the reader to get insight in the mentality of BAT giving us an overview about their opinion but not the actual ‘acts’.

Even though the overview is dominated by mental process types, some relational process types are seen as well. Taking starting point in the first paragraph a relational process type is found; ‘we have a particular responsibility […]. This relational process shows a possession of a responsibility for BAT to manage their business responsible.

Due to the significance of mental and relational process types the overview creates a content which is focused on the devotion of BAT to their CSR strategy and how they perceive the field in relation to their own organization.

The overview contains several circumstantial roles as well, which are structures constructing the circumstantial functions and putting the processes and participants into context. In the first paragraph BAT gives a reason for their CSR commitment; ‘because tobacco products are […] controversial’ and the manner in which they focus on their efforts; ‘[…]work hard to do the right things[…].

The grammatical tense in the overview includes past tense (kept up the pressure, was another year etc.), present tense (we see them as intrinsic, tobacco products are etc.) and future tense (we hope, we still have much to do). This wide range of tenses brings on a perspective of an ongoing process with some completed tasks.

Looking into the interpersonal resources, the text is constructed of interrogative and declarative sentences. These speech functions establish an experience of a conversation or interview with the Chief Executive. The interview-like style of the overview can create a reality of a transparent and accessible organization. Declarative sentences are used to present something as factual and by the means of this function to impose authority on the receiver. Modality verbs, such as ‘must, can, will’, are used in the text in order to establish relational interpersonal meaning in terms of obligation of BAT to a sustainable business.

In terms of attitudinal lexis several positive vocabulary are found both in relation to their business (secure, robust) and their commitment (intrinsic, refreshing) which shows a very positive attitude towards their commitment and business, which is also expected in such a report.
The textual resources are used to structure the flow of information on terms of cohesion and context. The overview consists mostly of unmarked themes which mean that the subject is the main theme of the text. This results in a text aimed at giving information about BAT. Because of the interview-like structure of the text, no cohesion is found between the questions asked only within the answers. Cohesive features such as adversative conjunctions (e.g. however) and references (e.g. they) are found in order to make the text fluent and natural.

6.4.2 Discourse
Having examines the textual resources of the text, the next step in Fairclough’s framework concerns the discursive practices used to represent a specific perspective of the world. By examining the interdiscursivity of the overview it can be determined how BAT blend discourses in order to communicate their CSR strategy.

In the Chief Executive’s overview there is a high degree of interdiscursivity since the text draws on already established discourses and it becomes evident that some of these discourses are superior to each other. By using a number of different discourses BAT addresses a number of different issues without disturbing the reception of the text. The main discourses drawn on are a stakeholder discourse, a business strategic discourse, a devotion discourse, a sustainability discourse and an interview discourse.

A dominant discourse is the sustainability discourse. According to Longmans dictionary the definition of sustainability is ‘economic development that is able to continue without causing damage to the environment’ (Mayor & et al., 2006 p. wh. 28). This is identified by the means of the words responsibility, sustainable, environmental and human right concern in the report. This discourse represents the genre of the following report establishing a theme for the communication and seeks to form a basic conceptualization of the field of works.

An identification of a stakeholder discourse in the overview can be seen by the naming of several stakeholders BAT seeks to address by the means of their CSR activities. These stakeholders include shareholders, consumers (‘underage’), enforcement authorities, employees, stakeholders, which have already been mapped as key stakeholders (paragraph 6.3.1 Stakeholder mapping). Relating back to the theoretical background section for stakeholder theory it is obvious that BAT draws on this discourse since the stakeholder relations according to Homann & Blome-Drees argues that
'accepting responsibility means to give answers to inquiries of internal and external stakeholders’ (Cited in Beckmann S.C., Morsing M., Reisch L., 2006 p. 18). By using this discourse, BAT shows recognition of their stakeholders influence and importance in their business strategy.

Another dominant discourse drawn upon in the overview is a business strategy discourse. This discourse become evident through the words goals, strategy, value, compete, prosper, business, delivered, results, shareholders, agenda, campaign, report etc. This discourse is used to show how BAT incorporates their CSR efforts into their business strategy. This discourse shows the reader how BAT sees CSR, as a strategic instrument, and how they seek to incorporate it into their business.

One of the most evident discourses used in the overview is a devotion discourse showing, by the means of emotional words, how devoted BAT is to their CSR strategy. The words include believe, must, work hard, intrinsic, pressure, progress, refreshing, truly work to meet etc. This discourse is used to express a real interest in doing good and are all used in relation to the personal pronoun ‘we’ to show the reader that BAT acknowledge their responsibilities. This discourse binds together the previous mentioned discourses showing that BAT concentrates on the importance of their stakeholders in their sustainability efforts and how they make use of this according to their business strategy.

