Your Cost or My Benefit?
Effects of Concession Frames in Distributive Negotiations

Nazlı Bhatia[1], Rosalind M. Chow[2], Laurie R. Weingart[2], Matthew A. Diabes[2]
[1]Legal Studies and Business Ethics Department, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania
[2]Tepper School of Business, Carnegie Mellon University

Author Note

Nazlı Bhatia, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6952-0635
Rosalind M. Chow, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1847-2458
Laurie R. Weingart, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2542-7727
Matthew A. Diabes, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5361-3711
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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Nazlı Bhatia, bhatiana@wharton.upenn.edu

Abstract

Reaching agreement in distributive negotiations often requires making concessions, in which one side incurs a cost to provide a benefit to the other party. Although these two aspects, conceder-cost and receiver-benefit, coexist in any concession, past work has not disentangled the potentially differential effects of concessions framed as conceder-cost versus receiver-benefit on negotiation processes and outcomes. In this paper, we document that concession-givers use conceder-cost frames more frequently and expect them to be more believable than receiver-benefit frames. However, receivers of concessions that emphasize conceder-cost are more skeptical of this frame and perceive their counterpart to be more manipulative than receivers of concessions that emphasize benefit. These negative perceptions, in turn lead them to make lower counteroffers compared to receivers of concessions that emphasize benefit, which ultimately help their economic outcomes.

Keywords: concession, cost, benefit, manipulativeness, economic outcome

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Concessions, which are an integral component of any negotiation (Benton et al., 1972; Komorita & Esser, 1975), entail giving something up to benefit another party. For example, when selling a used car, the seller might want $5,000, while the buyer might only want to pay $4,000. To close the gap, the seller could reduce the price by $300—a concession that is both costly to the seller and beneficial to the buyer. In this paper, we ask: Would it affect the negotiation process and outcome if, when the seller reduced the price, they described it to the buyer as them incurring a $300 cost versus describing it as a $300 benefit to the buyer? And if yes, in what way and why?

In a distributive negotiation where one negotiator's gain is the other's equivalent loss, all concessions are, by definition, as costly to the conceder as they would be beneficial to the receiver[1]. However, in this research, we propose that concession-givers and concession-recipients utilize and respond differently to *concession frames* that emphasize conceder-cost versus receiver-benefit. We argue that concession givers are more likely to emphasize the costliness of their concessions when presenting a concession to their counterpart because they will be seen as more believable. However, in contrast to that expectation, we predict that concession-recipients view conceder-cost frames with more skepticism than receiver-benefit frames and thus reciprocate them less in return. Subsequently, receivers of concessions that emphasize cost obtain better economic outcomes compared to those of concessions that emphasize receiver-benefit.

The present research makes a number of contributions. First, we depart from prior research on concessions, which has largely focused on understanding the antecedents of concession-making and the impact of concession size (or magnitude) on negotiation outcomes (Carnevale & Lawler, 1986; Komorita, 1973; Kwon & Weingart, 2004). Instead, by exploring the impact of how equivalent concessions are described—as costly to the self or beneficial to one's counterpart—we add to the literature on framing effects in negotiations. Importantly, our effects also highlight the impact of language choices on interpersonal dynamics, as concession frames describe equivalent concessions, but from the vantage point of the concession-giver versus the concession-recipient. Finally, our research answers a growing call for more research on rhetorical strategies used in negotiations, as negotiations can be seen, fundamentally, as a phenomenon involving persuasion and influence.

Framing Effects in Negotiations

Framing effects have a long history in the literature on behavioral decision-making. Perhaps the most well-known research in this domain that has been extended to negotiations is prospect theory (Budescu & Weiss, 1987; Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). According to prospect theory, people make decisions based on a reference point, such that outcomes that are worse than the reference point are encoded as losses and those that are better than the reference point are encoded as gains. More importantly, losses are experienced more negatively than gains of equal magnitude, thus leading to a discrepancy in how aversive a potential loss is experienced, as

[1] This research examines only the distributive negotiation context for two reasons. 1.To our knowledge, we are the first to explore concession frames in negotiation and as such, we wanted to start with the simple paradigm, 2. We base our theorizing on concession frames on the original framing literature, in which an objective statement is made in contrasting ways. A distributive negotiation allows us to be clear that a concession on part of the concession-maker, is indeed objectively equivalent to the benefit provided to the concession-recipient.

compared to how alluring a potential gain of equivalent size is experienced. These effects have been replicated in the negotiations domain, such that negotiators whose outcomes are framed as losses focus more on their own outcome (De Dreu et al., 1992b) and concede less (De Dreu et al., 1994; De Dreu & McCusker 1997; Lim & Carnevale, 1995). That is, because "losses loom larger" than equivalent gains, negotiators focused on potential loss are more intractable and less likely to see the perspective of the other side.

In contrast to this prior work, which has focused on the effects of framing one's outcome as a loss or a gain, our work examines highlighting an interaction partner's gain versus one's own loss (De Dreu et al., 1992b; De Dreu et al., 1994; Lim & Carnevale, 1995). Put differently, by studying how equivalent concessions can be described in terms of its effects on the self versus the other, concession frames can be seen as a way individuals address interpersonal relationships through their discourse (as opposed to a purely cognitive phenomenon). Indeed, other work has shown the impact of language used during negotiations on behavior. For example, receivers of proposals framed as "requests" view them less favorably and are less willing to concede than receivers of equivalent proposals framed as "offers" (Majer et al., 2020; Trötschel et al., 2015).

The present research builds on this prior work on framing by focusing specifically on concessions and how the description of concessions of equivalent magnitude can influence the negotiation process. We take as our starting point that a concession has been made, and focus on the fact that it can be described in a way that emphasizes the costliness of the concession to the conceder or the benefit provided to the receiver of the concession.

In studying how concessions themselves are framed, we add to a growing literature documenting the profound effect of rhetorical strategies in negotiation. For example, the way in which offers are made (Ames & Mason, 2015; Bhatia & Gunia, 2018; Loschelder et al., 2014; Mason et al., 2013) or questions are asked (Bitterly & Schweitzer, 2018; Minson et al., 2018) have been shown to influence not just negotiators' economic outcomes but also the perceptions they form of each other. In a similar way, our work extends this recent interest in rhetorical strategies to studying how the rhetoric around concessions can impact negotiator perceptions and lead to divergent outcomes.

Differentiating Conceder-Cost and Receiver-Benefit

Though there are a multitude of frames negotiators can use to explain their concessions, we focus on conceder-cost and receiver-benefit, as they are inherent aspects of any negotiation. That is, any concession brings an inevitable cost to its giver but also a benefit to its receiver, as demonstrated in our opening car sale example. The question for us is: Which of these co-existing aspects of a concession will be responded to more positively? Although past work on negotiations is mute on this exact question, evidence from related domains suggest the receiver-benefit frame may be more effective in eliciting positive responses than those focusing on conceder-cost.

In a distributive negotiation, concessions help the other party because any concession negotiators make in this context is a direct benefit to the receiving party (and a direct cost to the granting party). We therefore draw from literature on helping behavior to develop our theorizing of how concession frames may impact perceptions and reactions to concessions. This line of work suggests that it is the perceived desire to help, rather than the perceived cost of helping that will be a larger driver of help recipients' responses. For example, people's likelihood of reciprocating help is based on their perception of the amount of help they have received (Batson

& Powell, 2003; Gouldner, 1960). Similarly, social exchange (Kelley &Thibaut, 1978) and equity perspectives (Adams, 1965) predict that fairness exists when an individual's response to being helped is proportional to the amount of help they received. In addition, many economic models of altruism predict that reciprocity is determined by perceptions of a helper's kindness (Falk & Fischbacher, 1999; Rabin, 1993), defined as the amount of help beneficiaries received. In none of these perspectives is a help-recipient's response associated with the amount of cost incurred by the help-giver.

In perhaps the closest empirical examination of the question of how concession frames might be perceived by the concession-recipient, Zhang and Epley (2009) find that help-givers' expectations of reciprocity are driven by their perceptions of how costly it was to provide the help, whereas help-receivers reciprocated to the extent that they perceived themselves to have benefitted from the help. Notably, for our purposes, this research shows that it is the amount of benefit experienced from the help, rather than the cost borne by the help-giver, that is a stronger predictor of how help-recipients (or, in our case, concession-recipients) respond. Taken together, the evidence from the helping literature indicates that benefit is a more likely driver of individuals' experience of and response to help than the cost incurred by the help-giver. We therefore predict that frames highlighting such benefit will have a more positive effect on reciprocity than concessions that emphasize the costliness to the conceder.

