THE EFFECTS OF MUSIC IN ADVERTISEMENT

A comparative study of theories

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Abstract

The influence of music in retail settings and advertisements on consumers' purchasing behavior has been an important topic in both fields of marketing and psychology. The use of music to regulate consumers' emotions to increase consumption is a dominating marketing strategy for stores and other service environments. The theory of *atmospherics* by Kotler and the theory of *Pleasure, Arousal, Dominance* (*PAD*) by Mehrabian-Russell are both widely used in studying the effects of music in retail settings. However, while other theories have been formulated to study music in advertisement, *atmospherics* and *PAD*, being fundamental in retail settings, have not been used in studying the effects of music in advertisement. The aim of the thesis is to answer the question whether these two theories can be applied to study the effects of music in advertisements. This thesis analyzes the function of music in three different commercials, how it contributes to the other aspects of the commercials and how it could influence consumers' purchasing behavior, based on the parameters from both the *atmospherics* theory and *PAD* theory. Findings suggest that *atmospherics* is suitable for studying the effects of music in advertisements, while *PAD* seems not to be suitable for studying music in advertisements according to the current study method. Future research could optimize these findings by conducting experimental studies involving participants.

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Introduction

In 2011 and 2012, supermarket Albert Heijn released a couple of commercials dedicated to the summer holiday. In each of these commercials, Albert Heijn's icon Harry Piekema would "perform" on stage, singing songs about that week's products and sales. These songs were parodies on several original hit songs with their lyrics edited to match the theme of the commercials. At the time, these "new" songs were recognizable and the commercials became quite memorable. Through this way of using these well-known songs in their commercial, Albert Heijn's commercials are original and distinctive.

Being distinctive is important when it comes to advertising your brand, store or products. The role of music in marketing and consumers' behavior has long been an important research topic in both marketing and psychological research. The use of background music in regulating consumers' emotions would be the dominating marketing strategy for stores and other establishments such as restaurants and bars. Empirical studies have shown that music has a positive influence on consumers' mood (e.g. Alpert and Alpert 2005, 370; Cassidy and MacDonald 2007; 518; Chebat, Chebat, and Vaillan 2001; 120-122; Donovan and Rossiter 1982, 54-55; Donovan, Rossiter, Marcoolyn, and Nesdale 1994, 291-292; Iyiola 2011, 62-63). This indicates that music is a useful stimulator of consumers' shopping behavior.

Through examination of the theoretical framework of previous studies on the influence of music on emotional state and shopping behavior, two theories were mainly used. The first is the theory of *atmospherics.* Marketing author, consultant, and professor Philip Kotler states that people, in their purchase decision-making, respond to more than simply the tangible product or service being offered; they respond to the *total product*. He proposes that the *atmosphere* of the place is sometimes more influential that the product itself in the purchase decision. Kotler describes atmospherics as the "conscious designing of space to create certain effects in buyers; spatial aesthetics" (Kotler 1973, 50). Here, the spatial aesthetics of a space are designed to influence consumers' purchase behavior. The second theory is theory of *PAD*. Environmental psychologists Albert Mehrabian and James A. Russell proposed a model which describes the environmental experience of individuals based on cognitive functions of "pleasure, arousal and dominance" (PAD). The PAD model consists of three dimensions of emotion that indicate people's state of feeling. While the model is originally used in environmental psychology, it is nowadays used in retail settings and buying environments. The model describes how outside

influences affect our emotional state and how that influences consumer's behavior.

Although both theories have been applied in studying the effects of music in in-store settings, the theories have not so far been used for studying the effects of music in advertisements. Rather, studies on music in advertisements often use involvement and memory as base theory. At the same time, while both theories focus on retail and how to optimize consumers' purchase behavior, they differentiate in important ways. Kotler focuses on the designing aspect of an establishment, from the perspective of optimizing the best environment, while Mehrabian and Russell focus on the consumers' perspective and their response to their environment. The aim of this thesis is to answer the question whether both theories by Kotler and Mehrabian and Russell are applicable for studying the effects of music in advertisement on consumers' behavior and if needed, to propose a new theory based on both theories.

To answer this question, in chapter one I will first examine functions of music in advertisement and how music in advertisement has been studied. I will focus on the marketing aspect by looking at the effects of music on stimulation of purchasing behavior. While some scholars studied music in advertisement from a social and cultural perspective, I focus on the psychological effects it has on behavior and how it can be applied in marketing strategies to optimize purchase behavior. In chapters two and three, I will explore both theories by Kotler and Mehrabian and Russell by explaining the theories, how they are used to study music in previous studies and I will analyze some commercials in both chapters to apply each theory. Finally, I will discuss my findings in the discussion to answer my main question.

Study method

As described above, while two major theories, atmospherics and PAD, have been widely used in studying the influence of music on consumers' behavior in physical settings, they have not yet been used in studying the influence of music on consumers' behavior towards non-physical settings, thus commercials. While commercials act as multimedia persuader for the viewer to perform certain purchasing behavior, physical establishments are designed to do the same.

For this thesis, I will apply the theories, atmospherics and PAD, to analyze the music in commercials based on their core functions and ideas to see whether these theories are applicable for studying music in commercials. With each commercial, I will discuss what music is playing, what the message of the commercial is, how the music is placed in the commercial and how it stimulates the viewer, based on the parameters of the atmospherics and PAD theories.

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The contribution to the field of study is that this way of applying these two theories that has not been done before. While music in advertisement has widely been studied from different perspectives, such as psychology, humanities and marketing, these two theories from the "in-store" field have not been used in studying music in advertisement. To contribute to the field of study, I will examine whether their application can be an extension to the current literature.

Commercials

For the analysis part, I chose three different commercials. The first one is a holiday season commercial by *de Bijenkorf* from 2019[1]. During holiday season, it is custom for stores and companies to make holiday special commercials, since people are shopping presents around this time of the year. *De Bijenkorf is* a warehouse known for its luxurious and expensive brand. Yet the warehouse is somewhat affordable for the average shopper which makes the warehouse accessible and not too expensive. (de Bijenkorf n.d.) The commercial was released November 7 in 2019, being their holiday season commercial for that year. I wanted to analyze a fashion store, since clothing is the first thing people notice when meeting other people. Identity is immediately communicated through clothing, thus those commercials are often fashioned towards certain demographic groups. I chose this store, since it has a distinctive and luxurious image. I chose the commercial because it is the most recent one and has several scenes to analyze. This makes the commercial dynamic and gives a lot to discuss.