When talking about discourses a brief discussion can be addressed to the issue of missing or repressed discourses. Only twice the word ‘tobacco’ is mentioned. Once the word controversy is used in relation to the word and once the studies towards potentially lower risks are mentioned. In the rest of the text the word is omitted. When leaving out this discourse in the several of the paragraphs BAT constructs a reality of the controversial business as all other business’ dealing with environmental issues, human rights and business strategy in order to normalize their business and position them as uncontroversial but also distancing them from the past repositioning them as socially responsible.

The layout of the overview is based on an interview discourse with an unknown person asking questions to Poul Adams, the chief executive. By drawing on this discourse of an interview simulation the overview get a ‘critical’ look which was also examined in the textual dimension.
6.4.3 Social practice

After having examined the text in terms of textual resources and discursive practices the text is now to be placed in the last dimension of Fairclough's model, hence in accordance to the social practice. By examining the social practice it can be determined which societal tendencies that influence the sustainability report.

This section also serves as a part conclusion since the social practice draws on the entire discourse analysis and the context determined by the CSR mapping and stakeholder analysis.

As stated in the introduction the concept of CSR is diffuse and contextual, but by recalling Schwartz and Carrolls three-domain approach, which relates to the mapping of CSR activities into three major categories; legal, ethical and economic, with overlapping domains it can be determined how CSR has influenced the construction of the text. By combining this model with a stakeholder identification it become evident which considerations that have influenced BAT’s construction of the sustainability report.

Textual wise the overview provides an insight into the mentality of BAT as underlines the qualification as responsible as an attribute to BAT and states the motivation for BAT to engage in CSR by the means of the circumstantial roles of ‘controversy’.

The sustainability report is written in retroperspective but adds on a present tense to involve with the reader and a future tense to give the reader insight into their future strategic achievements and ongoing process with completed tasks. The formal format of the overview, the interview simulation signifies that they exercise self-criticisms and have answers to direct questions but also adds transparency because it is easy accessible.

In the overview there is a high degree of interdiscursivity since the text draws different discourses. The main discourses drawn on are a stakeholder discourse, a business strategic discourse, a devotion discourse, a sustainability discourse and an interview discourse.

Communicating their CSR initiatives by the means of the devotion discourse BAT shows their stakeholders their seriousness towards their strategy and tries in this way to establish, or remain, a good relationship to their stakeholders and position themselves as a responsible business seeking, with all efforts, to run their company in a sustainable manner.
Referring back to the CSR activity mapping the major focus of BAT according to CSR activities were on the economic/ethical dimension or the centrepiece of the diagram which also adds the legal aspect.

The stakeholder analysis showed us that the major stakeholders considered by BAT are the consumers, regulators, employees, shareholders and NGO’s which mostly constituted the dominant stakeholder group, meaning stakeholders who possess the power to impose their will on the organisation. These stakeholders have had a great influence on the choice of the CSR activities since BAT states that the activities are chosen on the basis on what their stakeholders perceive as important (British American Tobacco, 2010 pp. 7, 50).

Even though BAT seeks to position themselves as proactive according to CSR and sustainability by the means of the Devotion discourse it becomes evident that they have a reactive behavior towards CSR since they respond to the, more or less, exact will of the consumers and stakeholders.

Based on the previous argument it can further be discussed if BAT use their sustainability report as a communication tool concerned with managing the corporate image and engage in a dialogue with stakeholders. The report is expressively outside-oriented due to the structural traits, meaning that the report is structured into specific chapters addressing different stakeholders, the report is expressly stakeholder-oriented (Francesco, 2006 pp. 76-77).

As stated in the introduction, the tobacco industry has a bad reputation due to prior attempt to manipulate with their stakeholder according to product harm. As stated above the goal of this sustainability report is a positive position but also to distance BAT from the past and reconstruct the organizational ontology as socially responsible based on the interactions and communications with stakeholders. By the means of this stakeholder inclusion each stakeholder reading this report immediately is to feel his or hers importance and weight concerning the organizational strategies (British American Tobacco, 2010; Francesco, 2006 p. 77).