If this is true, then the next question is: why? In the following section, we argue that these effects are driven by the focus of negotiators on different information in the negotiation, which impacts their perceptions of the concession-givers' intentions in the negotiation.

Effects of Concession Frames on Perceptions of the Concession-Maker

Recall our car negotiation example, in which a concession of $300 has been made. When the buyer receives a $300 concession, the fact that they have received $300 of help is quite visible to them. Notably, whether the $300 concession is actually costly to the seller is not necessarily clear. That is, from a concession-recipient's point of view, the amount of benefit provided is immediately clear and available. The amount of cost borne by the other party, however, is opaque; is $300 a large sum for the seller or just a pittance used to make the concession seem like more of a big deal than it actually is? This example highlights a critical feature of any interpersonal interaction, but is particularly true in negotiations: there is inherent information asymmetry about one's own and the counterpart's position (Samuelson & Bazerman, 1984). That is, individuals always have more information about themselves than they do about others.

We argue that the concession frame leads concession recipients to differentially notice this inherent information asymmetry. As laid out in the preceding example, while recipients of a concession can easily assess whether and how much a concession benefits them, the actual costliness of the concession to the conceder is opaquer because most negotiators lack information regarding the overall resources available to the conceder. Thus, when concession-givers point to how the concession benefits the concession-recipient, this assertion is easily verifiable for them. Yet when concession-givers lament how costly the concession is for them to give up, this assertion is not easily verifiable for concession-recipients, thereby highlighting the information asymmetry inherent in negotiations. We therefore predict that concession frames emphasizing cost makes salient to the receiver the paucity of information available regarding the concession-giver's actual position. In contrast, receiver-benefit frames draw receivers' attention

to their own position and knowledge of their own resources.

Evidence from the communication literature supports the prediction that language can shift attention and highlight information asymmetry. Specifically, work comparing communication that uses "I" versus "you" pronouns finds that the former focuses listeners on the speaker whereas the latter focuses listeners on themselves. Consequently, listeners respond to communication using "you" with more personal stories and examples, whereas they respond to "I" communication with more hypothetical examples (Cline & Johnson, 1976). This finding suggests that different messages lead listeners to focus on different information and is consistent with our contention that concession frames can make receivers more or less attentive to the information asymmetry inherent in a negotiation.

Noticing a lack of information about the counterparty could lead to skepticism, for example, in the forms of doubt or disbelief, toward a particular piece of information (Obermiller & Spangenberg, 1998). In this case, if recipients of a conceder-cost frame are skeptical about the actual costliness of a concession, they might wonder, "Is the concession *really* as costly as the other party is claiming it is?" We argue that concession receivers' skepticism about the costliness of the concession will manifest as the perception that the use of this frame is strategic behavior intended to manipulate them. On the other hand, the receiver-benefit frame should not induce such skepticism because it does not lead concession-recipients to pay attention to the position of the concession-giver. Because the concession's benefit is readily observable to them, concession-recipients do not question the veracity of the frame, leading them to be less likely to perceive the frame as being used to manipulate them.

If what drives concession-recipient skepticism of a concession-cost frame is the salience of their lack of information about the true degree of costliness of the concession to the concession-giver, then the provision of such information should attenuate this effect. In determining whether a concession is indeed costly, concession-recipients must consider the overall pool of resources available to the conceder and the value of the concession relative to the overall pool. However, this information is often not known. For example, when a car seller presents a $300 concession as being very costly, the receiver typically does not know whether this concession represents a large or a small proportion of the conceder's resource pool. A concession of $300 might indeed be quite costly for a student who has little to no income. In contrast, that same concession might be a pittance to a professional who is gainfully employed. Because of the uncertainty regarding the true cost to the conceder, we predict that negotiators receiving concession frames emphasizing cost will view their counterparts as more manipulative than those using the receiver-benefit frame. However, we also predict that information about the overall pool of resources available to the conceder that confirms the costliness of the concession will eliminate such perceptions of manipulativeness.

Effects of Concession Frames on Negotiation Outcomes

Being perceived as being manipulative impacts how people behave in negotiation. Prior work indicates that perceptions that one's counterparty is manipulative can engender competitiveness in negotiation (Boles et al., 2000), leading to behaviors such as withholding concessions (Schurr & Ozanne, 1985) or not reciprocating them. Conversely, positive perceptions of the concession-maker lead to more cooperation in decision-making contexts (Barsade, 2002) and less contentious behaviors in negotiation (Carnevale & Isen, 1986). We expect, then, that receivers of concession frames emphasizing conceder-cost, as compared to those receiving concession frames emphasizing receiver-benefit, will perceive their counterparts

as more manipulative, and will respond by reciprocating less in the negotiation. This reduction in reciprocal concessions, in turn, will increase individual economic outcomes for receivers of frames highlighting conceder-cost.

Overview of Research

Taken together, we expect concession frames emphasizing conceder-cost to be met with skepticism, manifested as an increase in perceptions of concession-giver manipulativeness compared to frames emphasizing receiver-benefit. Such perceptions of manipulativeness should decrease concession-recipients' reciprocal concessions, leading to higher individual economic outcomes for receivers of frames highlighting conceder-cost. Furthermore, we expect the provision of information about conceders' overall resources, presumably offering evidence of the costliness of the concession, should eliminate perceptions of manipulativeness associated with the cost frame. Figure 1 depicts this theoretical model.

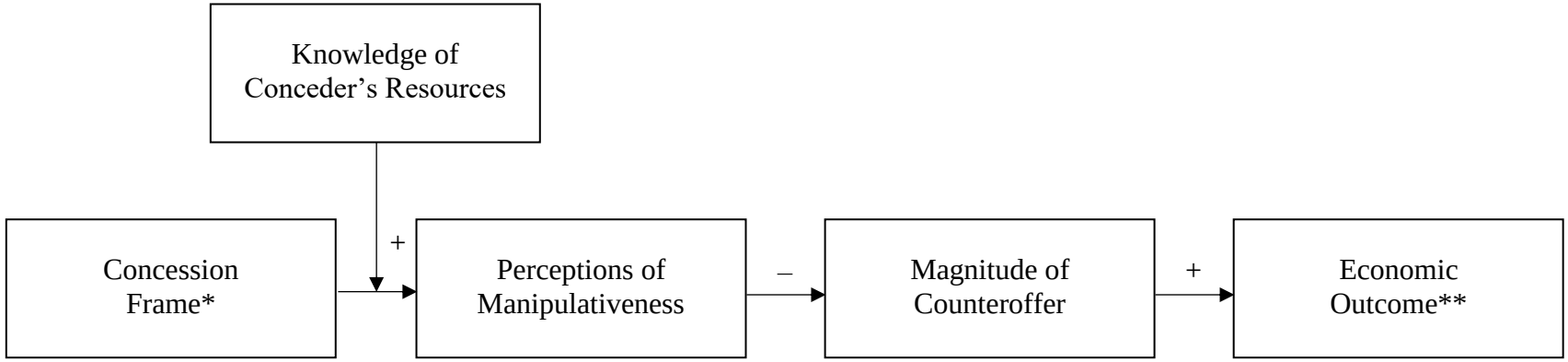
We tested these predictions in five studies. In Study 1a, we explored the frequency by which negotiators spontaneously use conceder-cost or recipient-benefit frames. Study 1b examined how negotiators expect their partners will respond to different frames. In Study 2, we documented the effects of concession frames on economic outcomes. In our last two studies, we delved into the mechanism responsible for negotiated outcomes to examine perceptions of manipulativeness and subsequent decreases in reciprocal concessions (Study 3a). We further provided evidence that receivers' perceptions of manipulativeness are driven by information asymmetry by providing information about conceders' resources (Study 3b).

Figure 1

Theoretical Model of Depicting the Effects of Concession Frames on the Negotiation Process and Outcomes

Figure 1

Theoretical model of depicting the effects of concession frames on the negotiation process and outcomes.



Note: *Receiver-benefit=-1, conceder-cost=1.** "Economic outcome" indicates increased economic outcomes for the receiver of the concession frame. For example, receivers in the role of buyers would pay less for the negotiated item; receivers in the role of sellers would be paid more for the negotiated item.