The second commercial I chose is the 2013 *Mercedes-Benz* commercial on their comfort and technological innovations and design in their new cars[2]. *Mercedes-Benz* stands for comfort, luxury and quality, and they want to exceed customers' expectations by constant innovations (Mercedes-Benz n.d.). Their cars are comfortable, feel luxurious and make sure the customer has optimal driving experiences. While the previous commercial focused on fashion, this one focuses on cars, which are people less likely to frequently buy than clothing. Therefore, car commercials may not directly stimulate the viewer into purchasing behavior. I chose this particular

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[1] De Bijenkorf. "Feestseizoen commercial met Robbiii de Robot (2019) | de Bijenkorf". *Youtube* video, 0:59. November 7, 2019. 0:59. Accessed 1 May, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IoZG8zOMd2M

[2] Mercedes-Benz. "Mercedes-Benz "Chicken" MAGIC BODY CONTROL TV commercial". *YouTube* video, 0:52. September 23, 2013. Accessed May 25, 2020. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLwML2PagbY

commercial since it became widely popular, when shortly after car brand *Jaguar* also made a commercial as reaction to this one, parodying the original clip. Only a few months after *Jaguar*, *Mercedes-Benz* came with a lesser known reaction to the *Jaguar* commercial. Overall, the "war" between the two manufactures made the original commercial generally known.

The third commercial I chose to analyze is the 2010 *Calvé* peanut butter commercial[3]. *Calvé* focuses on health and well-being (Calvé n.d.). This idea could be applied to their products as well, since many of their products are popular ingredients in Dutch households. From sauces to spreads, Calvé is affordable, but also tries to be healthy. This commercial is about their well-known peanut butter, which is a household name in Dutch culture. Unlike the other two commercials, *Calvé* peanut butter is an example of a product that has direct competition, as it is most of the time presented in stores among many other brands and products at the same time. When people go to fashion or car establishments, they often find one brand: that particular store. In case of food products, they are presented together with lots of the same products from different brands (unless you go to a special market). Ultimately, food products do have the most competition when it comes to presenting themselves to the customer. I chose this particular commercial since it was awarded with the "Ster Gouden Loeki" for being the best commercial of that year, therefore being an interesting commercial to analyze.

As described above, *de Bijenkorf* advertises a store and *Mercedes-Benz* a brand whereas *Calvé*'s peanut butter is a direct advertisement for one product. With the first case, the commercial advertises a space or establishment in which the customer experiences certain values. In this case, the commercial influences whether the customer is willing to buy at a certain space, regarding of the products being sold there. In the second case, a brand is advertised, in which the commercial influences whether the customer is willing to buy the product, no matter where it is sold. With the third case, the commercial advertises for a specific product amongst other products. Here, the commercial must influence the customer to buy a certain brand and product. For this thesis, I chose one commercial of each category to see how music functions in the different commercials.

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[3] Calve "Calvé pindakaas reclame 2010 Pietertje". *YouTube* video, 0:47. June 8, 2016. Accessed May 25, 2020.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xI-jW1TqCRI

Chapter 1: Studying music in commercials

In this chapter I will discuss how music has been studied in commercials before, by focusing on the influence it has on consumers evaluations and attitudes towards the commercials. I will start with a short definition of advertising, followed by different roles music can serve in commercials. Finally, I will discuss some major theories on how the influence of music in commercials has been studied.

Advertising is a means by which a party seeks to persuade or attract another into purchasing a particular product or service (Huron 1989, 557; Vedabala 2018, 517). Huron explains that this contrasts the one-on-one sales pitches one may encounter at the point of sales since advertising reaches out to a larger, and often more general audience. He states that advertising therefore differentiates from alluring conversations in a way that it relies fully on mass media and "on widespread social meanings rather than personal or idiosyncratic motivations for purchasing" (Huron 1989, 557). David Allan explains that the definition of advertising varied over the course of history. While some describe advertising as "the greatest art form of the twentieth century…", others reject it as an art and describe it as "a medium of information…" (Allan 2005, 3). Through a study to come to a consensus on a definition of the term *advertising*, Allan proposed the definition as "a paid, mediated form of communication from an identifiable source, designed to persuade the receiver to take some action, now or in the future" (Allan 2005, 3). The overall idea is to stimulate the buyer without directly meeting them through an effective but short message, which carries an important role in the process of communication (Vedabala 2018, 517).

In 1989, music theorist David Huron proposed six features in which music can serve in a commercial. These six features are entertainment; structure/continuity; memorability; lyrical language; targeting; and authority establishment (Huron 1989, 560). The first feature, entertainment, functions to contribute to the effectiveness of advertisements by constructing the advertisements to be more attractive. Good advertisement attracts the attention of the audience, and the clearest way of doing this is to build an appeal which is entertaining, or at least draws attention. Furthermore, Nicolai Graakjær argues that sounds, and in particular music, have an advantage over visual attention-catchers. While viewers can easily redirect their visual attention, they cannot easily redirect their aural attention in the same manner (Graakjær 2015, 4).

The second feature is structure/continuity. As Huron continues, music may also be

applied to structure a commercial. The most important structural role is bridging a sequence of visual images and/or different scenes, narrative voice-overs or different product applications (Huron 1989, 561). Therefore, in advertising, music can be applied to continue the narrative or story of the commercial, or be linked to indicate different themes in the commercial.

The third feature is memorability. A good advertisement is memorable, for the advertisers want consumers to buy their product. Music boosts the memorability of a product or the company's name. Before the 1980s, the jingle was popular and became the dominant advertising strategy for years, since the jingles were associated with one product or company.

The next feature is lyrical language. Lyrical language differs from the spoken language, as it conveys verbal information in a non-spoken way (Huron 1989, 565). While the message often does not differ from spoken language, lyrical language engages with the consumers by adding a musical phrase to the message, rather than simply be spoken. While a message can be interpreted banal or corny when spoken, singing often adds the little nuance to the message in which the individual can easier detect the meaning (Huron 1989, 565).