From an economic point of view BAT uses this communicative tool of the sustainability report merely to relate and satisfy stakeholders, in a manner stated above, to increase the profit of the company to satisfy their shareholders. Hence the overall goal of the sustainability report is to get the stakeholders to ascribe the cooperation a higher value due to the good social activities. This is in line with Cornelissen’s notion of CSR as a reputation construction tool and targeted at an overall better financial performance.
As stated previously the main stakeholder identified by BAT belongs to the dominant stakeholder group and the importance ascribed to the stakeholder satisfaction is connected with the power these stakeholders are able to impose on the business and the notion by Palazzo and Richter that tobacco companies engage in CSR merely to exists (Palazzo & Richter, 2005 p. 396).

From the stakeholder point of view, the fact that BAT is a part of the so-called ‘sin industry’ combined with the shareholder and economic references should pose the question of the initial motives for BAT engaging in CSR activities since these can throw further light on the harmfulness of the products and result in a decreasing future tobacco sale for BAT, which contradicts the notion of a sustainable, hence ongoing, business. This again means that the consumers must, in the reception of the communication stay critical towards the information and evaluate on the initial motivation for the CSR strategy and sincerity of activities.

Even though BAT admits that their business is controversial the repressed tobacco discourse in the overview combined with the non-disclosed factual information about the harmful effect, such as death numbers, deceases etc. forms the basis for skepticism towards how transparent the company actually is.

Fairclough argues that texts can bring about changes through social effects (N. Fairclough, 2003 p. 8). In the sustainability report the inter-discursive blending realized in the text, through the stakeholder, sustainability, business strategy and devotion discourses, shows a change in society where CSR initiatives are needed for all businesses, also those of controversial nature. This change is based on the increasing expectations from stakeholders (Matten & Crane cited in Palazzo & Richter, 2005 p. 390). This means that the consumer becomes a ‘driving force for change through ethical consumerism’ (Devinney, Auger, & Eckhardt, 2010 p. 168). However, for the CSR activities to pose a value for BAT the sales must stay equal or increase as a result. This is determined by the stakeholders and is based on what they value or do not.

To sum up, the analysis has shown that BAT engages in a reactive behavior towards their stakeholders and CSR activities. This should be seen in close relation to Palazzo and Richter’s notion of tobacco companies engaging in CSR merely to exist. Throughout the report there is a high
degree of recognition of the economic effects of the CSR activities and the responsibility towards their shareholders.

The report has a strong external stakeholder orientation and by the means of the devotion discourse BAT seeks to establish, or remain, a good relationship to their stakeholders and distance themselves from prior manipulative behavior and reconstruct the organization as socially responsible, even though it can be discussed how sincere their motivations are on the basis of prior arguments on economic concerns and strive for legitimacy and existence.

7. Conclusion

Based on the problem statement of this thesis the goal has been to examine how BAT handles the controversy between the harmful nature of their products and CSR activities by the means of communication.

This research question has been answered by the means of studying the 2009 sustainability report on the basis of CSR activity mapping, stakeholder analysis and a critical discourse analysis in order to examine the communicative and practical choices aiming at constructing BAT as socially responsible.

Taking starting point in Schwartz and Carroll’s Three-domain model of CSR it becomes evident that the CSR activities aim at several dimensions, which is also advised to do from the authors. Combining this with Mitchell, Agle and Woods stakeholder mapping concerning ‘The Principle of Who and What Really Counts’ it could be determined that BAT seeks to address their most dominant stakeholder groups, who possess the power to impose their will on the organization if an urgent claim arises.

BAT handles the controversy between their business and CSR by seeking to construct the organisation as socially responsible. BAT does this through this extensive stakeholder awareness and addressing and their linguistic choices.

The report is written in retro perspective but adds on a present tense to involve with the reader and a future tense to give the reader insight into their future strategic achievements and ongoing process with completed tasks.

The major linguistic influencers are the organizational attribution of responsibility and the discursive choices.
The CDA showed us that the Chief Executive’s overview primarily were concerned with allowing the reader to get insight into the mentality of BAT and underlines the attribute of responsibility. The formal format of the overview, the interview simulation signifies, that they exercise self-criticism and have answers to direct questions but also adds transparency because it is easy accessible.

In the overview there is a high degree of interdiscursivity. The main discourses drawn on are a stakeholder discourse, a business strategic discourse, a devotion discourse, a sustainability discourse and an interview discourse.

Communicating their CSR initiatives by the means of the devotion discourse BAT shows their stakeholders their seriousness towards their strategy and position themselves as a responsible business.

On the other hand BAT also handles the controversy by repressing the tobacco discourse. When repressing this discourse in several of the paragraphs BAT reconstructs the reality of the controversial business through a ‘normalization process’ but also distancing them from the past repositioning them as socially responsible. Hence the result of the CSR activities and the linguistics features used, BAT reconstructs the organizational ontology. This should be seen in close relation to Palazzo and Richter’s notion of tobacco companies engaging in CSR merely to exist.

