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A content analysis on features of suspenseful commercials

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A content analysis on features of suspenseful commercials

by

Chen Liang

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Major: Journalism and Mass Communication

Program of Study Committee:
Su Jung Kim, Major professor
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Ames, Iowa

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ABSTRACT

Suspense has been used as a tool that helps to keep audiences' attention during a course of a story. It has been studied in the context of a wide range of narrative genres. Attracting and maintaining attention is critical in advertising because of the abundance of audio-visual stimuli in the current media environment. Current research about suspenseful commercials is mainly focused on a combination of hope and fear emotional responses. However, there are very few studies showing how suspense is generated in commercials.

This study attempts to find out factors that create suspense in commercials by conducting a content analysis of suspenseful and non-suspenseful commercials and compares their characteristics. A total of 203 awards winning commercials of The Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity under the category "Film" from 2012 to 2014 were chosen as the sample of this study. Two coders were trained and then coded these commercials independently from three main aspects: the structure and content of commercials, emotional appeals used in commercials, and the time of brand- or product-related information shown in commercials.

The results of this study show that suspenseful commercials tend to be non-or less verbal and use more number of emotional appeals than non-suspenseful commercials. Among four types of emotional appeals (fear, hope, humor, fantasy), humor and fantasy appeals are used more frequently. The results also show that suspenseful commercials tend to show less information of products or brands than non-suspenseful commercials.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since advertising saturates people's lives, it becomes very difficult to attract their attention if advertisers keep using common advertising strategies invariably. As a result, creative appeals are employed in television commercials to elicit consumer attention. One such appeal that is designed to enhance consumer interest is suspense. The use of suspense in commercials is to arouse curiosity and maintain consumer interest, and then deepen the audience's impression of the products or brands that appear in commercials. In recent years, researchers have started discussing how suspense is generated in advertisements by analyzing the process of suspense generation in films, dramas, and novels and then applying the lessons from these studies to commercials (Alwitt, 2002; Bee & Madrigal, 2005; Ilyas & Ahmed, 2014). They found that some of the suspense-generating factors in these genres also create suspense in commercials. Results of recent studies showed greater effectiveness on positive attitude toward advertisements and brands in suspenseful commercials than in non-suspenseful commercials (Alwitt, 2002; Bee & Madrigal, 2005).

However, there are very few studies showing how suspense is produced in commercials. Most previous studies in this line of research tested the effectiveness of suspense-generating factors that were used for other narrative genres, like novels, in the context of commercials (Alwitt, 2002; Bee & Madrigal, 2005; Ilyas & Ahmed, 2014), but did not focus on the process of generating suspense in advertising. This leads us to wonder whether, except some elements of suspense generation that were commonly used

by commercials and other narrative genres, there are unique suspense-generating factors in commercials that are distinguished from those in other genres.

Advertising is an art of persuasion. The goal of advertising is to persuade audience to form a positive attitude toward a brand or ultimately buy a product. Different from other genres like novels and dramas, commercials should be executed in a limited time due to the finite attention of audience and the limited budget of advertisers. As a result, in order to achieve a better persuasion effect, it is important to find out characteristics of suspenseful commercials.

Of interest to this study is to find out features of suspenseful commercials that stand out compared to non-suspenseful commercials. In doing so, this study will conduct a content analysis to identify factors that help generate suspense in commercials. As we will see, this study will lead us to understand more deeply about suspense-generation techniques in commercials.

This study is structured as follows: Chapter I introduces the background and purpose of this study. Chapter II outlines previous studies related to suspense generation not only in commercials but also in other narratives. Based on the review of relevant literature in Chapter II, Chapter III proposes three hypotheses and two research questions. In Chapter IV, details of the method used in this study is presented, and in Chapter V results and analysis are described. Chapter VI demonstrates the results and Chapter VII gives implications and limitations of this study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of suspense

Suspense has been extensively used as an important element to attract viewers in narrative genres. Early studies mainly focused on finding an approach to conceptualizing suspense to provide relevant theories that explain the generation of suspense and examining its effects on audiences. These studies were conducted from a psychological perspective and examined a wide variety of narrative genres including drama, films, novels, etc. (Vorderer, Wulff, and Friedrichsen, 1996). Today, it becomes more and more difficult to attract viewers' attention because of abundant media choices. As an effective way to attract and maintain viewers' attention (Alwitt, 2002), the research and application areas of suspense have been extended: researchers in communication (Wirth & Schramm, 2005; Westerwick et al., 2009; Shafer, 2014), and business (Moulard, Kroff, Folse, 2012), as well as advertising (Alwitt, 2002; Bee & Madrigal, 2012), and recently computer science (Langer, 2014) have begun to study suspense as well.

The first and the most basic question for researchers is what suspense actually means. According to Zillman (1996), suspense is considered as an experience of uncertainty whose emotional properties can vary from being anxious to being pleasant. Researchers cannot reach a consensus on what kind of emotion is generated during the experience of suspense. On the one hand, most researchers agree that suspense is a type of negative emotion. Wuss (1996) interpreted suspense as a particularly special case of tension; Berlyne (1961) and Zillmann (1996) believed that high levels of uncertainty tends to generate noxious states rather than hedonically neutral or positive ones; De Wied (1995)

defined a response to suspense as an anticipatory stress reaction; Tan and Ditlewieg (1996) summarized theoretical and empirical studies of Zillman (1980, 1991), then proposed that the experience of suspense is an emotional response, a state of fearful apprehension.

On the other hand, some studies showed that in some situations suspense could have a positive affective valence (Brewer, 1996). For instance, suspense was described as a “curious mixture of pain and pleasure (Barnet, Berman, and Burto, 1971, p. 107).”

Woodworth (1921) stated that the joy of escape was more than the momentary unpleasantness of fear in certain situations. Tan and Ditlewieg (1996) also found that suspense could increase the viewers’ enjoyment. Some scholars maintained that the emotions generated during the experience of suspense include both negative and positive ones. Studies in this line of research showed that suspense leads to an emotional state between fear and pleasure (Chatman, 1978; Mikos, 1996; Bee & Madrigal, 2005).

From the previous studies, we can see that suspense is usually defined as a state or feeling of excitement or anxious uncertainty about what may happen during the course of story development. The subsequent affective state after experiencing suspense, thus, can be either positive or negative.

Generation of suspense in different genres

Regarding the question of suspense generation, scholars are mainly divided into two groups: one group argues that suspense is text-oriented (Wulff, Leonard, 1996), which means that the production of suspense depends on a narrative’s outcome, the plot setting for the narrative, and the fate of a protagonist, etc. Scholars in the other group believe that suspense is reception-oriented. Instead of being generated from a text, suspense is a product from audiences’ cognitive activities and emotions (Vorderer, Wulff, and

Friedrichsen, 1996). Although some researchers believed that suspense is either text- or reception-oriented, most studies at least acknowledge or consider that these two aspects are needed to explain how suspense is created.