Studies 1a and 1b

In these first two studies, we explored whether negotiators use conceder-cost and receiver-benefit frames without explicitly being prompted to do so, as well as what outcomes they expect from their frame use. To do so, in Study 1a, participants read about a negotiation situation and develop a concession strategy. We then coded their responses for frame use. In Study 1b, participants read about a negotiation where a concession was made using either a receiver-benefit or a conceder-cost frame. They then answered questions on how they thought a negotiation counterpart would respond to these frames.

Study 1a Method

Participants

One hundred and fifty participants from Prolific Academic, an online data collection website, were recruited for the study. Data from 151 participants (M_{age}=35.04, SD_{age}=13.16, 86, 49.3% women) were collected. Participants were paid $1.00 for their participation.

Procedure

The study contained only one, open-ended measure. Participants were told to imagine that they were selling some old furniture, as they were moving into a new apartment. One of these pieces of furniture was a three-seater sofa, which they had advertised online for $100. Participants were then told that they had received a $70 offer from an interested buyer. However, they (the seller) did not want to reduce the price so much. Participants were told to imagine that they had decided to respond to the potential buyer with a $10 concession, and in doing so, would also have to provide a justification to the buyer for the concession. Specifically, they read: "Please type out the email response you would send to the buyer, telling them that you can reduce the price by only $10 and explaining why."

Two coders then coded these responses for the type of explanation that participants provided when making their concession (coding procedure described below).

Results and Discussion

To code the responses, the following coding procedure was used. The two coders separately coded the entire response by each participant for the dominant argument used in the response. That is, if a participant expressed multiple arguments as part of the response, the most salient one was used for coding. Following this procedure, the coders compared their evaluations to assess interrater reliability, which was estimated to be α =.80. After this initial evaluation, the coders reconciled their differences to create a final set of codes. This analysis yielded seven distinct categories of explanations. These explanations focused on: Conceder-cost (39.3% of responses), the (good) condition of the negotiated item (20.7%), references to other interested buyers (10.0%), the fair price being asked (10.0%), receiver-benefit (4.7%). A sixth coding category was "no explanation given" where participants restated the concession amount without giving an explanation (13.3%) Finally, there were a few responses that did not fit any of these categories and were thus categorized as "other." (2.0%). An example of a statement that would

be coded as conceder-cost is, "Thank you for your interest in this item. The lowest I can go is $90. I bought this item for a lot more than 90 so I am taking a huge loss." An example of receiver-benefit is, "Hi there, thanks for your interest. To help you out, I can reduce the price to $90, but I can't go any lower than that at the moment."

As these results show, the dominant explanation for a concession included a discussion of the cost to the conceder. This was mentioned more than any other type of explanation, including referencing the positive qualities of the couch being sold or referring to the fairness of the pricing. In addition, although some participants did mention the benefit provided to concession-recipients, the proportion of people who did so spontaneously was quite small, suggesting that receiver-benefit frames are not as prevalent as conceder-cost frames.

Why is the conceder-cost frame so prevalent, especially relative to recipient-benefit? One possibility is that they believe that highlighting the costliness of the concession is more believable than highlighting its benefits to the recipient. We explore this possibility in Study 1b.

Study 1b Method

Our goal in this study was to gauge negotiators' expectations regarding their partners' perceptions of the concession as a result of concession frame use. The study had one manipulated variable: concession frame (conceder-cost vs. receiver-benefit) and we measured participants' perceptions of the concession explanation's believability and manipulativeness.

Participants

Data were collected from 150 participants on Prolific Academic (M_{age}=31.72, SD_{age}=10.91, 49.3% women), who were paid $1.00 for their participation.

Manipulated and Measured Variables

Concession Frame Manipulation. All participants read that they were selling their car online and that they were making a $1,000 concession from their initial asking price of $14,500 to an interested buyer. Then, participants in the conceder-cost condition read, "You think $1,000 is quite a concession and that you are taking a hit by reducing the price in this way. So, you say 'I will reduce the price but you should know that I am taking quite a hit by doing so. This is costly to me but I will reduce the price to $13,500.'" Participants in the receiver-benefit condition read, "You think $1,000 is quite a concession and that you are helping the buyer out by reducing the price in this way. So, you say 'I will reduce the price but you should know that I am trying to provide a benefit to you by doing so. To help you out, I will reduce the price to $13,500.'"

Predicted Perceptions of Believability. Concession believability was measured by asking participants to answer the following question: "You told the buyer that you are taking a hit (conceder-cost condition) [helping them out (receiver-benefit condition)]. How believable will the buyer think this statement to be?" (1=not at all believable, 7=very believable)

Predicted Perceptions of Manipulativeness. To examine predicted perceptions of manipulativeness, we asked participants the extent to which the buyer would view them as manipulative, misleading, disingenuous and deceitful (1=not at all, 7=very much, α=0.86).

Attention Check. We embedded a question that participants were prompted not to

answer to check if they were paying attention.

Results and Discussion

Two participants failed the attention check question and were removed from further data analysis.

Predicted Perceptions of Believability

To test the effect of concession frame on participants' expectations regarding believability, we first coded the concession frame variable as receiver-benefit = -1, conceder-cost = 1. We then conducted a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test with the concession frame variable as the independent and perceptions of believability as the dependent variable. Results indicated that participants expected the conceder-cost frame to be significantly more believable than the receiver-benefit frame, $M_{\text{conceder-cost}} = 4.17$, $SD_{\text{conceder-cost}} = 1.65$, $M_{\text{receiver-benefit}} = 3.17$, $SD_{\text{receiver-benefit}} = 1.60$, $F = 6.28$, $p = .01$, $d = 0.41$.

Predicted Perceptions of Manipulativeness

To see whether participants thought concession frame use would influence how manipulative their partners perceived them to be, we re-estimated the above ANOVA on perceptions of manipulativeness. Results were not significant, $F = 0.000$, $p = 1.00$.

Results of this study suggest that people expect the conceder-cost frame to be more believable than the receiver-benefit frame. Despite this difference, they do not appear to believe that these two frames will influence perceptions of manipulativeness differentially. Taken together, our initial two studies suggest that people are more likely to use conceder-cost than receiver-benefit frames in negotiations and that they think the cost frame is more believable than the receiver frame. In our next two studies, we test whether these lay expectations indeed effective in negotiation.

Study 2

In Study 2, we explored the effect of concession frames on negotiation outcomes. We predicted that receivers of concession frames that emphasize conceder-cost will obtain better outcomes than those of frames that emphasize receiver-benefit. To test this prediction, we conducted an experiment with one manipulated variable: concession frame (conceder-cost vs. receiver-benefit), and observed the final outcomes of a distributive negotiation.

Method

Participants

One hundred and eighty-two participants with ages ranging from 19 to 56 ($M = 27.20$, $SD = 9.83$, 45.7% women) completed the study in the laboratory and received $10 for their participation. Participants were recruited from a general population research participant pool maintained by a mid-Atlantic university of individuals interested in participating in studies for pay.

Procedure

Participants completed the study in pairs. Once participants arrived at the laboratory, they were told that they would be negotiating over the sale of a biotechnology plant and that they would be randomly assigned to the role of either the buyer or the seller. They were then provided with their role materials (which, for sellers, included the manipulation materials, described below), taken into separate rooms, and given 15 minutes to prepare for their role.

A total of 91 negotiating dyads were randomly assigned to either the conceder-cost or receiver-benefit concession frame conditions. All negotiation sessions were audiotaped and transcribed for process analysis (described below). The negotiation task was adapted from the exercise Synertech-Dosagen (Greenhalgh, 1993) and included one distributive issue: the sale price of the plant[2]. This sale price constituted the economic outcome measure.

Manipulated and Measured Variables

We manipulated concession frames through an "Important Message for the Seller" and through participant coaching.

Concession Frame Manipulation. The manipulation was introduced as an "Important Message for the Seller." All sellers first read: "Concessions are reductions that a negotiator makes during the course of a negotiation. Most negotiations require that parties make at least some concessions. As part of your strategic planning for the negotiation, you should think carefully about how to present your concessions to the other party."