Huron's fifth feature may be the most important feature of all six. As mass media and digital advertisement rose, advertisers and agencies sought out to find their listening audience. They seek to find an audience whose demographic characteristics are in line with the identity or brand of their products (Huron 1989, 566-567). Focusing on a specific audience is called "targeting".

The final feature of Huron is authority establishment. Authority establishment focuses on the use of music to enhance the advertising's authority and validating the use of the product or brand.

Studying music in advertisement

Around the 1950 advertisers and agencies would shift from a direct way of advertising, to a subliminal way of advertising by engaging on the emotional state of the consumers (Taylor 2012, 7). In 1981, Bower conducted a few studies on the influence mood on memory, by letting participants engage and identify with characters and scenarios based on certain states of feelings. Through this, Bower concluded that emotional state plays a role in activating memories (Bower 1981, 146-147). Another study by Batra and Stayman on mood and advertising showed that a positive mood results in a more positive evaluation of an advertisement (Batra and Stayman

1999, 213-214). These two studies indicate the importance of a positive emotional state in order that the advertisement is most successful.

Gorn (1982) studied the influence of music in advertising by using a classical conditioning approach. He found that feelings provoked from hearing liked or dislike music in combination with the presentation of a product can positively or negatively affect consumers' purchase choices (Gorn 1982, 97-98). Classical conditioning involves the pairing of a product (neutral stimulus) with liked/disliked music (unconditioned stimulus) that will form an association between the two, and therefore a preference or not for the product (the conditioned response) (Zander, Apaolaza-Ibáñez, and Hartmann 2010, 129). Later studies replicating Gorn's initial study found that this might not work with all kinds of products (Kellaris and Cox 1989, 117-118).

The next two theories focus on the level of arousal, or involvement with an advertisement. ELM (Elaboration of Likelihood Model) is a theory by Petty and Cacioppo (1981) that hypothesizes two ways of changing or provoking one's attitude and feelings (Zander, Apaolaza-Ibáñez, and Hartmann 2010, 130). In theory, attitudes and feelings are described as general evaluations of ourselves or products/objects. "These evaluations rely on behavioral, affective and cognitive experiences and affect our emotions and behavior" (Zander, Apaolaza-Ibáñez, and Hartmann 2010, 129). One way of changing or provoking attitudes and feelings is through motivation, high involvement and consciously processing the information about a product. A state of high involvement with a product results in preferred behavior, such as buying the product. The other way is when there is little or no motivation or ability to deal with information about a product. In this case, there is low involvement. Attitudes and feelings about a product are here constructed through associations with the product, which in the case of commercials often music is. Zander et al. argue that consumers are more likely to be influenced by music when there is low involvement with the actual product. This way, the music can evoke emotions more easily than when one is in a state of high involvement (Zander, Apaolaza-Ibáñez, and Hartmann 2010, 130).

Park and Young (1986) studied the effect of the level of involvement (low-high involvement) on an individual's reaction to advertisement. They utilized music to see how it affected attitude and what effect is has on evaluation towards brands. They concluded that the effect of music on the evaluation towards brands depends on the level of involvement. The less

involvement with a brand or product, the more music complements the other aspects of the advertisement and the more influence music has on the evaluation towards the brand or product.(Park and Young 1986, 21-22)/ In other words, when you are already consciously involved with a brand or product, there is little chance that music changes your attitude towards the brand or product.

The following two theories focus on the congruence of music with the advertisement. Musical fit, as the name suggests, is the degree in which the music fits into the advertisement. This concept builds on the idea of Park and Young. MacInnis and Park (1991) argue that music that interacts with the consumers' perception towards the central message of the advertisement and product, may have a positive effect on consumers state of involvement (MacInnis and Park 1991, 162). While the music may be carefully selected and placed in the advertisement, musical fit refers to the "subjective perception" of consumers in which they evaluate whether they think the music fits right in the advertisement. When the music and all the elements of the commercial coincide with one another, they connect cultural context communicated through the commercial and create meaning (Zander,Apaolaza-Ibáñez, and Hartmann 2010, 130). When meaning is created, consumers are more likely to engage with the product.

Kellaris, Cox and Cox (1993) studied the impact of message-congruent background music in advertisements on attention. They hypothesized that people are more likely to recall a brand's name or product when the message of the music is congruent with the message of the commercial than when the messages are incongruent. Furthermore, they hypothesized that people are more likely to recognize a brand's name or product when the message of the music is congruent with the commercial, than when the music is incongruent. They concluded that, when the music's message is congruent with the commercial's message, people are more likely to recall and recognize brand's or products. When the messages are incongruent, music serves as a distraction in information processing (Kellaris, Cox, and Cox 1993, 120-121). Later studies by Oakes (2007) add to this idea that, altough incongruent music-messages often polarize the evaluation of the commercial's message, in some cases it can lead to consumers' interest, as its non-matching expectations serves as attention-creator (Oakes 2007, 47-48).

The last theory focuses on familiarity with the music. David Allan (2006) studied the familiarity and personal significance with the music in commercial affects viewer's attention. He hypothesized that people with a higher personal significance and familiarity with the have more

attention to the commercial than people with little personal significance and familiarity. Allan questioned how familiar music and personal significance affects attention to commercials. He concluded that familiarity with the music in commercials helps to attract attention from the viewer (Allan 2006, 440-441). This study and later studies by Allan also showed that personal significance helps the viewer evoke memories and therefore helps to attract attention as well (Allan 2014, 37).

In this chapter, I examined different roles in which music can be used in commercials. Like in movies, music helps to narrate the story of the commercial. Furthermore, I discussed how different approaches for studying music in commercials have been used. Nonetheless, for this thesis I will analyze two more theories to see whether they are applicable as well in studying music in commercials and whether they can be used as extension to the current literature. In the next chapter, I will focus on the first theory, *atmospherics* by Philip Kotler.

Chapter 2: Atmospherics by Kotler (1973)

In this chapter, I will discuss Kotler's theory of *atmospherics* by explaining how he proposed the theory and what application it has. Furthermore, I will give a short overview of studies done through *atmospherics* and their findings. Finally, I will apply the theory to analyze three commercials.