Cilliers' study (1996) summarized seven qualities shared by the Thriller and the Comedies of Plautus and Terence about suspense production: (1) the structure of the plot, (2) goals of escape and entrainment, (3) stereotyped plot, (4) predetermined time, date and place, (5) perspicuous plot, (6) strategies of delay, and (7) duration of action. Six out of the seven qualities were about plot setting, but at the same time, it also involves one quality about cognitive activities: goals of escape and entertainment. Zillmann (1996), who defined suspense as an almost completely cognitive and emotional concept in his study, also admitted the necessity of information flow, which is decided by narratives. Ohler and Nieding (1996) proposed a cognitive modeling of the reception of suspense-inducing structures, which is a kind of interaction between text and reception. Based on these discussions on the qualities of suspense, it is apparent that suspense is generated by both text and reception. According to Alwitt (2002), "suspense is a cognitive and emotional reaction of a viewer, listener, or reader that is evoked by structural characteristics of an unfolding dramatic narrative (p. 35)." This study also takes Alwitt's approach.

There is no agreement on factors that generate varying levels of suspense. After reviewing previous research, Comisky and Bryant (1982) summarized that two factors produce suspense: (1) degree of perceived outcome-uncertainty and (2) audience disposition toward the protagonist. However, based on a comprehensive analysis of previous studies, Guidry (2004) found that researchers who discussed the elements

eliciting suspense are in agreement with the following two factors: (1) uncertainty about a future outcome and (2) outcome importance. As Carroll (1996) stated, "...suspense only takes charge when we care about those future outcomes about which we are uncertain. We are not inclined toward suspense about whether or not the bus will start unless we have some stake or concern in its starting or not starting" (p. 76).

Although there is a discrepancy between the conclusions of these two studies, uncertainty is a common element that both studies identified as a requirement of suspense. Uncertainty has been identified as one of the antecedents of suspense. Guidry (2004) summarized major antecedents of suspense from previous studies and found that some researchers defined suspense in terms of its antecedents—uncertainty, certainty, or probability (Comisky & Bryant, 1982; Hoffner & Canto, 1991; Wied, Gerrig & Bernardo, 1994; Carroll, Zillman, Kassler, Tan & Diteweg, 1996). For instance, the degree of uncertainty was measured to represent the level of suspense in Bryant et al.'s (1994) experiment. However, several drama theorists (Fields & Pratt, 1939; Pfister, 1988; Ohlander, 1985) have made a distinction between uncertainty and suspense. By using a content analysis of participants' responses to which kind of techniques used in films caused them to feel suspense, Kassler (1996) found that uncertainty is just a component of suspense. In conclusion, it will be more sufficient and reasonable to think of uncertainty as one of the factors that generates suspense rather than define suspense in terms of uncertainty.

Theories of suspense generation and their implications in suspenseful commercials

Different theories have been used to explain suspense in cognitive terms. Since suspense can be produced either by text or reception as mentioned above (Leonard, Wulff,

Vorderer, Wulff, and Friedrichsen, 1996), theories that explain the generation of suspense are also divided into two groups: theories established on emotions and theories established on narrative structure.

Zillmann and Cantor (1972) first put forward the affective dispositions theory. According to this theory, media and entertainment users make moral judgments about characters in a narrative which in turn affects their enjoyment of the narrative. Zillmann (1991) applied affective dispositions theory to films and found that viewers participate in films by feeling empathetic with positive protagonists. This theory has also been used as an explanation for the level of suspense generated in sports. An individual develops strongly held dispositions toward teams such that the individual desires their loved team to win, leading to higher levels of suspense and enjoyment while they are watching the game (Shaffer, 2014). According to cognitive appraisal theorists, emotions arise based on appraisals, or information-processing tasks, of one's environment, and this information is evaluated regarding the individual's welfare (Ortony et al., 1988; Roseman et al., 1996). Excitation transfer theory explains how physiological arousal and emotions attributed to a stimulus can impact reactions to a subsequent stimulus (Zillmann, 1983).

Although most theories used to explain suspense are based on people's emotions, structural-affect theory is a narrative-based theory that is frequently applied to explain suspense from a psychological perspective (Brewer & Lichtenstein, 1981). It suggests that three major discourse structures are responsible for the enjoyment of a large number of stories— surprise, curiosity and suspense, which requires the existence of an initiating event and an outcome event in a given narrative. For suspense generation, an initiating event is presented which triggers the prediction of an outcome event that could lead to

significant consequences for one of the characters in the narrative. The reader feels concerned about the outcome of this character, and if this state is maintained over time, the feeling of suspense arises.

As stated in the previous section, this study considers suspense as an element that results from the influence of a text and the reception of the given text. Thus, in this study, both cognitive appraisal theory and structural-affect theory are employed to analyze suspenseful commercials.

First, suspense as an emotion could be either a positive or negative experience, or an experience mixed with positive and negative emotions. Commercials apply a variety of appeals to reach potential customers and then influence them to purchase products. Emotional appeals in advertising cater to the need or interest of an individual and mainly realized through creating emotions. Cognitive appraisal theory suggests that the central determinants of emotions are the evaluation and interpretation of events along certain criteria, and emotions cause specific reactions in different people (Madrigal & Bee, 2005). In other words, people decide how they feel after an event. Cognitive appraisal theory provides a strong theoretical basis for how different advertising appeals are effective in causing specific emotions of different people. Specifically, in the case of suspense, the emotion intensity of viewers relies on the desirability of a particular outcome or appraisals of future events.

Fear and hope have been widely studied in suspenseful commercials and the mixture of these two emotions has been proved as one of emotional characteristics of suspenseful commercials (Madrigal & Bee, 2005; Moulard, Kroff & Folse, 2012; Alwitt, 2002). From the perspective of advertising appeals, fear and hope could be related to fear appeals and

hope appeals. Both hope and fear are future-oriented emotion that motivates behavior by focusing one's thoughts on future rewards and punishments (Chadwick, 2014). Fear appeal attempts to influence or persuade through the threat of impending danger or harm (Higbee, 1969; Rogers, 1975). Subjective feelings of hope could be evoked by hope appeals, which are designed to evoke appraisals of importance, goal congruence, positive future expectation, and possibility (Chadwick, 2014). In this case, more than one advertising appeal that generates different emotions (fear or hope) can be mixed and used to create suspense in suspenseful commercials.

Second, as structural-affect theory states, suspense can be generated on the condition that an initial event and an outcome event are ordered chronologically, and other events are placed between them (Brewer & Lichtenstein, 1982). Based on this point, suspenseful commercials should contain at least a narrative to satisfy these criteria. Factors that help generate suspense found in narrative genres like films, novels, dramas, and so forth can be applied in the context of advertising.

Alwitt (2002) identified fourteen predictors of suspense used in these narrative genres and applied them to commercials. Except for three factors, including “conflict between one person and another person”, “conflict between person and nature or events in the environment (object or animal)” and “conflict between person and self”, he found that the remaining eleven of these fourteen factors successfully generated suspense in commercials. Commercials categorized as suspenseful ones were more likely to include the following eleven conditions: (1) main character(s) present, (2) plot exists, (3) there is time pressure or a time constraint, (4) One outcome is more morally correct than others, (5) music created feelings of suspense and anticipation, (6) music interests or involves

viewer in the commercial, (7) presence of any conflict, (8) anticipation that something negative is likely to happen to main character(s), (9) uncertain about outcome to main character, (10) did not expect ending—a surprise, and (11) there was a surprising event or message in the commercial. Because suspenseful commercial is one narrative genre, they share many characters in common with other narrative genres. However, at the same time, we should admit that suspenseful commercials must have some characteristics, which are different from other narrative genres from the perspective of advertising content and structure.