Sellers in the *conceder-cost* condition then read: "According to negotiation experts, **you should emphasize to the other party that your concessions have been *costly to you*.** Whenever you make a concession, **remind the other party *what you are giving up*** by agreeing to concede" (bolded and italicized words included in manipulation materials).

Sellers in the *receiver-benefit* condition read: "According to negotiation experts, **you should emphasize to the other party that your concessions have been *beneficial to them.*** Whenever you make a concession, **remind the other party *that you are helping them out*** by agreeing to concede."

Materials in both conditions also included some example phrases that sellers could use for their concession frames such as "OK, I will reduce the price but this really hurts me," or "I am trying to provide some benefit to you by reducing the price."[3]

In addition to these written materials, about halfway through the preparation session,

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[2] We removed the compatible issue of workforce so that the scenario was purely distributive.

[3] We tested the realism of the conceder-cost versus receiver-benefit frames with a study conducted on Amazon Mturk with 80 participants (M_{age}=37.21, SD_{age}=12.61, 52.0% women). In this study, participants were told to imagine that they were negotiating over the sale price of a used car. After reading about the seller's concession (which included our manipulation of concession frame), they were asked, "The seller emphasized that he is taking a hit by reducing the price (conceder-cost condition [that he is trying to help you out by reducing the price (receiver-benefit condition). In your opinion, how likely is a negotiator to use this type of argument in face-to-face negotiations?" (1=Not at all likely, 7=Very likely). Results suggest participants found both frames likely to be used in negotiation as manifested by means above the midpoint of the scale ($M_{conceder\text{-}cost}$=5.68, $SD_{conceder\text{-}cost}$=1.49, $M_{receiver\text{-}benefit}$=5.16, $SD_{receiver\text{-}benefit}$=1.77) and also that the conceder-cost frame would be more likely to be used than the receiver-benefit frame, (F=3.97, p=.05). Interestingly, they also reported the cost frame to be less believable than the benefit frame, providing some initial evidence that the cost frame is seen as manipulative (F = 7.34, p < .01, $M_{conceder\text{-}cost}$ = 3.83, $SD_{conceder\text{-}cost}$ = 1.86, $M_{receiver\text{-}benefit}$ = 4.62, $SD_{receiver\text{-}benefit}$ = 1.76).

sellers also received verbal instructions from the experimenter to increase the probability that the concession frame manipulation would be correctly implemented. Specifically, the experimenter asked participants if they knew what a concession is, and then gave them a standard definition regardless of whether they answered yes or no. Then, the experimenter told them that the purpose of the study is to discover the best strategy to use when talking about one's concessions in a negotiation, and asked them to, every time they made a concession, emphasize how costly it had been to them (conceder-cost condition) or how beneficial it had been to the counterpart (receiver-benefit condition). The experimenter then pointed out the sample phrases provided in the manipulation materials as examples of how participants could implement this strategy. Following these instructions by the experimenter, participants were asked whether they would be willing to use the mentioned strategy. All participants agreed to use concession frames and also practiced how to do so with the experimenter using the sample phrases described above.

Participants in the buyer role did not receive additional instructions beyond those provided about their role. After preparing their respective roles, the dyads were then brought back into the same room and negotiated for the sale price of the plant.

Concession Magnitude. To measure the extent to which buyers (the receiver of the concession) conceded in total, we used the transcribed audiotapes to document their first offers and the final settlement price for the negotiation. We subtracted buyers' first offer from the final settlement price to use as our measure of overall concession magnitude. Thus, this measure indicates the total amount of concessions that recipients of the frames made over the course of the entire negotiation. For example, if a buyer first offered $15 million for the plant, and the final sale price was $11 million, our measure of $15 million – $11 million (yielding $4 million) captured the magnitude of all concessions made over the course of the negotiation by the buyer.

Economic Outcome. Economic outcome was measured as the final sale price for the plant.

Results and Discussion

It should be noted that all studies reported in this paper from this point forward examine the effects of concession frames on concession receivers. Therefore, the analyses and results are from the perspective of the receiver of the concession, which are, in this study, the negotiators in the role of the buyer. Means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations of variables used in the main analysis are reported in Table 1.

Preliminary Analyses

Manipulation Check. To ensure that the sellers actually implemented the manipulation, a research assistant transcribed all audiotapes of the negotiations. The first author then identified every instance of concession frame use in the negotiation. That is, we checked both that a frame was used and that the correct frame, according to assigned condition, was used.

Eight sessions in which frames were never used were excluded from further analyses. In addition, two dyads went off the negotiation script by including issues that were not a part of the negotiation[4]. Thus, ten dyads were dropped from our sample and we conducted our main analyses on the remaining 81. Exclusion did not differ by condition, $N_{\text{conceder-cost}} = 6.00$, $N_{\text{receiver-}}$

[4] Including these two dyads in the analyses does not influence any of the results.

$_{benefit}$ = 4.00, $F < 1$.

Seller First Offers. We first checked to make sure the concession frame did not influence first offers set by sellers, that is, the conceders in the study. It is plausible that sellers that received instructions to emphasize the costliness of their concessions might start off with higher first offers to make up for the losses to be incurred by conceding, as compared to sellers that received instructions to emphasize benefit. To test this possibility, we used the transcriptions to record the first offers made by the sellers. We conducted an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) with the concession frame as the independent variable and sellers' first offers as the dependent variable. Results showed that sellers' first offer did not differ by condition, $M_{conceder\text{-}cost}$ = 28.41, $SD_{conceder\text{-}cost}$ = 10.45, $M_{receiver\text{-}benefit}$ = 27.33, $SD_{receiver\text{-}benefit}$ = 6.07, F = .45, p = .51. Means are reported in units of millions of dollars.

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, and Zero-Order Correlations of Variables in Study 2

Variable	*M*	*SD*	Concession frame	Concession magnitude	Economic outcome
Concession frame	0.07	0.86	_		
Concession magnitude	2.32	2.28	- .30*	_	
Economic outcome	22.27	3.32	- .24*	.30**	_

Note: N = 81. Concession frame is coded as receiver-benefit = -1, conceder-cost = 1.
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

Main Analyses

Concession Magnitude. We predicted that negotiators who received concessions (i.e., buyers in this study) emphasizing conceder-cost would concede less in return over the course of the negotiation, compared to those who received concessions emphasizing receiver-benefit. To test this hypothesis, we conducted an ANOVA with concession frame as the independent variable and the magnitude of receivers' concessions as the dependent variable. Results indicated that receivers of frames emphasizing conceder-cost made significantly smaller concessions in the negotiation as compared to receivers of frames emphasizing receiver-benefit ($M_{conceder\text{-}cost}$ = 1.68, $SD_{conceder\text{-}cost}$ = 2.00, $M_{receiver\text{-}benefit}$ = 3.06, $SD_{receiver\text{-}benefit}$ = 2.39), F (1, 68) = 6.55, p = .01, d = 0.63[5].

Economic Outcome. We predicted that negotiators who received concession frames emphasizing conceder-cost would obtain higher economic outcomes compared to those who received frames emphasizing receiver-benefit. To test this hypothesis, we re-estimated the above

[5] Including sellers' first offer as a covariate in this analysis did not influence significance of the results, p = .02.

ANOVA with economic outcome, that is, the sale price, as the dependent variable. As predicted, we found that recipients (i.e., the buyers) of the conceder-cost frame paid significantly less for the plant, and thus obtained significantly better economic outcomes (M = 21.48, SD = 3.35), compared to those of the receiver-benefit frame (M = 23.07, SD = 3.18), F (1, 79) = 4.79, p = .03, d = .49[6].

In line with our predictions, Study 2 showed that receivers of concessions that emphasize the costliness of the concession concede less in return and thus obtain better economic outcomes than receivers of concessions that emphasize benefits to the recipient in a face-to-face negotiation. In our next two studies, we investigate the mechanism behind this effect.

Studies 3a and 3b

Our overall theoretical argument is that receivers of concessions that emphasize conceder-cost will be less likely to believe the frame and thus view their counterparts as more manipulative than receivers of the benefit frame. These negative perceptions will in turn lead them to reduce the size of their reciprocal concessions. We further theorize that the provision of information verifying the costliness of the concession will eliminate concession-recipients' skepticism towards the conceder-cost frame.