In 1973, the American marketing theorist and professor Philip Kotler stated that people, in their purchase decision-making, respond to more than the actual product or service being offered. In other words, they respond to the *total product* (Kotler 1973, 48). Here, he proposed the notion that the *atmosphere* of a place is sometimes more influential than the product itself in decision-making. Kotler suggests two factors explaining why atmospherics was often overlooked by marketeers. First, he indicates that businesspeople tend to be more practical and functional in their thinking, often neglecting the aesthetic aspect of consumption. Secondly, atmospherics is often more a "silent language" in communication on which not much study was done at that time (Kotler 1973, 48).

In his article, Kotler describes atmospherics as "the conscious designing of space to create certain effects in buyers", which he calls "spatial aesthetics" (Kotler 1973, 50). These "spatial aesthetics" are designed in a buying environment to produce specific emotional effects in the buyer, which will affect the buyer's purchase probability. Furthermore, the term is used to characterize the quality of the surroundings. Accordingly, atmospherics is always described in sensory terms: sight, sound, scent and touch. For the sake of this thesis, I will mainly focus on sound and its dimensions. These dimensions are volume and pitch. An important distinction exists between the *intended atmosphere* and the *perceived atmosphere*. The intended atmosphere is the set of sensory qualities in an environment that communicates to the customer. However, the perceived atmosphere may vary between different customers. When the customers of a particular establishment are more dissimilar, the perception of a given intended atmosphere is more varied.

Kotler describes atmospherics as a chain reaction of different mediums (Kotler 1973, 53-54):

- *Attention-creating medium*: the purchase object is integrated in a space defined by certain sensory qualities in order to draw the attention of the customer.

- *Message-creating medium*: the buyer perceives only certain qualities of the created space: the atmosphere communicates different things about the establishment to potential and actual customers.
- *Affect-creating medium*: qualities perceived by the person can affect their information and affective state.
- *Situational factor:* the buyer's altered information and affective state may increase the purchase probability. Therefore, the atmosphere helps to modify behavior and intentions into actual buying behavior.

In order to successfully create the right atmospherics, Kotler proposes that the first step is to define the target audience, which is most important in any type of marketing planning. Next, one must consider what the target audience seeks to obtain through the purchase or consumption. Buyers have certain values in what they expect from their shopping experience and atmosphere is an excellent communication medium to express these values. Then, one must identify the dominant atmospheric variables that are available to construct the favored awareness and reaction from the customer. Furthermore, the atmospheric details should be worked out in a way that is believable, effective and above the competition. Finally, one should always be alert to calling for freshening and revising the atmosphere.

Studying background music through atmospherics

Studies on the effect of background music on consumers' behavior have noted that music is one of the major atmospheric variables in retail stores and other service environments. This is also referred to as the *sound environment*. (Yi and Kang 2019, 409). Overall, sounds can be classified into *human activity sound*, *natural sound* and *technical sound*. A retail environment is a typically indoor environment in which the sound environment consists of a combination of human activity sounds and technical sounds such as background music, speech, footsteps etc.

Burghelea, Plaias and El-Murad (2015) did an extensive literature review on studies about music and atmospherics. Since Kotler's proposal in 1973, the field of atmospherics and its influence of consumers' behavior is widely studied. It is widely popular amongst retailers and other consuming environments to use background music to influence consumers' behavior. This is due to the notion that background music is part of the aural dimension of atmospherics (Burghelea, Plaias, and El-Murad 2015, 378). Atmospheric variables are any perceptive senses

that can stimulate the total experience of consumers (Burghelea, Plaias, and El-Murad 2015, 378). As they continue, Burghelea et al. found out that different studies proposed that the variables of atmospherics can be *dynamic* or *static*. Music is a dynamic variable, since it can often be changed quickly while decorations, lighting or layout of an establishment are static variables, since they are often not easily changeable. Yet, in the long run, all the atmospheric variables are dynamic. The authors also found, as Kotler described, that the atmosphere conceived by the retailer can be more influential in the decision-making process that the actual product. This way, it is important for retailer to understand the influence music in store has and how they can utilize this to the greatest to influence consumers' behavior in their purchase decisions.

Studies have shown how music can be an important element in creating or enhancing the sensory experience of customers and how in store music can be a critical element in the atmosphere of the store. One study pointed out that "music is a particularly attractive atmospheric variable because it is relatively inexpensive to provide, is easily changed, and is thought to have predictable appeal to individuals based on their ages and lifestyles" (Burghelea, Plaias, and El-Murad 2015, 379). Here, music has the power to evoke memories. Moreover, these memories linked to and evoked by the music could be combined with other variables of atmospherics, which all together can influence the customers' shopping experience. By doing this, the store can create a more or appealing atmosphere to match their desired brand's image, store design and overall satisfaction with the store.

In 1990, Bruner examined published works of non-behavioral studies on music in general and in the marketing context and concluded there was little written about the effects of music in retail stores. He concluded that more studies focusing on music and various aspects of marketing were needed since music had already been considered to be effective for triggering moods (memories and emotions) and to be capable of evoking affective and behavioral consumers' responses (Bruner II 1990, 99-100). Later studies found that the atmospheric variable has influence on the consumers' evaluation of the shopping experience, which can increase the probability of repeated purchase (Kellaris and Cox 1989, 117-118). Other authors defined basic characteristics of music, such as volume, genre, pitch etc., as "objective and observable qualities of a musical composition" (Burghelea, Plaias, and El-Murad 2015, 379). Various studies have shown that these characteristics of music each, in isolation, are capable of deriving specific

effects in the retail context and/or in other service environments. The other variables are affective characteristics in which the listeners provide their own evaluation of the music and these are described in affective characteristics (Bruner II 1990, 99). These characteristics of music can be linked to emotions, feelings and moods. Finally, Burghelea et al. summarized the findings of the studies as followed (2015, 381):

- Music, as a sensory variable of atmospherics, can influence shopping experience.
- The structural music variables and affective variables influence shopping experience.
- Alluring shopping experience influence consumers' responses at the levels of cognition, emotion and behavior
- The relationship between background music and shopping experience is controlled by the consumers' profile, store branding and time of purchase.