Advertising as a narrative genre tries to tell a story in a simple manner. Unlike films, novels, and dramas, advertisements should attract viewer's attention first and then provide enough information for their product or service in a limited time. Because of this, information in advertising is compressed to meet the requirement of time limitation. The plot of a commercial cannot be unfolded extensively. In the case of suspenseful advertising, suspense is created in a very short time and should be solved by the end of the commercial in another short time. This feature determines that the plot of suspenseful commercials cannot be as complicated as novels and films. For instance, character valence is regarded as one of the factors that can help generate suspense (Jose & Brewer, 1984; Kassler, 1996): the existence of a villain is necessary in almost all the suspenseful novels and films. However, a villain is hardly necessary in suspenseful commercials that run in a short time. Furthermore, the limitations of characters and scene setup are less than those in films and novels. Both real and virtual characters can be used in any scene in commercials with a relative weaker logic than in elaborate novels.

On the other hand, from the point of advertising itself, the task of commercials is to persuade audience to purchase their products or to formulate favorable attitudes to the brands. As a result, how to transfer product or brand information toward an audience is the key question for advertisers. An ideal state of successful commercials is to provide the audience with more effective information and gain a high level of attention from the audience at the same time. But it is not easy to balance the level of attention and the amount of information in one commercial, especially for suspenseful commercials. They usually need more time than other types of commercials due to the process of unfolding the plot to set the suspense, resulting in a relative less amount of time to introduce the product or service directly.

Although suspenseful commercials are different from other narrative genres from the previously mentioned perspectives, cognitive appraisal theory and structural-affect theory can still be applicable to them. The reason for using these two theories is that suspenseful commercials satisfy the following two characteristics in short: they can create emotions and they are usually narrative.

Suspense research in television advertising

The emotions that were developed during media reception do not differ fundamentally from everyday situations which are not influenced by media (Scherer, 1998). Just as what Marie Rodell said in 1952: “suspense is the art of making the reader care what happens next (p. 71).” Audiences feel suspense because they have no idea about what will happen in the next sequence in media content. Suspense has been used as a creative appeal in television commercials to attract consumers’ attention for a long time.

For instance, First National Bank (FNB) released an advertisement named “Dog”¹ in 2011. This commercial tells a story that a man found a lost dog and goes out of his way to help to find the owner of the dog. Finally, he found the dog’s owner who is crying for her lost dog at that time in a restaurant. By the end of the commercial, one sentence appears—“Where there’s help, there’s a way.” The audience does not know who the advertiser is until the last minute, which increases the level of suspense. When FNB’s logo appears with a slogan “how can we help you?” appears, as Figure 1 shown, the audience associates the commercial with FNB, which resolves the feeling of uncertainty.

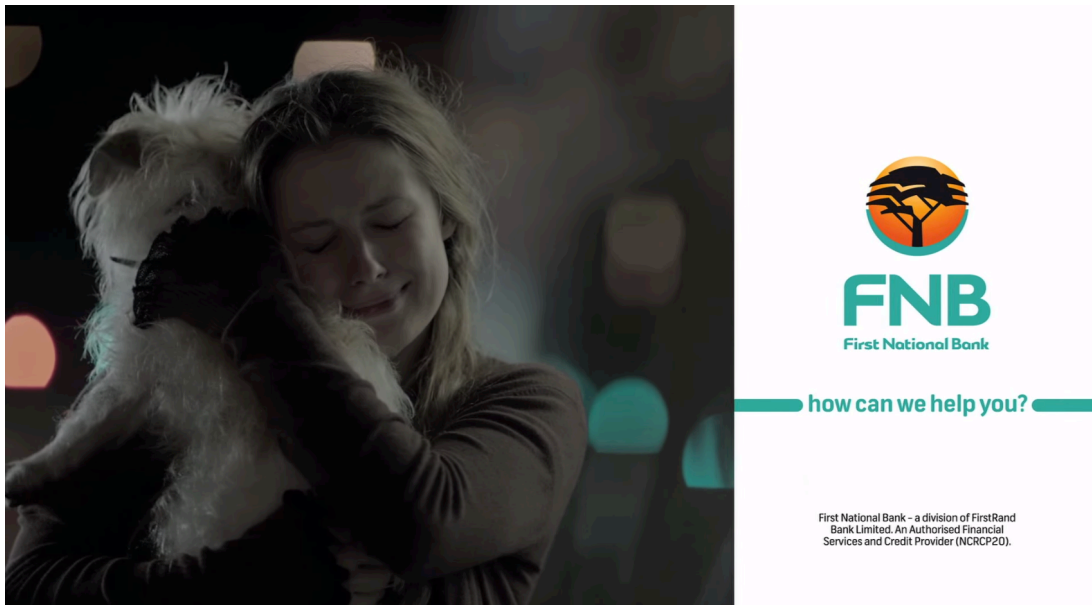


Figure 1. Screenshot of First National Bank advertisement “Dog”

As television audiences become familiar with commercials’ formats and content, it becomes more and more difficult to maintain their attention (Alwitt, 2002). As a result,

¹ Link of the commercial “Dog”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4x6H_ELG0-g

² According to Neuendorf (2002)’s guidelines, coefficients of 0.90 or greater are nearly always acceptable, 0.80 or greater is acceptable in most situations, and 0.70 may be appropriate in some exploratory studies. If the acceptable level of intercoder reliability (at least 0.70) was not achieved, the coding scheme should be developed to achieve a higher value of Krippendorf’s alpha. The rest coding could begin until the

suspenseful commercials begin to attract scholars' attention (Alwitt, 2002; Bee & Madrigal, 2005; Moulard, Kroff & Folse, 2012; Llyas & Ahmed, 2014). Most studies conceptualized suspense as a production of hope and fear, so researchers tested the effect of hope and fear separately or together as a mixed emotion on generating suspense in commercials. Factors that help generate suspense in commercials are usually defined as factors that help create hope and fear (Moulard, Kroff & Folse, 2012). Madrigal and Bee (2005) studied the level of hope and fear in suspenseful commercials compared with non-suspenseful commercials. Suspense in this study is regarded as one of the independent variables, which can help create emotions. However, we still know little about how suspense is produced in commercials. Furthermore, because these studies are based on previous studies from drama, films and novels, we should understand emotions like fear and hope are just parts of cognitive and emotional suspense antecedents.

As mentioned in the previous section, suspense is also generated by the structural aspect of a narrative. Thus, only looking at emotions does not fully explain the ways in which suspense is generated in commercials. Only Alwitt (2002) used both structural antecedents and emotional antecedents of a suspenseful reaction in previous studies as characteristics of suspenseful commercials to distinguish suspenseful advertisements from non-suspenseful advertisements. Due to the time constraint of advertising, we cannot completely apply the elements found in previous studies that investigated other narrative genres that produce suspense to suspenseful commercials. Based on previous research that identified factors that generate suspense in various content genres, this study aims to identify what specific factors – both structural and cognitive/emotional – contributes the production of suspense in commercials.