We tested these predictions in Studies 3a and 3b. In Study 3a, we manipulated the frame given for a concession and measured its effects on concession-recipients' perceptions of the concession-giver's manipulativeness. We also included a control condition to measure concession-recipients' baseline perceptions of concession behavior. In Study 3b, we used a moderation-of-process design (Spencer et al., 2005) to test the prediction that the provision of more information about the conceder's resources reduces the uncertainty about the costliness of the concession, thereby eliminating the skepticism that a conceder-cost frame might normally elicit. Specifically, if a conceder is known to have high resources, their claim of costliness will be rightfully viewed with disbelief. However, if the conceder is known to have low resources, their claim of costliness should be believed, thereby attenuating the negative perceptions that lead to lower reciprocal concessions. Thus, information verifying the costliness of a concession to the conceder should eliminate perceptions of manipulativeness associated with the conceder-cost frame. Furthermore, as a robustness check of our previous results, we again tested the relationship between concession frames, perceptions of manipulativeness, and counteroffers.

Study 3a Method

We conducted an experiment with one manipulated variable: concession frame (conceder-cost vs. receiver-benefit vs control), and measured its impact on concession-recipients' perceptions of the concession-givers' manipulativeness and recipients' concession behavior.

Participants

We recruited 300 participants on Prolific Academic and collected data from 302 participants with ages ranging from 18 to 75 (M = 31.08, SD = 10.86, 48.0% women). They were paid $.85 for their participation.

[6] Including the buyers' first offer as a covariate did not influence significance of the results, p = .01.

Manipulated and Measured Variables

All participants were asked to imagine that they wanted to buy a used car online, and that they had narrowed their search to a particular car with an asking price of $14,500. They were told that they had exchanged emails with the seller and were now meeting to negotiate in person.

Concession Frame Manipulation. Our manipulation was embedded as an audio file of the seller's first offer. We chose to deliver the manipulation via audio to control for differences in how participants might imagine the expression of the concession in terms of tone of voice and gender of the speaker. The seller was a male speaking in standard American English.

Participants in the conceder-cost condition heard the seller say: "OK, I can take a hit here. I can reduce the price to $13,500. I am willing to take a hit by going down to $13,500." Participants in the receiver-benefit condition heard: "OK, I can help you out here. I can reduce the price to $13,500. I am willing to help you by going down to $13,500." Participants in the *control* condition heard: "OK, I prefer not to spend a lot of time on this. I can reduce the price to $13,500. I am willing to go down to $13,500." We added the portion about time to make sure our control condition was comparable to the experimental conditions in terms of length and in terms of containing more than just the numerical offer.

Perceptions of Manipulativeness. We measured participants' perceptions of how manipulative the conceder was by asking them to indicate the extent to which they thought the seller's behavior was disingenuous, deceitful, manipulative, and misleading (1 = Not at all, 7 = Very much, $\alpha = .94$).

Counteroffer. Participants were asked to provide a counteroffer to the seller.

Manipulation Check. At the end of the study, participants were asked to respond to a multiple-choice question that asked them to indicate what the seller had said in the audio.

Results and Discussion

Means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations of variables used in the analysis are reported in Table 2.

Table 2
Means, Standard Deviations, and Zero-Order Correlations of Variables in Study 3a

Variable	*M*	*SD*	Concession frame	Perceptions of manipulativeness	Counteroffer
Concession frame	0.01	0.82	_		
Perceptions of manipulativeness	2.84	1.44	.14*	_	
Counteroffer	13,082.74	400.14	.02	-.26**	_

Note: $N = 294$. Concession frame is coded as receiver-benefit = 1, control = 0, conceder-cost = 1. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

Preliminary Analysis

Manipulation Check. Eight participants failed the manipulation check question and were excluded from further analysis, leaving us with a total of 294 participants. Exclusion did not differ by condition, $N_{\text{conceder-cost}} = 1.00$, $N_{\text{control}} = 4.00$, $N_{\text{receiver-benefit}} = 3.00$, F (2, 299) = 0.50, p = .61.

Main Analyses

Counteroffer. To test the effects of concession frames on the counteroffer, we conducted a one-way ANOVA with concession frame as the independent variable and counteroffer as the dependent variable. Surprisingly, this analysis did not yield a significant result, F (2, 294) = 0.04, p = .96 (Means and standard deviations are reported in Table 3 below).

Perceptions of Manipulativeness. To test our prediction about perceived manipulativeness, we computed the above ANOVA on this variable again, which yielded a significant effect, F (2, 294) = 5.96, p = .003. Planned contrast tests revealed that participants in the conceder-cost condition perceived their counterparts to be more manipulative than those in the receiver benefit, t = 2.33, p = .02, d = 0.32 and control conditions, t = -3.37, p = .001, d = 0.47. However, there was no difference between the receiver-benefit and control conditions in terms of how manipulative the counterpart was seen, t = 1.03, p = .30 (Means and standard deviations are reported in Table 3 below.)

Table 3

Main Effects as a Function of Concession Frame in Study 3a

Main effects between subjects	*Receiver-benefit*	*Control*	Conceder-cost
	Mean (SD)	*Mean (SD)*	*Mean (SD)*
Counteroffer	13,077.06 (438.01)[a]	13,079.38 (385.06)[a]	13,091.50 (379.40)[a]
Perceptions of manipulativeness	2.75 (1.31)[a]	2.54 (1.30)[a]	3.22 (1.61)[b]

Note: N = 294. Different letters within the same row indicate significant differences at $p < .05$.

Mediation Analysis[7]. We predicted that receivers of concession frames emphasizing conceder-cost would view their counterparts as more manipulative and would subsequently make lower counteroffers compared to receivers of concession frames emphasizing receiver-benefit. We were agnostic as to whether this mechanism would occur in the control condition. This prediction amounts to a mediation model where the relationship between the concession frame

[7] There is growing consensus among statisticians that a main effect is not a necessary condition to test for mediation (Hayes, 2009; Shrout & Bolger, 2002). In addition, our theorizing suggests that a decrease in counteroffers occurs only through perceptions of manipulativeness, implying that statistically a main effect does not need to be present.

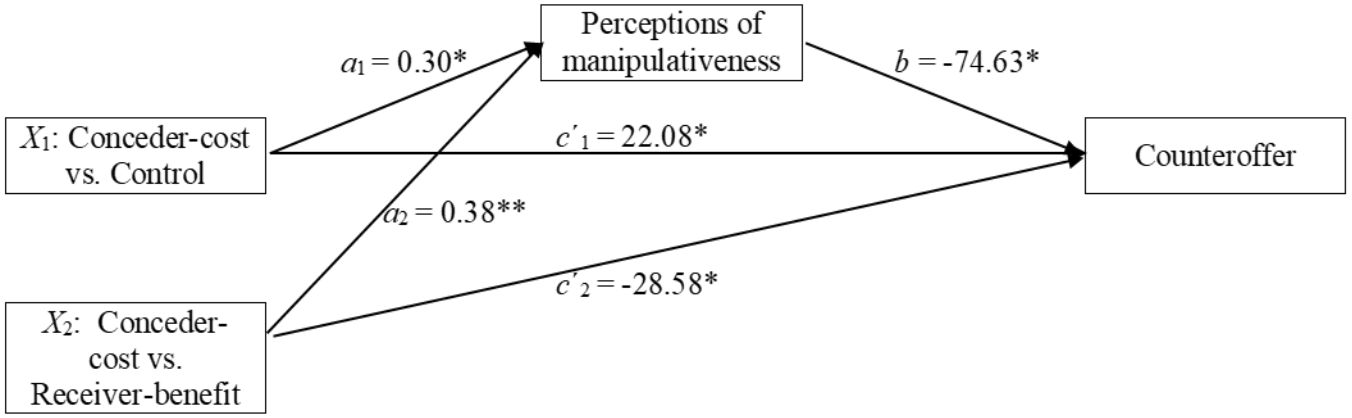
and the counteroffer is mediated by perceptions of manipulativeness in the two concession frame conditions.

Because the independent variable has three levels, we followed the recommendations of Hayes and Preacher (2014) for testing mediation models with multi-categorical independent variables. We used PROCESS V3.1 by Hayes (2018) to conduct the analysis, which allows for a number of different ways in which the three conditions can be coded. As our main interest is comparing the conceder-cost condition to receiver-benefit and control conditions separately, we used unweighted effects coding and created two dummy variables. The comparison between the conceder-cost and control conditions was represented by X_1 and that between conceder-cost and receiver-benefit was represented by X_2. In order to test the possible indirect effect of perceptions of manipulativeness on the relationship between concession frame and the counteroffer, we used 10,000 bootstrapped resamples. In this analysis, significant mediation is present if the 95% confidence intervals do not include zero.