Studying atmospherics in commercials

As I mentioned before, atmospherics can be described as a conscious design of space to affect buyers' intentions. While this has been used in physical stores, it can likewise describe the atmosphere of a commercial. A commercial is also a conscious design of images and sounds to stimulate the customer into purchasing behavior. What makes aiming for the audience in commercials harder to do than in physical stores the fact that the perceived atmospherics differs between viewers. Since commercials are often communicated to a wider audience than physical stores can do, a much clearer message is needed to attract the favored audience. Depending on the intention of the commercial, the perceived atmospherics should be close to the intended atmospherics for the favored audience to be attracted, or the intended atmospherics should vary enough for a wider audience to attract a possible new audience.

As Kotler described, atmospherics serves as different mediums to attract an audience, which functions the same way in commercials as in physical establishments. First, the *attention-creating* aspect is always the most important part of the commercial, since it directly determines whether the viewer will focus their attention towards the advertisement or not. The *message-creating* aspect implies the message the commercial carries. It is important for a commercial to communicate a clear message to attract the right audience. When the message in the commercial is clear, the viewer can evaluate their affect towards the commercial. Finally, depending on the perceived message and the formed affect, the commercial may or may not stimulate the viewer

into purchase behavior.

To apply atmospherics in my analyses, I will discuss what atmosphere the music of the commercials creates and how it serves according to the chain of different mediums of atmospherics. I will discuss my findings at the end of the chapter.

Case study 1: Holiday season by *de Bijenkorf*

The first commercial I will analyze is the holiday season commercial of 2019 by *de Bijenkorf*.

Attention-creating medium: The clip opens with the construction and awakening of the protagonist, Robiii the Robot (YouTube 2019, 0:00-0:10). In the music we hear a glissando by the harp starting from the tonic to the submediant and back while the flutes and violins hold the submediant. The next beat, the tone dissolve into the leading tone and is held for a few beats. This sequence creates tension and makes the listener wondering whether it dissolves into the tonic. When Robiii awakes, the held leading tone dissolves into the tonic and the music changes to a waltz accompanied by a female choir and with the becomes more prominent in this scene. Here, the choir introduces the main theme and the clip attracts the viewer's attention by changing the style of music.

Message-creating medium: With the introduction of classical music, the commercial already communicates a certain message; high class. According to Peter Kupfer, classical music is often associated with sophistication and high quality, and represents, as he quotes Nicolas Cook, "an ideal synthesis of art and technology" (Kupfer 2017, 24). This is in line with the brand of *de Bijenkorf*, since the store also advocates luxury and high quality. Further in the clip, the notion of loneliness is introduced as the creator of Robiii is portrayed as lonely while the other residents we see are celebrating the holiday season together (YouTube 2019, 0:10-0:38). In this scene, the choir only sings when the attention is focused on the celebrating neighbors, indicating that they are living the happy and sophisticated life. Finally, the choir sings the main theme again with some variations indicating the end of the clip feeling of joy returns the scene (YouTube 2019, 0:38-0:59). In this scene, we see Robiii the Robot guiding all the neighbors to the lonely creator, closing the commercial on a joyful note. Throughout the commercial, two messages are communicated. The first one being that the holiday season is better celebrated together than alone, as the music complements this with its main theme only playing when we see people together. The second message is the sophistication and high quality indicated by the classical

music played during the whole clip, which is in line with the store's brand.

Affect-creating medium: Throughout the clip, there are several references to Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Nutcracker*, like the portrayal of different characters such as the fairies and nutcracker himself and a ballet dancer and of course the waltz itself. Furthermore, on several passages in the music, bells are used as well. Ultimately, nutcrackers and bells are often associated with Christmas. By associating Christmas feelings with the *de Bijenkorf* through the music, the viewer is likely to associate good feelings with *de Bijenkorf*

Situational factor: the commercial suggests a feel-good moment towards the end, as we see the creator being reunited with the robot and being accompanied by the other neighbors. Playing on these emotions helps the viewers evaluating a positive affect towards the commercial and may stimulate purchasing behavior, especially during the holiday season.

Case study 2: Magic body control by *Mercedes-Benz*

The second commercial I will discuss is the 2013 commercial by *Mercedes-Benz.*

Attention-creating medium: The clip opens with the camera zoomed in on a chicken's head while the narrator is counting down. Right after finishing the count down, the music starts playing Diana Ross's "Upside Down" (YouTube 2013, 0:00-0:08). From this moment on, we can see two hands holding a chicken, not only moving the chicken on the beat, but also on the lyrics of the song. As the lyrics are words such as "up", "down", "round" and "turn", the chicken's body is also moved into these movements while the head is rather comfortable and stays in its place This immediately attracts the attention of the viewer, since the scenery in this commercial is rather ridiculous, as we see a "dancing chicken" in a car commercial. Without the song, the images would not have made much sense.

Message-creating medium: The clip communicates the comfort and technology within the cars, as the driver would also feel comfortable and unmovable while making "turns" with their car. One focus point is the fact that, although the bodies of the chickens are moving around, the head stays in place and does not move. Finally, towards the end a word message is communicated, stating "stability at all times, magic body control". Literally, the cut lyrical passage from the song describe the movements of the chickens we see in the clip. However, in the original song, Diana Ross illustrates how her lover turns her "upside down and around", which is in contrast with the message of the commercial, as it advocates for stability and control.

Although the message of the song is not coherent with the message of commercial, it is edited in a way it does fit.

      Affect-creating medium: In this commercial, we see a brand communicating their message through playing with the viewers expectations by stating their message only at the end of the clip. The attention-catcher in this commercial is the absurd image of "dancing" chickens on a groovy pop song. By associating several unexpected cues with each other, e.g. dancing chickens and the easy lyrics of the song, people would immediately memorize the commercial when hearing the song.

      Situational factor: Towards the end, we see that the chickens may be a metaphor for *Mercedes-Benz*'s cars. By using an amusing way of presenting their message, rather than a serious one, the viewer is forced to adjust their initial thoughts on the commercial because the combination of chickens and *Mercedes-Benz* is somewhat surprising. Having different reference points, such as "dancing" chickens and an easy and recognizable song, the commercial becomes memorable.

Case study 3: Pietertje by *Calvé.*

For the last analysis, I will discuss the 2010 peanut butter commercial by *Calvé*.