CHAPTER III

HYPOTHESES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Since the purpose of this study is to find out both structural and emotional factors that can help generate suspense in commercials, the following hypotheses and research questions are based on these two perspectives. On one hand, H₁, RQ₁ and H₃ are proposed from structural perspective, aiming to find structural characteristics of suspenseful commercials. On the other hand, H₂ and RQ₂ are proposed from cognitive and emotional perspective, which are focused on emotional appeals used in commercials.

Peter Wuss (1996) found verbal pronouncements in the film could “help viewers to textually identify, evaluate the previously obscure film events and also contribute to the formation of dramatic conflict” (p. 125). Also, in the film study, Carroll (1996) stated that as long as the suspense sequence keeps the relative probabilities of the alternative outcomes of the relevant course of events vividly before the audience, suspense can be generated no matter if it is verbal or visual. However, it is still not clear whether the presence of verbal component to a relative short-time commercial contribute to creating suspense. Therefore, the following research question is posed:

RQ₁: Compared with non-suspenseful commercials, are suspenseful commercials inclined to be non-or less verbal to help increase the level of suspense or more verbal in a single commercial?

Based on the structural-affect theory (Brewer & Lichtenstein, 1981), suspense generation requires the existence of an initiating event and an outcome event in a given

narrative. From this point, we can assume that a majority of suspenseful commercials contain a narrative. Considering the requirement of the plot setting (initiating event, outcome event and events happened between them), the following hypothesis is developed:

H₁: The length of suspenseful commercials tends to be longer than that of non-suspenseful commercials because of the time demand for a narrative component of suspense.

At the same time, emotional appeals will be employed as an explanation for the cognitive and emotional factors that appear in suspenseful commercials. As Moulard, Kroff and Folsie (2012) stated, suspense is a formative construct with emotions as its components, which means that suspense is not a direct feeling but an emotion consisting of other emotions. According to the cognitive appraisal theory, emotions are the results of evaluation and interpretation of events along certain criteria, and cause specific reactions in different people (Madrigal & Bee, 2005). Different emotions could arise during the process of watching suspenseful commercials, but viewers would feel suspense as a result of their own evaluation and interpretation. From this perspective, suspenseful commercials should have at least one emotional appeal to generate suspense. From another perspective, suspenseful commercials could be quite different from non-suspenseful ones on the use of emotional appeals: in suspenseful commercials, contrasts between suspense-rise events and suspense-resolve events will cause different emotions. Therefore, this study predicts and proposes that:

H₂: Suspenseful commercials tend to use more number of emotional appeals than non-suspenseful commercials due to the need to create suspense-generating and suspense-resolving events in a narrative.

RQ₂: Which emotional appeals are used more frequently in suspenseful commercials?

Suspenseful advertisements are much easier to catch audience attention, but most of the time, audiences focus more on the advertisements' plot rather than the real protagonists: products or brands that commercials try to promote. On the one hand, uncertainty exists in suspenseful commercials, which means that audience cannot predict either the fate of the protagonist or the outcome of an event. The products or brands could be the protagonist sometimes, but most of the time they only have a symbolic meaning, which is not highly relevant with the story in suspenseful commercials. On the other hand, in order to make suspenseful commercials more attractive and keep the suspense for a longer time, advertisers cannot repeat the information of products over and over during the commercial. Therefore, it is predicted that:

H₃: Suspenseful commercials tend to show less information of products or brands than non-suspenseful commercials.

CHAPTER IV

METHODS

Sample

Because this study attempts to see suspense that contains both structural (i.e. of narrative) and cognitive/emotional elements, film commercials were sampled for analysis. Cannes Lions, the world's biggest celebration of creativity in communications, defines film as "traditional TV and film content produced for online airing and other screens" (<http://www.canneslions.com/>). Film commercial has been widely accepted as one of important competition categories in most international advertising competitions. The Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity is considered to be the most important and famous international competition for creative work in the world of advertising. Every year, in addition to the Grand Prix award, Gold, Silver and Bronze Lions are awarded in each category to entries. This study chose award-winning commercials of The Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity under the category "Film" from 2012 to 2014. A total of 218 film commercials in total (80 from 2014, 79 from 2013 and 59 from 2012) are selected.

Categorizing suspenseful commercials

A total of 218 film commercials were categorized independently as suspenseful or non-suspenseful commercials by two coders. Since there is no consistent agreement on the definition of suspense, suspenseful commercials were categorized by coders' agreement. Unlike Alwitt (2002), who identified a commercial as suspenseful just based on the execution and interest in what happen to a character, this study used the following

criteria: 1) no direct and obvious correspondence between the content of the advertising and the brand or product. In other words, coders cannot tell what the brand or product is until the logo of the brand or the product appears in the commercial; 2) the outcome of a character or a story is uncertain. The reason for the first criteria is that when audiences are watching commercials, they always connect commercials with certain brands or products. If the commercial does not mention the brands or products, the audience will become uncertain about what brands or products the commercial is trying to promote, then suspense will arise. By taking into account these two rules, commercials were classified into two categories: suspenseful and non-suspenseful commercials.

Measures

Two coders were trained and then coded these two categories of commercials independently from two main aspects: the structure and content of commercials, emotional appeals used in commercials. Variables measured and methods used for testing research questions and hypotheses are stated as below.

RQ₁: compared with non-suspenseful commercials, are suspenseful commercials inclined to be non-or less verbal to help increase the level of suspense or using more verbal in a single commercial?

To answer RQ₁, the ratio of the time when a verbal component is present to the total time of the commercial was measured. Coders recorded the time when protagonists were speaking in commercial and then divided this number by the length of that commercial. After collecting all the data needed, an independent two-sample t-test was used to see whether there is a statistically significant difference between the mean ratio of suspenseful commercials and non-suspenseful commercials.

H₁: The length of suspenseful commercials tends to be longer than that of non-suspenseful commercials because of the time demand for a narrative component of suspense.

To test H₁, the length of each commercial is recorded and compared. Coders recorded the time of each commercial in seconds to measure the length of a commercial. An independent two-sample t-test was employed to test H₁.

H₂: Suspenseful commercials tend to use more number of emotional appeals than non-suspenseful commercials due to the need to create suspense-generating and suspense-resolving events in a narrative.

The coders watched 20 suspenseful commercials to do a quick survey of most commonly used appeals in suspenseful commercials before coding how suspenseful commercials attempted to attract audiences with unique appeals. As a result, four common emotional appeals were chosen for coding: 1) fear appeals—showing negative outcomes that may happen; 2) hope appeals—contrast with fear appeals, providing likely positive outcomes that may happen; 3) humor appeals—making audience laugh; 4) fantasy appeals—building unrealistic scene. Coders recorded all the above advertising appeals used in each commercial. For those appeals used by certain commercials but not listed above, coders chose “other” instead. Coders then chose one of the options as below: 1) advertising with one emotional appeal; 2) advertising with two emotional appeals; 3) advertising with three or more emotional appeals. Examples of each appeal and their links were shown in the Table 1.