Results indicated that the relative indirect effect for the first contrast comparing the *conceder-cost* to the *control* condition was significant [95% CI: 05.07, 44.59] as was the second contrast comparing the *conceder-cost* and *receiver-benefit* conditions [95% CI: -55.94, -08.52]. Thus, the difference in concession magnitude between those in the *conceder-cost* and *receiver-benefit* conditions appears to be driven by the perceptions of their counterpart as being manipulative. Figure 2 depicts this mediation model.

Figure 2

Mediation Analysis of the Effect of Concession Frame on Concession Magnitude with Perceptions of Manipulativeness as the Mediator (Study 3a).



Note: N=294. For the concession frame variable, receiver-benefit was coded as -1, control was coded as 0 and conceder-cost was coded as coded as 1. X_1 represents the contrast between the conceder-cost and control conditions and X_2 represents that between the conceder-cost and receiver-benefit conditions; a_1 and a_2 are the relationships between contrast X_1 and X_2 on the mediator, respectively; c'_1 and c'_2 represents the indirect effect of X_1 and X_2 on concession magnitude, respectively.

Study 3b

In this study, we manipulated perceptions of the concession-maker's resources by providing information about his/her profession. We pretested the viability of manipulating seller profession as a proxy for resources by asking 75 participants from Mturk (M_{age}=33.21, SD_{age}=11.32, 56% female) to indicate whether they thought a doctor or a graduate student, on average, has more money, more financial resources, and whether a doctor or graduate student, on average, is richer. 100.0% of participants indicated that a doctor has more money and is richer than a graduate student. 92.2% indicated that a doctor, on average, has more financial resources than a graduate student. We therefore use profession as a way to manipulate beliefs about the seller's resources.

If, as we predict, concession frames impact concession-giving behavior via perceptions of manipulativeness resulting from skepticism regarding the conceder's true position, information that verifies that the concession is indeed costly (e.g., when the seller is a graduate student) should attenuate the negative impact of a conceder-cost frame. To test these predictions, we conducted an experiment with a 2 (concession frame: conceder-cost vs. receiver-benefit) x 2 (conceder resources: high vs. low) design.

Method

Participants. We advertised the study for 400 participants on Prolific Academic and collected data from 403 participants (M_{age}= 33.33, SD_{age} = 11.68, 38% women). Participants were paid $0.85 for their participation.

Procedure. The procedure was identical to Study 3a with three exceptions: 1. We manipulated the profession of the negotiator making the concession, using profession as a proxy for conceder resources (described below), 2. We did not include a control condition, as our main focus was the comparison between the conceder-cost and receiver-benefit frames, and 3. We included an additional manipulation check question for our conceder resources variable.

Manipulated and Measured Variables.

Concession Frame, Perceptions of Manipulativeness and Counteroffer. These variables were manipulated or measured in the same way as in Study 3a.

Conceder Resources. Our manipulation of the conceder's resources was embedded into a description of the email exchanges about the car. Participants in the High Resources condition read: "During this exchange, you also find out that the seller is a doctor." Participants in the Low Resources condition read: "During this exchange, you also find out that the seller is a graduate student."

Conceder Resources Manipulation Check. We asked participants to indicate the profession of the seller in an open-ended format.

Results and Discussion

Means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations of variables used in the analysis are reported in Table 4.

Table 4

Means, Standard Deviations , and Zero-Order Correlations of Variables in Study 3b

Variable	*M*	*SD*	Concession frame	Conceder resources	Perceptions of manipulativeness	Counteroffer
Concession frame	0.01	1.00	_			
Conceder resources	0.01	1.00	-.01	_		
Perceptions of manipulativeness	3.70	1.55	.22**	.11*	_	
Counteroffer	13,067.41	470.93	.05	-.09	-.16**	_

Note: N = 365. Concession frame is coded as receiver-benefit = -1, conceder-cost = 1. Conceder resources is coded as low resources = -1, high resources = 1. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Preliminary Analysis.

Manipulation Check. Fourteen participants failed the concession frame manipulation check question. Thirty participants failed the conceder resources manipulation check question. Six of these participants failed both manipulation check questions, leading to 38 unique participants that failed one or both questions. We excluded these participants from further analysis, leaving us with a sample of 365. Exclusion did not differ by the concession frame, $N_{\text{conceder-cost}} = 12.00$, $N_{\text{receiver-benefit}} = 2.00$, $p = .35$ or conceder resources conditions, $N_{\text{high-resources}} = 20.00$, $N_{\text{low-resources}} = 10.00$, $p = .70$.

Main Analyses.

Counteroffer. To test the effects of our manipulations on the counteroffer, we conducted a two-way ANOVA with the concession frame and conceder resources conditions as the independent variables and the counteroffer as the dependent variable. Results indicated only a marginal effect of the conceder resources variable, F (1, 361) = 2.84, $p = .09$, $d = 0.18$, such that participants, in the role of buyers, made more generous counteroffers to the negotiator with low resources, $M_{low\ resources} = 13{,}109.72$, $SD_{low\ resources} = 441.37$; $M_{high\ resources} = 13{,}026.24$, $SD_{high\ resources} = 495.74$.

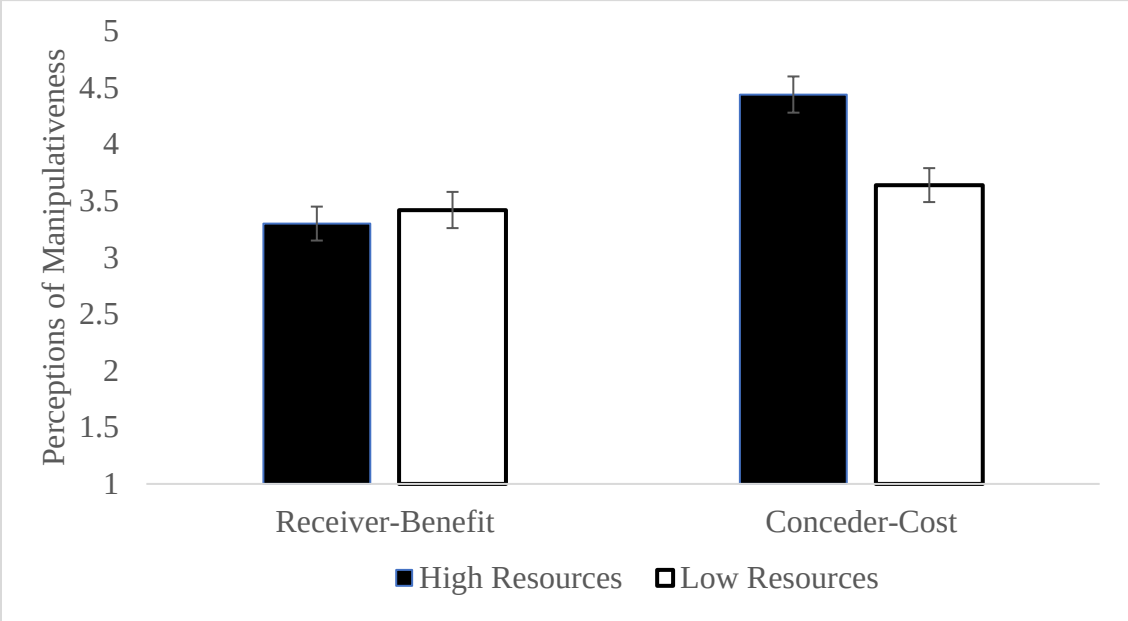
Perceptions of Manipulativeness. We predicted that once concession-receivers have information about the resources available to the concession-giver, they would no longer be skeptical of the conceder-cost argument and thus would not view a negotiator using this frame as being more manipulative than one using a receiver-benefit frame. In this study, this prediction means there should be no difference between the conceder-cost and receiver-benefit conditions on perceptions of manipulativeness in the low resources condition. However, in the high resources condition, conceder-cost frames should increase perceptions of manipulativeness relative to receiver-benefit frames. Statistically, this prediction amounts to an interaction between the concession frame and conceder resources variables on perceptions of manipulativeness.