      Attention-creating medium: The clip opens immediately with a man and children screaming indistinctly. We see children playing soccer, probably a competition, on a soccer field lying between the pastures. There is a yellow filter over the camera during the whole commercial, creating a rather old looking scene. This commercial immediately attracts the viewers' attention since both the stimuli (image and audio) commence at the same time creating a busy scenery at the start of the clip. The song in the whole commercial is "You'll never walk alone" by *Gerry & The Pacemakers*, which is played at the same volume level as the rest of the commercial's sounds. The song is often associated with soccer, as it is the national anthem of the Liverpool FC (Classic FM 2018). Here, as the commercial starts, the listener immediately knows that the clip is sport related.

      Message-creating medium: As the clip progresses, we see how clumsy the protagonist is and it is clear that he cannot play soccer. One thing to point out is the fact that his name is constantly dropped, namely "Pietertje". Towards the end of the clip, we discover that this little boy is Pieter van den Hoogenband, a famous Olympic swimmer. Only in the last seconds of the

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clip, we see the actual product: Calvé peanut butter, with a description saying "reach your potential" (YouTube 2016, 0:43-0:46). Unlike in the previous case study, this song's meaning is actually in line with the edited passage. The original song stimulates to never give up and "walk on" while this is also the message in the commercial as it sounds as an encouragement for Pietertje, although he cannot hear the song. The commercial serves two messages. The first being literal by encouraging not to give up, as the song also suggests. The second being that *Calvé* helps you in this process.

Affect-creating medium: In the first part of the commercial, the occupation of the song is small with only a piano, drums and the voice of Gerry Marsden singing in his lower register. The song is rather calm as Gerry sings the first verse and accompanies the scene as we see the protagonist being clumsy in his own way (YouTube 2016, 0:00-0:24). The second part of the clip is introduced by a glissando by violins making Gerry now singing an octave higher and the song becomes more powerful, together with the lyrics because now the chorus is sung. The words "walk on" create a feeling of motivation and triumph as Pietertje did not give in and became a famous swimmer in the end. Here, the feeling of motivation and triumph is associated with *Calvé*'s peanut butter.

Situational factor: As there are many brands of peanut butter, with the motivational and triumphal feeling the music brings to the commercial, *Calvé* distinguishes itself for the viewer as "helping to reach your potential".

Conclusion

As we saw throughout the three case studies, music can be studied through the different mediums of atmospherics. Following the mediums of atmospherics, we can identify how music in these commercials serves each role. In case of situational factor, this is harder to identify, since there is no actual behavioral response to measure. Throughout the case studies, we saw how music was used differently in the scenes to attract the attention. Furthermore, music helped to communicate the message and the brand of the product. In all three commercials, the music served as prominent atmospherics variable to complement in the overall atmosphere of the clips.

In the next chapter, I will discuss the second theory, PAD by Mehrabian and Russell. I will go through the chapter in the same manner. Finally, in the discussion I will combine both findings from this chapter and the next one to answer my research question.

Chapter 3: PAD by Mehrabian and Russell (1974)

Environmental psychologists Albert Mehrabian and James A. Russell proposed the *PAD* theory as a reaction to the proposed theory of *atmospherics* by Kotler. From a psychological perspective, they tried to study consumers' reactions to atmospherics and this theory would later on be used as a base for studying consumers' behavior in general (Foxall 1997, 506). This chapter will explore the PAD model, the use of it in studies and finally I will apply the model to the same advertisements analyzed in the previous chapter.

Mehrabian and Russell state that human emotional responses result from a combination of three dimensions: pleasure, arousal and dominance (PAD) (Krause and North 2014, 6). The psychologists theorize that human responses to an environment can be seen as *approach* or *avoidance* behavior (Donovan and Rossiter 1982, 37). These human responses play an essential role in understanding the PAD theory. These behaviors are considered to have four aspects:

1. A willingness to physically stay in (approach) or to leave (avoidance) the environment
2. A willingness to explore (approach) the environment or to avoid interaction (avoidance) with the environment
3. A willingness to communicate (approach) with people in the environment or to ignore communication (avoidance) with people
4. The degree of increase (approach) or backtrack (avoidance) of *performance and satisfaction* with task performances

The described aspects can be applied to describing behavior in retail settings. (1) Can be seen as the actual intention of going to a retail environment. (2) Can be described as the exploration through the environment and likeliness to spend time inside the establishment. (3) Can be described as the willingness to interact with floor staff. And (4) can be related to the purchase behavior and shopping frequency in the particular environment.

In environmental psychology, three dimensions "pleasure, arousal and dominance" are considered to be the three basic emotional responses that indicate people's state of feeling and which are influenced by personal and environmental stimuli (Bakker, Voordt, Vink, and Boon 2014, 2) (Krause and North 2014, 6) (Donovan and Rossiter 1982, 38):

- Pleasure is described as the overall state of feeling happy or unhappy. The dimension indicates the overall positive or negative emotional state of the individual.

- Arousal refers to the degree of stimulation. Level of arousal indicates the willingness of an individual to perform certain tasks. This dimension indicates whether a person is stimulated to behave active in a situation.
- The third dimension, dominance, indicates the feeling in which the individual feels in control of the situation. The level of dominance indicates whether an individual feels free to act in certain situations.

These three dimensions form a basis for human emotional response to an environment and in turn, an individual's emotional state regulates their behavior in the situation (Krause and North 2014, 7). Therefore, PAD is a tool to determine consumer's response as approach-avoidance behaviour (Burghelea, Plaias, and El-Murad 2015, 381).

In relationship to the PAD model is the notion of consumers' mood (Belk 1975, 161-162). Belk proposed the idea that mood influences consumers' behavior, which is much of a summary of the PAD model. As Sherman et al. describes, "moods may be thought of as feeling states that gain ascendancy and "describe a phenomenological property of an individual's subjectively perceived affective state which will refer to the general, pervasive, affective states that are transient and particularized to specific times and situations"" (Sherman, Mathur, and Smith 1997, 363)