Table 1. Examples and links of each appeal

Appeals	Example and Link	Plot Summary
Fear appeals	<p>“Chef”</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-xtZ3BeEfk</p>	<p>The commercial raises our awareness about safe driving. Many accidents on the road happen while drivers are speaking on the phone. This spot takes place at the restaurant kitchen. The chef speaks on the phone, while he is chopping a pumpkin.</p>
Hope appeals	<p>“Dog”</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4x6H_ELG0-g</p>	<p>The commercial tells the story of a man who goes out of his way to help. This shares the philosophy of how help is entrenched in the core belief system of FNB and that great things can happen when people help each other.</p>
Humor appeals	<p>“AAAA auto repair”</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JydJP2nf9o</p>	<p>A mechanic chooses to name his company AAAAAAAAAAAAA Auto Repair, so that he can ‘get an edge’ by being listed first in the phone book. His co-worker informs him that FedEx offers smarter ways to get an edge on the competition.</p>
Fantasy appeals	<p>“They know it”</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2kwBQ-76ap4</p>	<p>This campaign pursues to give to the mothers the proper recognition that they deserve as the household’s heroines, highlighting in a very sensible way, the sixth sense so characteristic of them, which makes them so capable to detect any attempt of being deceived.</p>

Since both variables in H_2 are categorical and no more than 20 percent of the cells had an expected frequency of at least 5, which violates the prerequisite to use a Chi-Squared test (Yates, Moore & McCabe, 1999, p. 734), a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was conducted to test H_2 . Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is used for nonparametric statistics and is considered more flexible than the Chi-square approach. One of the important advantages of using Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is that “a minimum number of expected frequencies in each cell is not required as in the Chi-square test” (Wimmer & Dominick, 1994, p. 310).

RQ₂: Which emotional appeals are used more frequently in suspenseful commercials?

Coders also recorded the type of appeals appeared in commercials when they were counting the number of appeals for H_2 . Four binary variables were collected for the presence of each of those four appeals (1=present, 0=not present). For example, if fear appeals exists in the commercial, record “1” in the column named “fear appeals” and the same applies to three other emotional appeals. After the coding work, a two-sample z-test for proportions was used to answer RQ₂.

H₃: Suspenseful commercials tend to show less information of products or brands than non-suspenseful commercials.

Lastly, the time that brand- or product-related information appeared during a commercial was recorded and the ratio of that time to total time of a commercial was calculated. An independent two-sample t-test was used to test H_3 .

After a careful training of coders, a pilot study was conducted to check intercoder reliability: 80 commercials from The Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity

were selected and then let independent coders categorize and code them. Krippendorff's *alpha*, which is the most conservative measure of intercoder reliability used for normal, ordinal, interval, and ration scales (Krippendorff, 1980), was used to check the intercoder reliability². After the coding work, data was collected and the corresponding statistic methods would be used to analyze data.

² According to Neuendorf (2002)'s guidelines, coefficients of 0.90 or greater are nearly always acceptable, 0.80 or greater is acceptable in most situations, and 0.70 may be appropriate in some exploratory studies. If the acceptable level of intercoder reliability (at least 0.70) was not achieved, the coding scheme should be developed to achieve a higher value of Krippendorff's alpha. The rest coding could begin until the acceptable coefficients were achieved.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

This study achieved a fairly good level of intercoder reliability for the coding scheme in general, as indicated by Krippendorff's *alpha* values ranging from 0.71 to 0.95 (see Appendix A for the measure of intercoder reliability for each variable). Coding disagreements between the two coders were resolved by consensus. Regarding the agreement on whether a commercial is suspenseful or not, we achieved the Krippendorff's *alpha* value up to 0.94. The Krippendorff's *alpha* value was 0.80 when coded the total number of appeals. The values were relatively lower for "the time when a verbal component" and "the time that brand- or product-related information" appeared during a commercial since usually on average one or two seconds counting errors existed.

A total of 203 valid samples were used for content analysis: fifteen samples were invalid because of either repetition or missing. Among the 203 commercials, 104 (51%) were non-suspenseful commercials and 99 commercials (49%) were suspenseful commercials. The descriptive statistics of main variables used in the analysis is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. *The descriptive statistics of three time variables used in the analysis*

Time (In seconds)	Suspenseful Commercials				Non-suspenseful Commercials			
	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Total length	88.75	58.98	15	396	97.69	72.36	30	542
Time spent on verbal component	22.21	33.82	0	210	40.02	41.00	0	252
Time spent on brand/product-related info	9.26	7.76	0	20	18.75	23.14	0	34
Number of appeals	1.51	0.56	1	3	1.16	0.40	1	3

For those variables needed to be compared by independent two-sample t-test —the length of the commercial, the ratio of the time when a verbal component is present to the total time of the commercial, the ratio of the time of brand- or product-related information shown in commercial to the total time of the commercial —the quantile-quantile plot was used to check normality, the prerequisite for t-test, of each variable in suspenseful and non-suspenseful category. As a result, for the ratio of the time of verbal component's presence to the time of the commercial and the number of each appeals the points plotted in quantile-quantile plot fell approximately on a straight line. After log-transforming, the other two variables fitted the normal distribution and thus independent two-sample t-test were used on the logged variables (see Appendix B). The independent two-sample t-test results for RQ₁, H₁ and H₃ are shown in Table 3 below. The two-sample z-test for proportions results for RQ₂ are shown in Table 4.

Table 3. Independent two-sample t-test on means between suspenseful and non-suspenseful commercials

	Commercials		t	Sig. (p)
	Suspenseful	Non-suspenseful		
Commercial Length	88.75 (58.98)	97.69 (72.36)	-0.66	0.225
Time Ratio ¹	0.23 (0.26)	0.44 (0.27)	-5.63***	<0.0001
Time Ratio ²	0.12 (0.07)	0.24 (0.21)	-4.14***	<0.0001

Note. * = $p \leq 0.05$, *** = $p \leq 0.001$. Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.

¹ = the ratio of the time when a verbal component is present to the total time of the commercial.

² = the ratio of the time of brand- or product-related information shown in commercial to the total time of the commercial.

RQ₁ asked whether suspenseful commercials inclined to be non-or less verbal compared with non-suspenseful commercials to help increase the level of suspense in a single commercial. By comparing the ratio of the time when a verbal component is present to the total time of the commercial in non-suspenseful commercials (Mean=0.44, SD=0.27) and suspenseful commercials (Mean=0.23, SD=0.26), RQ₁ could be answered. Results showed that compared with non-suspenseful commercials, suspenseful commercials are inclined to be non-or less verbal to help increase the level of suspense rather than more verbal in a single commercial ($t(201)=-5.63$, p value<0.0001).

H₁ predicted that the length of suspenseful commercials tends to be longer than that of non-suspenseful commercials because of the time demand for a narrative component of suspense. The results indicated that there is no significant difference ($t(201)=-0.66$, p value=0.225) between the length of non-suspenseful commercials (Mean=97.69, SD=72.36) and suspenseful commercials (Mean=88.75, SD=58.98). The results also revealed that the average length of non-suspenseful commercials was larger than that of suspenseful commercials, which was contrary to the prediction.