In order to communicate with their stakeholder BAT makes use of a two-way asymmetrical communication approach in the sustainability report which means that the report is sender oriented and BAT with an unequal power distribution in favor of BAT which also allows BAT to control the communication which again limits the organizational transparency.

It can be argued that the sustainability report is heavily influenced by a recognition of the economic effects when taking on CSR initiatives and complying with stakeholders’ expectations.

Through the analysis it becomes evident that BAT has a reactive behavior towards CSR since they respond to the will of the consumers and stakeholders. Hence the overall goal of the sustainability report is to comply with stakeholder expectation and get the stakeholders to ascribe the cooperation a higher value due to the good social activities.

From the stakeholder point of view, the fact that BAT is a part of the so-called ‘sin industry’ combined with the shareholder and economic references should pose the question of the initial motives for BAT engaging in CSR activities since these can throw further light on the harmfulness of the products and result in a decreasing future tobacco sale for BAT, which contradicts the notion of a sustainable, hence ongoing, business.
8. Reference list

Books and chapters


**Articles**


Company information


Appendices

Appendix 1: British American Tobacco Sustainability Report 2009

Enclosed CD-rom contains a digital version of the sustainability report from 2009 by the company British American Tobacco.
Appendix 2: Chief Executive’s Overview.

The text on the following page is the empirical data used for textual and discursive analysis. It is the overview of the sustainability report with Paul Adams, the Chief Executive, as a sender.

The text is originally from the “British American Tobacco Sustainability Report 2009” (released April 2010 on www.bat.com, p. 2).

The text can also be found in a digital version in appendix 1.

Plain text can be seen on next page.
“Our sustainability goals are not just an ‘add-on’. We see them as intrinsic to our strategy and a cornerstone of building sustainable value.”

How can you be responsible when you need to sell tobacco products and compete?
We believe we can run our business responsibly – and that we must. Because tobacco products are legal and used by millions of adults, but also controversial, we have a particular responsibility to work hard at doing the right things in every way that we run our business. No business can be sustainable if it doesn’t compete and prosper. We aim to build long term sustainable value for our shareholders, and our sustainability goals are not just an ‘add-on’. We see them as intrinsic to our strategy and a cornerstone of building sustainable value.

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What progress did you make on your sustainability agenda?
As you’ll see in the Report, examples include our clinical studies towards potentially lower risk products and the roll out of our new global campaign to help retailers block cigarette sales to the underage. We also continued to drive for 100 percent adherence by our own companies to our International Marketing Standards, with action plans to close any gaps.

We kept up the pressure for action against the problem of the illicit tobacco trade and continued to help enforcement authorities to crack down on it. As part of keeping our own supply chain secure, we successfully trialled our enhanced ‘track and trace’ system, so that it can track every carton and case a factory produces and will give open access to customs authorities.

It was another year of strong environmental progress, we began presenting our business more compellingly to potential employees, and we brought clearer focus to monitoring any of our businesses in countries that cause human rights concern to stakeholders. Our reporting now also includes more about the sustainability activities of our larger companies around the world. We hope this provides a more representative account of our business.

Last year you said you would pursue innovative ways to work with stakeholders on key issues. Did you?
Yes; we trialled a new form of dialogue, involving over 60 stakeholders in a ‘workshop’ approach to co-developing plans for our leaf and materials supply chain. This has contributed to a global sustainable supply chain strategy, now being developed. It was refreshing and uplifting to develop initiatives together with stakeholders and we would like to do more of it.
Unfortunately, engagement with the stakeholders most critical of our industry remains a challenge. They are reluctant to engage and some refuse point-blank. However, where we have at times been able to engage with stakeholders who are very critical of us, some have expressed surprise at the openness of the discussions. Our door remains open.

**How do you measure success?**
We hope stakeholders will judge us by our actions. So it’s important that we make commitments we can truly work to meet, to meet them to the best of our ability and, if we don’t, to explain why.

We are also greatly encouraged to have been selected for the eighth year running as the only tobacco company in the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index, and to have become the first tobacco business in the top ‘Platinum’ rank of Business in the Community’s Corporate Responsibility Index.

We don’t take these assessments for granted – they spur us to work harder. We know that we still have much to do and our sustainability goals are largely about steady steps, not overnight results. But as I look ahead, I believe our values and commitment to sustainability will help us to hold a steady course and prosper in future.

*Paul Adams*

April 2010