To test this interaction, we re-computed the above ANOVA on our perceptions of manipulativeness variable. This test yielded two significant main effects and an interaction. First, in a replication of the finding from Study 2a, we observed that receivers of concessions emphasizing cost viewed their counterparts as more manipulative ($M_{\text{conceder-cost}} = 4.04$, $SD_{\text{conceder-cost}} = 1.49$) than those that received concessions emphasizing benefit ($M_{\text{receiver-benefit}} = 3.35$, $SD_{\text{receiver-benefit}} = 1.53$), F (1, 361) = 19.16, $p < .0001$, $d = 0.46$. Though unanticipated, consistent with prior work on social class (Piff et al., 2012), participants also viewed the conceder with the high resources ($M_{high\ resources} = 3.86$, $SD_{high\ resources} = 1.82$) to be more manipulative than the one with the low resources ($M_{low\ resources} = 3.53$, $SD_{low\ resources} = 1.45$), F (1, 361) = 4.83, $p = .03$, $d = 0.22$. More importantly, the interaction between these two variables was also significant, F (1, 361) = 8.73, $p = .003$. Simple effects tests to decompose this interaction showed that in the high resources condition, conceder-cost frames elicited significantly higher perceptions of manipulativeness than receiver-benefit frames, $M_{\text{conceder-cost}} = 4.44$, $SD_{\text{conceder-cost}} = 1.49$, $M_{\text{receiver-benefit}} = 3.64$, $SD_{\text{receiver-benefit}} = 1.48$), F (1, 361) = 27.24, $p < .0001$, $d = 0.54$. However, in the low resources condition, this difference disappeared, F (1, 361) = 0.10, $p = .36$. Figure 3 depicts this

interaction.

Figure 3

Interaction Between the Concession Frame and Conceder Resources Variables on Perceptions of Manipulativeness in Study 3b



Note: N = 365.

Moderated Mediation Analysis. Our overall prediction is that the conceder-cost frame is seen as more manipulative due to information unavailability about the conceders' resources. Statistically, this prediction amounts to a moderated mediation where the relationship between concession frames and counteroffers mediated by perceptions of manipulativeness is moderated by conceder resources.

To test this model, we used PROCESS V3.1 Model 7 (Hayes, 2013). In support of the predicted model, the confidence interval for the indirect effect of perceptions of manipulativeness did not include zero in the high resources condition (95% CI: -54.74, -9.88) but did include zero in the low resources condition (95% CI: -20.08, 5.37). Additionally, the confidence interval for the overall model did not include zero (95% CI: -50.58, -5.67), providing support for the predicted pattern of moderated mediation. Figure 4 depicts these results.

Discussion

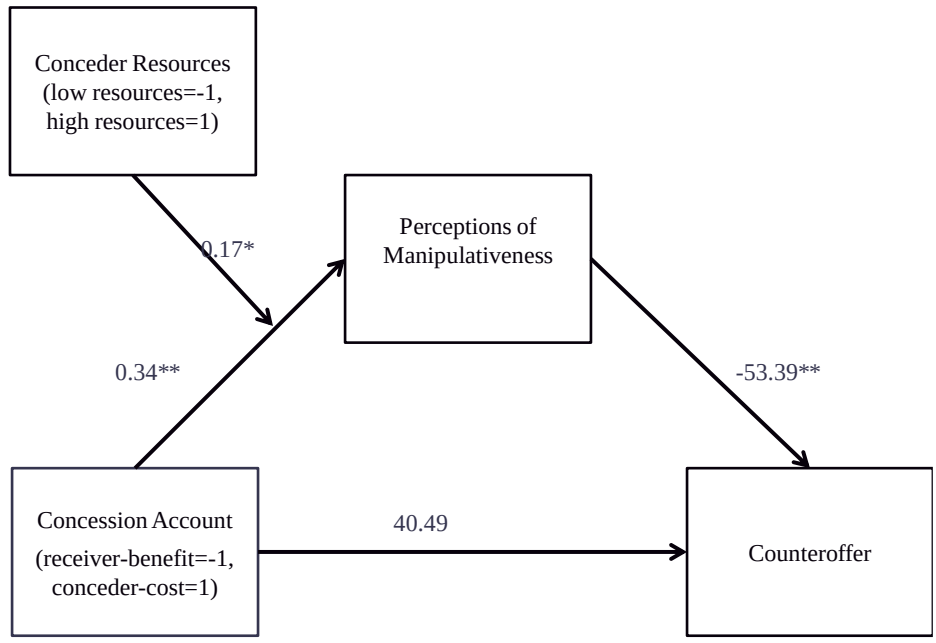
Studies 3a and 3b explored the reasons behind why concession frames affect negotiation outcomes and found that negotiators perceive counterparts using frames emphasizing cost to be more manipulative than those using frames emphasizing benefit. We argue these increased perceptions of manipulativeness in response to conceder-cost frames are driven by negotiators' inability to verify this argument. In Study 3a, we found evidence that concession-recipients

perceive concession frames with an emphasis on conceder-cost to be more manipulative than those who emphasize receiver-benefit, with subsequent effects on concrete negotiation behaviors, such as counteroffers. Study 3b manipulated the resources of the concession-maker to provide further evidence that this effect occurs due to the salience of information asymmetry when frames emphasize conceder-cost. Consistent with our predictions, once concession-recipients are provided with information that alleviates the ambiguity around the true position of the concession-maker and validates the claimed costliness of the concession, negotiators that use the conceder-cost frame are seen as no more manipulative than those using the receiver-benefit frame.

Despite having documented that recipients of concessions framed as conceder-cost do, indeed, view their counterparts as being more manipulative, and that these perceptions of manipulativeness do indeed impact the size of their counteroffers, it was puzzling that we did not find a significant effect of our manipulations on counteroffers. One possibility is that the size of the concessions possible in this scenario were not large enough to enable us to capture the impact of the concession frames. This is quite plausible when considered in conjunction with the results of Study 2 where we did observe a main effect of concession frames on concession magnitude and economic outcomes using a scenario with a large bargaining zone.

Figure 4

Moderated Mediation Analysis with Concession Frame as the Independent, Conceder Resources as the Moderating, Perceptions of Manipulativeness as the Mediating and Counteroffer as the Dependent Variable in Study 3b



Note: N = 365.

General Discussion

Our primary argument is that how concessions are framed—as conceder-cost or receiver-benefit—will influence negotiators' experiences and outcomes. In Study 1, we showed that negotiators use conceder-cost frames more frequently than receiver benefit-frames and expect them to be more believable. In Study 2, concession-recipients were less likely to reciprocate a concession framed as conceder-cost than one framed as receiver-benefit, which subsequently increased their economic outcomes in a distributive negotiation setting. In Studies 3a and 3b, we documented the mechanism underlying this effect, namely a perception that the conceder is using the cost frame to manipulate, brought on by information asymmetry. Taken together, these results suggest that the way a concession is framed can have significant impact on the negotiation process, as well as negotiators' economic outcomes.

To our knowledge, this research is the first to examine the impact of concessions without changing the magnitude of the concession or other structural elements in the negotiation. In this way, our approach to concessions contributes to research on interpersonal influence and persuasion tactics in negotiation, defined as "the effort to positively influence another party's attitude toward a given idea or proposition without changing the incentives or objective information set of the other party" (Malhotra & Bazerman, 2008, p. 512). This framework focuses on how negotiation moves of equal objective value can lead to divergent outcomes depending on the arguments made to support them, rather than on the economic or structural elements of the bargaining process. In other words, the interpersonal influence perspective focuses on persuasion tactics that impact the negotiation process without changing objective values, such as framing concessions to emphasize conceder-cost versus receiver-benefit.

Furthermore, our findings advance the rich literature on framing effects in negotiation which have been built on prospect theory (De Dreu et al., 1994; Neale & Bazerman, 1985; Neale et al., 1987). Thus far, this literature has predominantly examined the effect of framing an outcome as a loss versus a gain, which is driven by differential valuations of gains versus losses and shifting risk preferences. Our findings depart from this work and extend the theory on framing by showing that specific negotiation behaviors, such as making a concession, can also be framed in loss (i.e. conceder-cost) versus gain (i.e. receiver-benefit) terms, with attendant downstream consequences. In addition, whereas traditional loss/gain research might have predicted that negotiators would be more responsive to a loss (i.e., conceder-cost) framing, we find, instead, that emphasizing gains from a concession is more effective at curbing negative perceptions in the negotiation. A possible reason for this divergent finding might be that the traditional gain/loss frames both describe one's own outcomes, whereas concession frames contrast one's own gain outcome to another person's loss outcome in an interdependent decision-making context.