H₂ stated that suspenseful commercials tend to use a larger number of emotional appeals than non-suspenseful commercials due to the need to create suspense-generating and suspense-resolving events in a narrative. As results shown, 88 out of 104 non-suspenseful used only 1 emotional appeal, 15 used 2 emotional appeals and only 1 non-suspenseful commercial used more than 2 emotional appeals. However, in suspenseful commercials, 55 out of 99 used only 1 emotional appeal, 44 used 2 emotional appeals and 3 used more than 2 emotional appeals. Results for the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test ($D\text{-stat}=0.32 > 0.19 = D\text{-crit}$) indicated that suspenseful commercials tend to use more number of appeals than non-suspenseful commercials, which supported H₂.

RQ₂ asked which emotional appeal was used more frequently in suspenseful commercials. As shown in Table 3, both humor appeals and fantasy appeals were used more frequently in suspenseful commercials, occupied 38.38% and 37.37% respectively. However, although humor appeals were the most frequently used emotional appeal in both suspenseful and non-suspenseful commercials, there was no significant difference between these two proportions ($z=-0.337$, $p\text{ value}=0.736$, two-tailed). The results also indicated that except for humor appeals ($z=-79.5$, $p\text{ value}<0.0001$, two-tailed), proportions of all other three appeals had a significant difference suspenseful commercials and non-suspenseful commercials. The proportion of fear appeals used in suspenseful commercial (16.16%) was significantly larger than that in non-suspenseful commercials ($z=-79.5$, $p\text{ value}<0.0001$, two-tailed). Similar results were found in hope appeals ($z=-60.37$, $p\text{ value}<0.0001$, two-tailed) and fantasy appeals ($z=-39.56$, $p\text{ value}<0.0001$, two-tailed).

Table 4. Two-sample z-test on proportions of each type of appeals between suspenseful and non-suspenseful commercials

Appeals	Commercials		z	Sig. (p)
	Suspenseful	Non-suspenseful		
Fear appeals	16.16%	2.88%	-79.5***	<0.0001
Hope appeals	25.25%	8.65%	-60.37***	<0.0001
Humor appeals	38.38%	30.77%	-0.337	0.736
Fantasy appeals	37.37%	21.15%	-39.56***	<0.0001

Note. * = $p \leq 0.05$, *** = $p \leq 0.001$.

H₃ proposed that suspenseful commercials tend to show less information of products or brands than non-suspenseful commercials. The mean ratio of the time that brand- or product-related information appeared during commercials to the total time of the commercial in non-suspenseful commercials (Mean=0.24, SD=0.21) was larger than that in suspenseful commercials (Mean=0.12, SD=0.07. T-test results ($t(201)=-4.14$, p value<0.0001) supports the prediction.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

The main goal of this study was to find out features of suspenseful commercials that stand out compared to non-suspenseful commercials. While not all of the hypotheses were supported, the overall direction of results confirmed the predictions driven from previous literature.

RQ₁ asked whether suspenseful commercials are inclined to be non-or less verbal to help increase the level of suspense or using more verbal in a single commercial compared with non-suspenseful commercials. The analysis indicates that protagonists in suspenseful commercials spent less time on verbal procurements than those in non-suspenseful commercials. This result clearly shows that the extent to which main characters talk in commercials has an effect on the generation of suspense in commercials.

Results of this study are opposite to some of previous findings on suspense generation in other narrative genres. Wuss (1996) stated the effect of verbal pronouncements in suspenseful films. In his opinion, verbal pronouncements are given to the thought processes and thus help viewers to “textually identify and evaluate the previously obscure film events”. Verbal pronouncements also contribute to the formation of dramatic conflict, which confronts viewers with the question of what will happen if the reporter does not tell the truth. However, findings from other studies on suspense generation in films support a theoretical basis of the present results. Carroll (1996) stated that the key work that goes into a suspense sequence relies on “keeping the relative probabilities of the alternative outcomes of the relevant course of events vividly before

the audience”, which is not related whether it is verbal or non-verbal. Based on Carroll’s study, verbal is not a necessary component of suspense generation. In other words, being non- or less verbal could also generate suspense as long as uncertainty exists.

Another support for suspense generation in less or non-verbal condition is from the study by Alwitt (2002). Alwitt (2002) applied 14 characteristics of suspense from other genres and examined them in the context of suspenseful commercials, but none of them was related with the use of verbal stimuli. Since there is no agreement on the effect of verbal element on suspense generation and there is no research about the use of verbal element to create suspense in commercials, the results of this study merits attention for future research. The result that there is less verbal element in suspenseful commercials illustrates the importance of other audio or visual components of suspense generation in the context of commercials. Alwitt’s (2002) study found that there are usually music cues to events within a suspenseful commercial, which can create feelings of suspense and anticipation. It is not yet clear what characteristics of music contribute to creating suspense in commercials. In addition to musical cues, the sequence of scenes and the richness of visual images may also have effects on suspense generation.

H₁ stated that the length of suspenseful commercials tends to be longer than that of non-suspenseful commercials because of the time demand for a narrative component of suspense. The result shows no significant relationship between the length of suspenseful commercials and non-suspenseful commercials. Furthermore, when comparing the mean length between suspenseful and non-suspenseful commercials, the result is contrary to H₁: the mean length of suspenseful commercials is actually shorter than that of non-suspenseful commercials although the difference is not statistically different.

H₁ was proposed based on the structural-affect theory (Brewer & Lichtenstein, 1982). According to this theory, suspense can be generated on the condition that the initial event and outcome event are ordered chronologically, and other events are placed between them. As a need for plot development, greater length of suspenseful commercial is required.

Alwitt (2002) argued that since commercials are shorter in duration than other narratives, fewer events can be included, which could limit the opportunity to develop a suspense reaction. He mentioned that a longer anticipation period about what will happen at the end of the narrative leads to greater suspense (de Wied, 1994). But whether a longer anticipation period about what will happen at the end of the narrative equals to a longer length commercial has never been tested.

The results indicated that the existence of an outcome event is not necessary in suspenseful commercials. In numerous suspenseful commercials, suspense was set in an initial event but never solved out until the end of the commercial. Advertisers try to keep the longest anticipation period to generate the highest level of suspense, but do not pay much attention to solving suspense. This could also be the answer to the question why suspenseful commercials tend to show the information about a brand or a product at the end of a commercial in a short period of time: suspenseful commercials motivate audiences to anticipate the end of the narrative to accumulate their attention, hence the brand or product may get a relatively higher level of attention when they appear at the end of the commercial.

H₂ and RQ₂ were both concerned about emotional appeals in suspenseful commercials. H₂ was proposed according to the cognitive appraisal theory, which

claimed that suspenseful commercials tend to use more number of emotional appeals than non-suspenseful commercials due to the need to create suspense-generating and suspense-resolving events in a narrative. As cognitive appraisal theory claimed, people decide how they feel after an event (Madrigal & Bee, 2005). Different emotions could arise during the watching process of suspenseful commercials, but viewers would feel suspense as a result of their own evaluation and interpretation. Also, as mentioned before, suspense was a formative construct with emotions as its components (Moulard, Kroff & Folse, 2012), which means suspense is not a direct feeling but an emotion consists of other emotions. As a result, at least one emotional appeal should be present in suspenseful commercials to generate suspense. The result supports the prediction driven from this theory.