Studying background music through PAD

The PAD model provides a broad conceptualization of the environment by using the three dimensions "pleasure, arousal and dominance". The three responses describe observable consumers' behavior such as the desire to communicate with others in the establishment, the willingness to stay or leave from the setting, and the willingness to spend money/consume (Foxall 1997, 507). As mentioned before, scholars use the PAD model as framework for their study. Research on the effect of background music demonstrated that music affects consumers' behavior leading to cognitive emotional behavioral outcomes (Burghelea, Plaias, and El-Murad 2015, 381). Studies' analysis focused on several dependent variables in which behavioral response have been compared with emotional and cognitive responses. Burghelea et al. (2015) (mentioned before) also did an extensive literature review on studies on background music through PAD. They found that several studies showed that music volume influences shopping behavior, whereas loud music often has a negative influence on shoppers' rate of time spend in

the establishment. Furthermore, earlier studies found that music tempo influences shopping behavior in such way that customers would spend more time in a retail setting where slow-tempo music was played, while they were most likely to avoid or spend less time in setting where fast-tempo music was played. Also, consumers felt more aroused to spend money in slow-tempo-music environments than in fast-tempo environments. Nevertheless, later studies concluded that music preference also plays a role in relationship to tempo and volume ((Burghelea, Plaias, and El-Murad 2015, 386). Studies found that popularity of the music also plays a role in the time spend in an establishment. Music preference therefore has a positive influence on the pleasure dimension, resulting in more approach behavior (as described earlier).

Yalch and Spangenberg (1990) examined the effect of background and foreground music on shopping behavior. They found that, while foreground music commands more attention from customers, the actual age and preference of an individual also plays a role on time spending behavior. Furthermore, the purpose for shopping also varied by time of the day, so this also had influence on the overall PAD mood and time spending behavior (Yalch and Spangenberg 1990, 60-61). Other studies have found that gender plays a role on the influence of background music on shopping behavior. Studies by Andersson et al. showed that approach/avoidance behavior was moderated by gender, which indicated that approach/avoidance behavior is predicted through arousal. It turned out that gender has direct influence on arousal (Burghelea, Plaias, and El-Murad 2015, 387-388). These results match Sherman et al. (1997) findings which stated that arousal increase spending and purchase intentions. The study showed that females are positively affected by no music or slow-tempo music while males are positively affected by music and fast-tempo music (374-375).

Studies have also shown that music has direct influence on consumers' spending behavior. Higher rates of pleasure and arousal result in direct impact upon willingness to buy (Burghelea, Plaias, and El-Murad 2015, 388). Depending on the kind of store, the music genre also plays a crucial role in spending behavior. It is proven to be impactful if the music complements the stores brand. In some cases, classical music may be more suiting, regardless of its popularity as found earlier, than popular music. Furthermore, it is found that classical music has overall more positive impact on consuming behavior than pop music.

Studying PAD in advertisements

PAD determines consumer's response/approach-avoidance behavior towards their environment. With advertisements, it is hard to measure direct response from the viewer and the influence it has on their level of "pleasure, arousal and dominance". As described, pleasure indicates one's current state of emotion. Commercials can evoke emotions through their scenery and music, although it depends on the person how these emotions are affected. While some may be easily affected by visual and aural information, others may not be affected quickly. As I discussed in the previous chapter, the commercial's message should be as clear as possible to reach its favored audience. Communicating the right emotions is crucial in stimulating the viewers feelings. Studies have shown that music affects customers' emotions in a physical setting, and could therefore also be effective in commercials. The other two dimensions, arousal and dominance, are harder to measure in this thesis, since they describe behavioral response. Arousal indicates how willing the viewer is to buy a certain product, but this depends on the emotional state. Dominance, while the concept is somewhat abstract, depends on the subject of the commercial. Therefore, I will try to analyze the same commercials as in the previous chapter and I try to incorporate as many aspects of PAD as possible.

Case study 4: Holiday season by *de Bijenkorf*

As I already described in chapter 2, this commercial is about the holiday season.

Pleasure: The commercial takes the viewer on an emotional ride as different emotions are communicated throughout the commercial. As we saw in the opening, Robiii the Robot sees his creator going from happy to feeling somber (YouTube 2019, 0:10-0:16). The music confirms this since the main theme of the music is absent and horn and clarinet each play solo parts rather than the orchestra creating a reserved and lonely feeling. Watching through the "eyes" of Robiii, the viewer gets a feeling of being there in the room and senses the change of emotions. The heart-meter that can be seen on the visual "field" of Robiii helps to indicate the current mood of the scene. When looking at the other residents, we get the same feeling as Robiii, as a joyful feeling is communicated and the choir and violins return. In the next scene, the viewer experiences how the mood changes twice from happy to sad to happy again (YouTube 2019, 0:35-0:54). Here, the merry music abruptly stops and the short pedal point on the dominant played by the contrabasses creates tension and an uneasy feeling. A short soft melody played by

the piano indicates the loneliness of the man. The visual of the man standing in front of the glass and the focuses on his face confirm this feeling. When Robiii walks in with the other residents, a reprise of the choir starts and the mood changes to joyful again.

Arousal: This commercial plays with the emotions of the viewer through the different scenes to create a relatable story. With the music being the prominent and varying, it plays a prominent role in indicating the story's mood. Since the commercial makes use of different perspective angles, the viewer can place themselves in the different positions to get a better understanding of the emotional state of the scene. The main function of the commercial is to stimulate the viewer into purchasing behavior at their stores. Towards the end, a narrator tells the viewer that *de Bijenkorf* has everything they need for a fantastical holiday season and that delivery is free. So, the commercial tries to take the viewer on an emotional ride by connecting through different perspectives in order that the final message at the end of the clip persuades the viewer into buying behavior. The commercial therefore aims to "pleasure" the viewer by creating a happy feeling, which then results a high level of arousal, enough to make the viewer willing to buy.

Dominance: In this commercial, dominance does not really have a function, since the clip does not "obligate" the viewer into purchasing behavior.

Case study 5: Magic body control by *Mercedes-Benz*

The *Mercedes-Benz* commercial is not a complex, emotional story such as the previous commercial.

Pleasure: In this commercial, the emotional state of the commercial is quite clear, as there are no changes in the song and the story continues in one line. Diana Ross's song "Upside Down" is easy to memorize as the chorus only consists of a few notes, constantly repeating the same melody. Furthermore, the range of the pitches is rather small, so the melody is easy to follow. This makes the viewer easily involved with the commercial as the song gets easily stuck in one's head. In order to maintain attention to the commercial, it is important that it is accessible. The short melody and rather absurd images of the "dancing" chicken make it recognizable. However, where the previous commercial played on the emotional level of the viewer, this commercial does less of that. There is no emotional development for the viewer, rather the same feeling throughout the whole clip. This makes it harder for the viewer to really

connect with the product.