Our findings also contribute to the literature on negotiator cognition by suggesting that in distributive bargaining, negotiators' default assumption is that their counterparts have ample resources. For example, in Study 3a, when participants were not given information about their counterpart's resources, they found concessions framed as cost more manipulative. This pattern was also found when, in Study 3b, participants faced a counterpart known to have greater resources, suggesting that negotiators' default assumptions are that their counterparts are rich in resources. This finding presents yet another reason why trust building is such a challenge in negotiations (Lewicki & Stevenson, 1997), particularly in a distributive context. In distributive negotiations, the parties' goal is to divide a fixed resource, which makes competition and lack of

trust an inherent component of such interactions. Despite this, our findings demonstrate one way in which the distributive negotiation process can become more positive: by emphasizing how one is trying to help one's counterpart with one's concessions. While most of the negotiation literature focuses on the magnitude of concrete negotiation behaviors that can help or derail trust building, such as offer patterns (Osgood, 1962; Pillutla et al., 2003), our results demonstrate that rhetorical strategies can be critical drivers of this process as well.

Future Directions and Limitations

We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge several limitations to the present work. First and foremost, while we captured all the "steps" of our theoretical model, we do not have a study in which all components of the model are present in a naturalistic laboratory study in which a negotiation was conducted to conclusion. The drawback of this approach is particularly evident in the lack of effect of our manipulations on counteroffers in Studies 3a and 3b. As we argued previously, we believe that this difference may have been driven by the smaller size of concessions possible in these studies. If this is true, then one might expect that effect sizes across negotiation studies are impacted by the size of the concessions possible. That is, are the effect sizes found for negotiation researchers using scenarios in which millions of dollars are at stake different from those using scenarios in which hundreds of dollars are at stake? This seemingly small methodological choice might well have implications for how robust researchers' findings are, with attendant implications for replication efforts.

A second limitation is also one that is an opportunity. Here, we examined the effect of concession framing in the context of distributive negotiations. We began with the distributive negotiation context because it enables us to demonstrate that the very same concession, described in different ways, engenders different responses from the concession-recipient. In an integrative context, it may or may not be true that a concession is beneficial to the recipient is in fact costly to the concession-giver. Yet, our findings suggest that even though people tend to see negotiation in terms of fixed-pie (i.e., as distributive, Thompson & Hastie, 1990), underneath this competitive veneer is the intuition that concessions can be integrative in nature. This understanding, however, only seems to be elicited when concessions are made in a way that highlights the information asymmetry inherent to negotiations. These are intriguing findings that point to the importance of future researchers further exploration of concession-framing effects in integrative contexts. Indeed, for example, the skepticism engendered by describing concessions as costly to the conceder could work in a way that benefits both parties. Specifically, past work documents that suspicion in negotiations with integrative potential leads to more information seeking, which improves value creation (Sinaceur, 2010). Similarly, it is possible that the suspicion associated with conceder-cost frames may lead negotiators to seek information about the costliness of the concession, which may result in the discovery of useful information to facilitate trade-offs. Thus, the negative effects of this type of frame in distributive negotiations may play out differently in the integrative domain. We see this as a particularly fruitful avenue for future research.

Third, while methodological rigor compelled us to constrain our participants' exposure to only one frame at a time, in reality, it is also possible to combine these frames. For example, one may say "Although this is costly to me, I will reduce the price by $100 to help you out." It is an empirical question how negotiators will respond to this combination of frames. One possibility is that they may attend to the portion that is self-referential, that is, receiver-benefit. Another is that

recency (Sunstein & Zeckhauser, 2011) may play a role and they will attend to the part of the combination of the frame that came last. Thus, our research raises the question of not only whether concession frames impact negotiator perceptions and behaviors, but also whether specific combinations or configurations of frames might outperform single frames.

Similarly, our theory and empirical investigation focused on perceptions of manipulativeness, brought on by information asymmetry, as the main reason behind our effects. It is, of course, also possible that there may be other perceptions that operate in tandem with perceptions of manipulativeness, such as warmth and competence, which have been studied extensively in social psychology (Fiske et al., 2002). For example, receivers of cost frames may refuse to reciprocate concessions because they see their negotiation counterpart as manipulative but also because the conceder-cost frame creates the perception of a cold and competent partner. Similarly, the receiver-benefit frame may increase perceptions of warmth, leading receivers to reciprocate more to this frame than a cost frame. Future research should investigate how different perceptions engendered by concession frames may influence subsequent negotiation behavior.

Finally, we note that all our studies were conducted in the Northern American context. It is an open question as to whether the effect of concession frames extends beyond this individualistic cultural context. It is possible that emphasizing conceder-cost, which we found to be perceived as manipulative, may not be received as negatively in other cultures. In collectivistic cultures, engaging in self-sacrifice for the good of the group is seen as honorable and desirable (Triandis, 2001). Also, in such cultures, relationship building in negotiation is as paramount a concern as obtaining a good economic outcome for the self. Following this logic, it is quite possible that people from collectivistic cultures may have more positive perceptions of a negotiator who emphasizes the costliness of the concession, as compared to one who emphasizes the benefit of the concession to the concession recipient, because such behavior is acceptable, and even desirable, in working towards a good relationship between the negotiating parties. Thus, the negative perceptions resulting from conceder-cost frames in individualistic cultures may not occur in collectivistic cultures.

Conclusion

Our findings hold particular practical import for negotiators in distributive negotiations. Specifically, concessions that emphasize receiver-benefit, as compared to concessions that emphasize conceder-cost, lead to less negative perceptions of the conceder. However, this decrease in negative perceptions appears to have an adverse effect on economic outcomes, as receivers of concessions that are framed as benefit fare significantly worse than receivers of concessions framed as cost. In this way, concession frames may be a useful tool for concession-makers. By describing their concession in a way that emphasizes the benefit provided for their counterpart, they not only increase their counterparty's positive perceptions of them, which is critical for future interactions and building a good reputation (Tinsley et al., 2002), but also they obtain more desirable economic outcomes for themselves.

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Author Bios

Nazlı Bhatia, PhD is an Associate Professor of Practice at the University of Pennsylvania.

She studies and has published research on the influence of rhetorical strategies on negotiation processes and outcomes. Her work has been featured in major popular media outlets including the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and *BBC News Magazine*. Dr. Bhatia has won numerous teaching awards for her courses on negotiations, power and influence and organizational behavior. She received her PhD in Organizational Behavior and Theory from the Tepper School of Business at Carnegie Mellon University.

Rosalind Chow, PhD is a tenured Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior and Theory at the Tepper School of Business at Carnegie Mellon University. She studies and has published research on social hierarchy, justice, diversity, and inter-group and intra-group processes. In addition to many peer-reviewed publications, she has published articles geared to practitioners in *MIT Sloan Management Review* and *Harvard Business Review*. Dr. Chow was named one of the best 40 professors under 40 years of age by *Poets & Quants*. She received her PhD in Organizational Behavior from the Stanford Graduate School of Business.

Laurie R. Weingart, PhD is the Richard M. and Margaret S. Cyert Professor of Organizational Behavior and Theory in the Tepper School of Business at Carnegie Mellon University. Coauthor of *The No Club: Putting a Stop to Women's Dead-End Work*, Dr. Weingart specializes in team collaboration, conflict, and negotiation, with a focus on how differences across people both help and hinder effective problem solving and innovation. An elected Fellow of the Academy of Management and recipient of the Joseph E. McGrath Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Study of Groups, her award-winning research appears in top management and psychology journals.

Matthew A. Diabes, MS is a PhD Candidate in Organizational Behavior and Theory at the Tepper School of Business at Carnegie Mellon University, advised by Professors Taya R. Cohen and Laurie R. Weingart. He studies and has published research on team member attitudes and behaviors in high-stakes collaboration, especially within the emergency health care sector. Diabes is a two-time recipient of the Negotiation and Team Resource Institute Peterson research grant and has taught courses in Negotiations and Conflict Resolution and Organizational Behavior to undergraduates at Carnegie Mellon University.