In relation to H1, RQ₂ asked which emotional appeals are used more frequently in suspenseful commercials. From the cognitive appraisal theory, it is reasonable to predict that suspenseful commercials will use more number of appeals, but it is less clear what specific types of appeals will be used for suspense generation. Researchers from marketing and mass communication conceptualized suspense as a production of hope and fear. Therefore, fear, hope and the mixture of these two emotions have been widely accepted as one of emotional characteristics of suspense (Madrigal & Bee, 2005; Moulard, Kroff & Folse, 2012; Alwitt, 2002). But as the results of RQ₂ shows, fear and hope are not the only emotions that can help generate suspense and they were used even less than humor and fantasy appeals in this study. In early studies on suspense in other narrative genres, researchers often describe suspense as a type of positive or negative emotions (Zillman, Wuss, 1996; Berlyne, 1961; De Wied, 1991; Barnet, Berman, and

Burto, 1971, p. 107). Positive or negative emotions should not be confined to only hope or fear, more emotions can be added to study the generation of suspense in commercials.

H₃ predicted that suspenseful commercials tend to show less information of products or brands than non-suspenseful commercials. The results support the prediction. Alwitt (2002) proposed and proved a hypothesis in his study that viewers perceive the brand-related information of a suspenseful commercial to be less closely related to its executional characteristics. Although Alwitt's hypothesis is not related directly to H₃ in this study, it can provide a reasonable explanation for the result of H₃. Alwitt claimed that audiences are inclined to focus more on the execution than on the brand or product-related information because suspenseful commercials usually result in a higher state of arousal. In a higher state of arousal, audience will selectively process "cues" or events in the narrative, paying more attention on cues with high informational value (Pham, 1996), which are usually present in the execution rather than in specific information on the given brand or product of a suspenseful commercial. As a result, audiences tend to focus more on the executional style of the commercial. Based on this reason, one possible explanation on the relatively shorter length of suspenseful commercials compared with non-suspenseful commercials could be that the time required for brand- or product-related information appeared in suspenseful commercials could just be a minimum of certain threshold. Once past that threshold, there may be no added effect on the persuasive effectiveness of showing brand- or product-related information.

CHAPTER VII

IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Conclusion and implications

This study examined several features of suspenseful commercials and suspense-generation techniques in commercials by comparing suspenseful commercials and non-suspenseful commercials. The results of this study are reported in detail about the differences between suspenseful and non-suspenseful commercials from both structural and cognitive/emotional aspects. Clearly, those features of suspenseful commercials examined in this study make contributions to the study of suspense in advertising.

The most significant theoretical contribution of this study is broadening the study of suspense generation in narrative genres to the context of advertising. The generation of suspense is controversial among previous researchers. For narrative genres like novels, films and dramas, whether suspense is oriented by text or reception or by both has been studied for a long time without much agreement until now. This study has extended the scope of the study of suspense generation into advertising and found evidence that suspense in commercials can be generated by both structural and emotional factors.

Another theoretical contribution of this study is developing the structural-affect theory. Structural-affect theory claims that suspense can be generated on the condition that the initial event and outcome event are ordered chronologically, and other events are placed between them (Brewer & Lichtenstein, 1982). However, as this study demonstrated, for those suspense generated in commercials, the condition is no longer applicable: suspenseful commercials usually develop incomplete stories to create

suspense. This finding provides quantified evidence that suspenseful commercials are different from suspenseful films, dramas and novels and should be treated as a unique narrative genre from the structural perspective. As a result, except for the condition that suspenseful commercials tend to use non-or less verbal to create suspense, suspenseful commercials might have more unique features.

The last theoretical contribution of this study is finding out that not just fear and hope appeals can generate suspense, other emotions can also combine together to create suspense. Previous studies about suspenseful advertising focused on fear and hope emotion and claim that using these two emotions to create suspense is one of the characteristics of suspenseful commercials (Madrigal & Bee, 2005; Moulard, Kroff & Folse, 2012; Alwitt, 2002). According to the cognitive appraisal theory, viewers decide how they feel after an event and the emotion intensity of viewers relies on the desirability of a particular outcome or appraisals of future events. The results of this study indicate that more number of emotional appeals can generate suspense and those emotions are not limited to the feeling of fear and hope. At least, this study found that the use of humor and fantasy appeals also produce suspense. Future studies should try to identify what types of appeals are more frequently used in generating suspense.

This study also provides practical implications for advertisers and creative producers of commercials. This study illustrates several features of suspenseful commercials for them who want to develop high levels of suspense in creating commercials: stories in commercials can be incomplete (an outcome event is not necessary), which can help them shorten the length of commercials to save more budget. Emotions used to create suspense will not be confined to only hope and fear, which can avoid bad impressions of the

brands or products because of negative emotions aroused by fear. In addition, suspenseful commercials occupied up to 49% in awards-winning commercials, which indicates that suspenseful commercials are popular and striking as a kind of creative commercials. These findings could also increase motivation to study and create suspenseful commercials.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

This study acknowledges that there are limitations that should be addressed. The first limitation is about the influence of subjectivity during the content coding process. When coders were judging whether a commercial was suspenseful or not, the decision depended on coders' own knowledge despite the use of the two criteria mentioned in the methods section. Although coders kept the criterion of distinguishing suspenseful and non-suspenseful commercials in mind, for the commercials that coders seem familiar with, coders had a tendency to code them as non-suspenseful commercials due to the familiarity with the brand although they should have been coded as suspenseful commercials. In order to eliminate this type of errors caused by coders, increasing the number of coders may be needed with more detailed guidance on the distinction between suspenseful and non-suspenseful commercials in future studies.

Another limitation is about sample. The sample size used in this study is 203 commercials from The Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity. Although those award-winning commercials were chosen from many different advertising categories, those commercials may share something in common which caters to the preference of The Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity. Also, the sample used in this study is not a representative sample, which makes it difficult to generalize the findings of this

study to commercials that are not produced for the competition. As a result, a larger set of commercials that are created for TV broadcast is needed to increase the external validity in future studies.

The third limitation is about coders' knowledge of advertising appeals. When coders counted the number of emotional appeals in each commercial, they could have missed certain appeals and then resulted in less number of appeals recorded. Although coders are familiar with those four appeals used in this study and other common advertising appeals, some uncommon appeals might be left out. Future studies should add more appeals to the coding scheme to avoid omissions.

The fourth limitation is that this study is not comprehensive enough. There might be other components that are not coded in the analysis, such as the type of characters (fictional or real), the type of music used in suspenseful commercials, the type of brands or products (e.g. living goods, healthcare products, auto accessories) that prefer using suspense in their commercials and so on. Future researchers should find out more possible characteristics of suspenseful commercials and add those variables to their study.