Arousal: Nevertheless, being recognizable for standing out can still indicate a high involvement with the commercial, since people can easily remember the clip. Furthermore, the commercial became more popular when *Jaguar* commented on this commercial with their own version of the same clip. They also used the same style of music, without vocals. Furthermore, the melody is a mere variation on the melody of Ross's song, by taking a sequence of three notes close to the original sequence. The notorious commercial became an internet sensation between two famous car brands. As studies have shown, people who are more involved with the product are more likely to evaluate the brand as positive. This "war" resulted in more involvement among the viewers.

Dominance: Although the brand and message of *Mercedes-Benz* is clear, it does not persuade the viewer into actual shopping behavior. According to the dominance dimension, the individual's state of feeling and arousal determines whether they feel free to act in a certain way. This commercial surely gives the viewer freedom to act whether they are going to buy a car or not, but once again this cannot be measured through this analysis.

Case study 6: Pietertje by *Calvé*.

As described in chapter 2 "Pietertje" by *Calvé* plays into the feeling of motivation and determination.

Pleasure: As the playing children are depicted, the viewer can actually identify with them, since this is plausible to actually happen in the real world. Parents are often on the sidelines of their children's sport field, watching the chaos happening everywhere. The yellow camera filter gives the viewer also a sense of the past, since it reminds the viewer of old pictures that have turned yellow over the years. Clearly, in this commercial, it is all about the past and childhood and its emotions. Here, while the clip does not communicate that many emotions, it evokes emotions as memories are brought back by its scenery. This is a different way of connecting emotionally with the viewer than the *de Bijenkorf* commercial did, as that commercial guided the viewer through the different emotional states, whereas this commercial leaves much up to the viewer themselves. In the case of nostalgia, the song accompanies this feeling.

Arousal: As the lyrics say "hold your head up and don't be afraid of the dark", this could

be associated with the childhood fears and emotions we had and which we overcame through pushing ourselves. "Walk on" could refer to the obstacles we faced in our past, such as a soccer match, and how we did our best to make the best out of it. In the second part of the commercial, the song "You'll never walk alone" reaches its final chorus and the music becomes louder, whereas the story also changes (YouTube 2016, 0:26-0:47). Here, more than in the first part of the commercial, the song is on the foreground indicating that the message is more important than before. While the song's verse illustrates the past, the chorus illustrates the present. As we see in the clip, Pietertje is clumsy and not really fit to play soccer. Nevertheless, the lyrics "walk on" suggest not to give up. This ties in with the story; although Pietertje is not good at playing soccer, he tries his best and keeps pushing himself. Here, the commercial directly tries to connect with the viewer; the message is also echoing to the viewer. When the viewer is at this high level of arousal, the commercial shows us the peanut butter, associating the peanut butter with this feeling. By matching the motivational lyrics of the song resulting in these emotions and high level of arousal with *Calvé*'s peanut butter, the viewer will associate the peanut butter with a positive emotional state, which may boost purchase behavior.

Dominance: In this case, when there is a positive emotional state associated with the product, the buyer is more likely to freely show purchasing behavior.

Conclusion

As we saw in the case studies, PAD is not very suitable to analyze music in advertisements, mainly because it focuses on responsive behavior rather than the actual music. In case study 4, PAD could partially be used to explain emotional state of the story, but failed to really elaborate on the arousal and dominance dimensions. Likewise, in case study 5, only arousal could be discussed a bit, while the other two dimensions could not be explained thoroughly. Finally, case study 6 gave an opportunity to study the music through the dimensions PAD, but again, the main purpose of PAD could not be discussed.

Discussion

In chapter 2, we saw that atmospherics lends itself to study music in advertisements, due to its function to serve as different mediums. As described in that chapter, atmospherics describe the environment of a(n) establishment or commercial, and can be used to create the favored shopping behavior. From the case studies, we see how the theory fits in describing the different aspects of the commercial and its implications. In chapter 3, we saw that PAD does not lend itself to study music in advertisements, mainly because it focuses on responsive behavior rather than the commercial itself. As mentioned in the introduction, atmospherics is from a designer's perspective, while PAD is from the consumers' perspective. To answer the research question, atmospherics is applicable in studying music in advertisements, whereas PAD is less suitable for studying music in advertisement. In chapter 1, we saw that musical fit and message-congruent music both indicated that music helps to convey the message of the commercial when it fits the image. This is in line with intended atmospherics and perceived atmospherics, as the music helps to carry message of the intended atmospherics through to the viewer in order for the perceived atmospherics to match the intended atmospherics. Furthermore, the affect-creating aspect of is also elaborated on in later studies as we saw in chapter 1. PAD fits with the theories that focus on consumers' responsive behavior and involvement management. To answer whether a new theory is needed to be formulated, I do not think that is the case based in this thesis. Atmospherics can be used to study commercials, but there have already been better theories for studying music in commercials, as the theory is already dated. The same can be said about PAD. Although it forms a base for studying consumers' responsive behavior towards commercials, newer theories have elaborated more on its notions.

This thesis sought to find out whether it is possible to apply the Kotler and Mehrabian-Russell theories to study music in commercials. While Kotler's theory seems to be applicable based on this study, Mehrabian-Russell's seems not. In the first case, the literature already suggested the possibility as atmospherics is used to describe the space/environment and is consciously designed to affect the customer's purchasing behavior. While the actual sales numbers are not taken into account in this thesis, it was still possible to study the perceived atmosphere and how it could affect viewer's behavior.

In the case of Mehrabian-Russell, it became clear through the literature that the current study method was not useful to music through PAD. One way to study music through PAD is the

use of participants whose levels of "pleasure, arousal and dominance" are measured before and after watching commercials. Since PAD is based on responsive behavior, it is more than logic to involve participants in the study to measure their response to the commercials. Furthermore, future studies on this topic should also focus on purchase behavior when studying the music in advertisement. Exposing participants consciously or unconsciously to commercials could help understand how customers perceive them and how they would act when highly involved. Future research could be an extensive study which combines both theories whereas both atmospherics and responsive reactions from consumers are studied, as well as the actual sales numbers to see how the music in commercial really affects the consumers purchasing behavior.

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