Language is another limitation in this study. Although those awards-winning commercials are mostly produced in English, there are still some commercials produced in other languages and do not have an English version. Different languages cause the problem of counting the time of brand- or product-related information shown in commercials: it will cost different time on speaking the same sentence by different languages. Also, suspense might have cultural diversity. Future researchers should also look at commercials in different cultures to see whether there are similarities or differences in suspense generation in advertising.

Except for these suggestions mentioned above, here are other recommendations for future research. Since this study focuses on the features of suspenseful commercials, future research should develop more features of suspenseful commercials and pay more attention to the effects of suspenseful commercials. First and most important, they need to work on verifying the reason for studying suspenseful commercials: suspenseful commercials can catch more attention and then achieve a better effect of persuasion. This study got the conclusion that suspenseful commercials tend to show less information about brands or products, and the next step is to question whether suspenseful commercials can achieve a long-term memory of the brands and products after viewers watch them. Future studies also need to find out the best position for placing a brand or product message and the optimal length of showing the brand or product information in suspenseful commercials. The latter can help solve the question of why suspenseful commercials tend to show less brands or products information than non-suspenseful commercials. Another direction for future research is to find out what would be the single or combination of advertising appeals that produce the maximum level of suspense and exert a higher influence on the persuasive effectiveness of suspenseful commercials.

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APPENDIX A

CODER RELIABILITY RESULTS

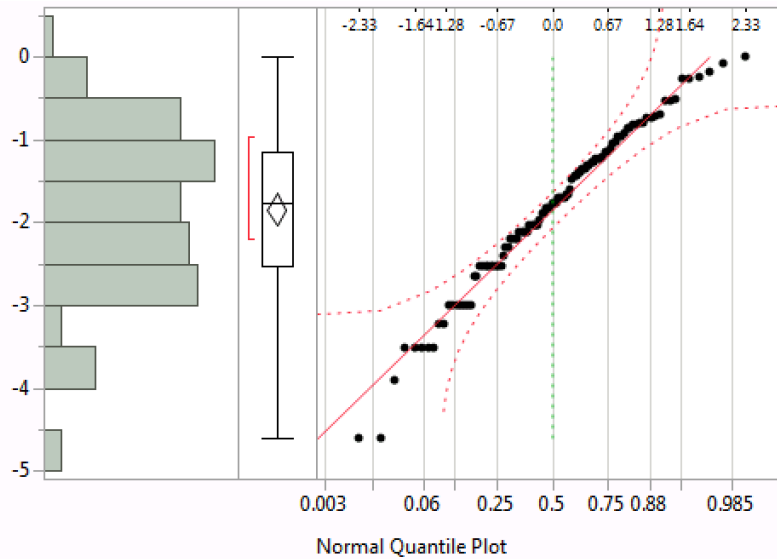
	Agreement	<i>alpha</i>	N Agreement	N Disagreement
Suspenseful or not?	97.5%	0.9377	78	2
Length of ads	100%	1	80	0
Speaking time	72.5%	0.7087	58	22
Related brands or production appeared time	78.75%	0.7792	63	17
Fear appeal	100%	1	80	0
Hope appeal	97.5%	0.8953	78	2
Humor appeal	97.5%	0.9462	78	2
Fantasy appeal	97.5%	0.9462	78	2
Other appeal	97.5%	0.9454	78	2
Total number of appeals	91.25%	0.8027	73	7

APPENDIX B

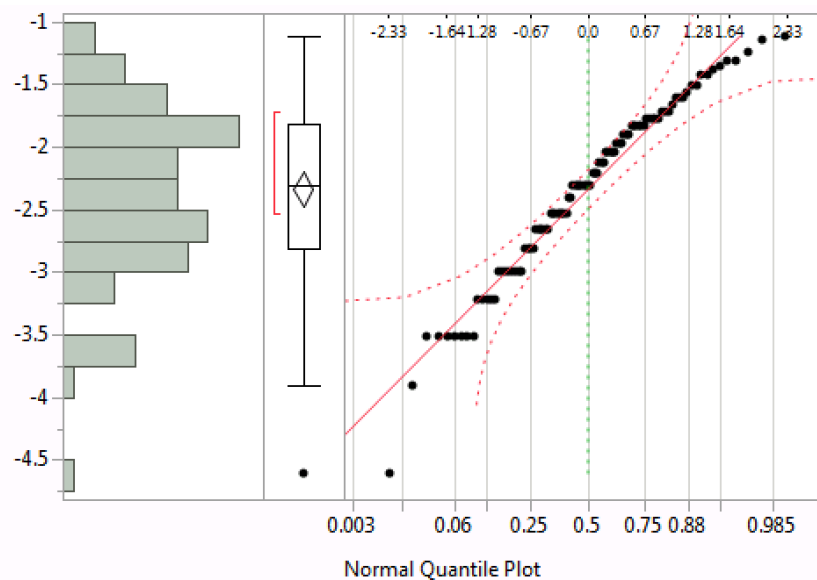
QUANTILE-QUANTILE PLOTS AFTER LOG-TRANSFORMING

Quantile-quantile plots for the ratio of the time of brand- or product-related information shown in commercial to the total time of the commercial after log-transforming.

For the ratio of the time of brand- or product-related information shown in commercial to the total time of the commercial in non-suspenseful commercials:

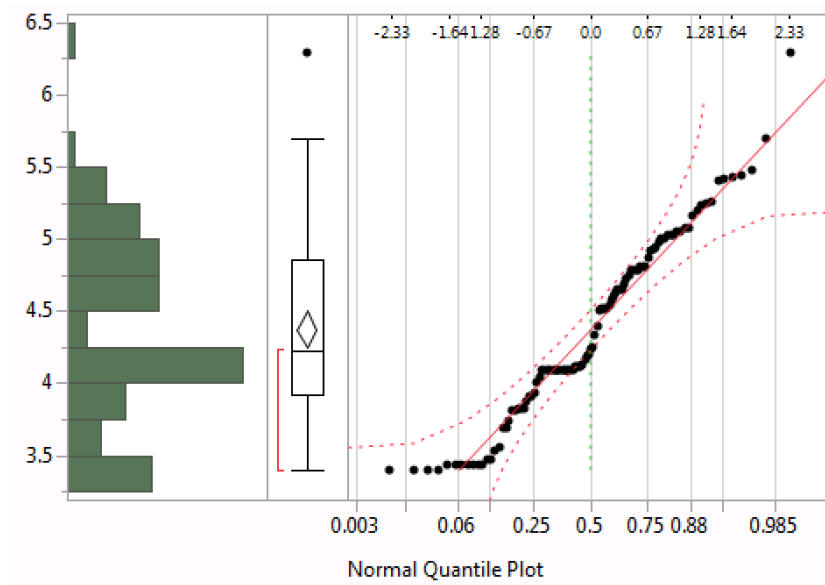


For the ratio of the time of brand- or product-related information shown in commercial to the total time of the commercial in suspenseful commercials:



Quantile-quantile plots for the length of the commercial after log-transforming.

For the length of the commercial in non-suspenseful commercials:



For the length of the commercial in suspenseful commercials:

