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**Suggestibility as an operant factor in advertising effects,  
cognitive defences and the issue of consumer sovereignty**

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## **Suggestibility as an operant factor in advertising effects, cognitive defences and the issue of consumer sovereignty**

### **Abstract**

This paper is a response to two recent, unrelated studies in the on-going issue of unconsciously processed advertising messages, one on similarity of hypnotic suggestion to suggestion in advertising, the other discussing more recent, similar constructs from psychology called the Dual Process Model in regard to the susceptibility of children to advertising. Implications for understanding low involvement advertising effects are discussed, plus the potential for a research agenda. The main theme of this paper is that it is clear that suggestions can be received without conscious awareness, but whether these are acted on may depend, as the hypnosis literature indicates, on a similarly unconscious filtering mechanism which retains control over consumer behaviour. Recent attempts to uncover these unconscious mechanisms have demonstrated the existence of such activity. The main conclusion of this paper is that consumer sovereignty remains a political, rather than a research issue.

Keywords: advertising, dual-process-model, hypnosis, consumer-sovereignty, suggestion

### **Biography**

David Wesson holds a PhD. in Communication specialising in Advertising. He has worked as a graphics specialist in media and advertising, and writes computer software in six languages. He is currently a Senior Lecturer in marketing communication at Newcastle Business School. His research and publication interests include advertising effectiveness and social effects, philosophy and theory in advertising, as well as the use of computer technology in psychometric assessment.

## **Suggestibility as a operant factor in advertising effects, cognitive defences and the issue of consumer sovereignty**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Two recently published papers from different perspectives converge on the long-standing issue of the role of suggestibility in producing advertising effects. One comes from the literature surrounding hypnosis (Kaplan, 2007) which re-opens, with some urgency, the long-standing discourse about the relatedness of advertising messages and hypnotic suggestion. The importance of this work lies in the attempt to measure what has eluded research for some time – the efficacy of sub-conscious suggestion in producing advertising effects.

The second comes from the mainstream advertising literature (Nairn & Fine, 2008) where the same issues are raised, without new supporting empirical data, of the probable effect of advertising in affecting children's' implicit attitudes. The psychological literature pertaining to dual process models is cited in depth, mainly paralleling the theory existent for decades in the literature pertaining to hypnosis. The advantage that the Kaplan article has is that for more than a century there has been overwhelming evidence of the efficacy of hypnotic techniques in producing suggestion-induced states that makes this strain of study grounded in solid experience. However, there has been little empirical evidence that supports the contention that mass-mediated communication can produce similar effects as those obviously possible through interpersonal communication from a hypnotist. The Kaplan paper is the latest effort in this regard to make this case and is commendable for vigorously attacking this recalcitrant problem. Before looking at this article in depth, a explanation of hypnosis is in order.

### **RESEARCH AND THEORY IN HYPNOSIS**

The phenomenon of hypnosis has been known for centuries. Yet only in the last several decades has this peculiarity of human psychology been considered a legitimate object of

scientific inquiry. To many it still remains a subject shrouded in the vapours of Mesmerism, trances and the mysteries that it engenders. But over the years, the various medical and therapeutic applications of hypnosis have been so well investigated, documented and discussed that clinical hypnosis has joined the arsenal of alternative therapeutic techniques available to professionals in the health industries and to the general public. Clinical hypnosis is not a field without controversies, however. Although practical techniques are well established, there are still many questions about the nature of the hypnotic state and what this phenomenon suggests about the operation of the human mind generally. This uncertainty yields the first parallel between hypnosis and advertising. We know they work, but we don't know how they work. (Gould, 1992)

There is another aspect to each of these topics that is readily apparent: both are viewed by critics of each field as being a form of control over the mind of its subjects. (Brown, 2008) Yet in both fields, practitioners and researchers are convinced that the powers of hypnosis and of advertising do not come from the ability to control, but from the ability to suggest. (Kaplan, 2007) It is possible that the mechanisms that make hypnosis so dramatically effective may be similar to those which make advertising effective, more subtly and insidiously, as well. (Branthwaite, 2002) Nevertheless, up until the Kaplan study, there was little or no empirical support for the notion that advertising is a form of hypnosis. The dissimilarities of the two practices are too great to support such a claim. Although the sensationalist tabloids might love the headline, "SCIENTIST PROVES ADVERTISING LINKED TO HYPNOSIS," there is little evidence of such a link beyond this single recent study by Kaplan which certainly should be scrutinised with care. The study was undertaken in two parts: first, to assess the hypnotic-like content in a set of advertisements and categorise them as high and low hypnotic content. The second stage was to assess the relative effectiveness of the advertising using subjects'

evaluations of the advertisements. The first stage entailed content analysis by experts in hypnosis on 35 criteria, plus one summative measure. These, summarised and abbreviated in the Appendix A, read mainly like a generalisable list for persuasive communications of all types, including advertising. From this we can surmise that hypnosis is a special case of persuasive communication, but not necessarily the converse – that all persuasive communication is a generalised case of hypnosis.

Many of these criteria are explicitly standard desiderata for advertising design and copy: Rapport, clarity, positive expectations, repetition, multi-modality, evoking emotion, positive suggestion, engender acceptance, interesting storyline, language appropriate to audience, offer solutions, indirect suggestions, empowering audience, paradoxical negative suggestion, clear product description, associative imagery, suggest purchase, simple communication, use of present tense, diverse sensory appeals, appropriate music and tone, non-linear connections, rhetorical questions, create and resolve tension, forced choice, presupposition as fact, connection of selling message to truisms, elicit visceral response and non-verbal suggestions. Some are not clearly explicit in advertising practice, such as embedding concealed commands. Mainly the criteria appear to describe good advertising creative practice generally. If these are also characteristics of hypno-suggestive technique, then the most probable outcome of an assessment of the effectiveness of a set of advertisements scoring high on this set of criteria is pre-determined, or at best a validation of conventional advertising wisdom. And so it turns out in the second stage – high “hypnotic content” advertisements perform better in advertising effectiveness measures, or more possibly stated – better designed advertisements perform better in short term measurement. What is not clear is that the hypnotic-like suggestion delivered in the mass media have hypnotic-like effects.

The idea that hypnotism and advertising are linked through the common device of suggestion is not new in advertising theory. Walter Dill Scott, one of the earliest and most influential theorist on advertising psychology, expressed the view that the operant processes in these areas were identical. (Kuna, 1976) According to Kuna's presentation there was a flourish of interest in hypnotism that coincided with the birth of psychology at the turn of the twentieth century. Lacking appropriate rigorous scientific methodologies to generate sustained scientific interest in hypnosis, the topic passed out of vogue. After World War II, the study was revitalized with an infusion of new quantification techniques to explore the subtleties of the hypnotic experience. (Chertok, 1969)

## **EXPLANATIONS OF HYPNOTIC STATES**

In summarising the state of understanding in this field of scientific inquiry into hypnosis, it should be acknowledged that few of the postulates presented are free from controversy, though no more so than any social science can currently claim. Therefore, it is necessary to rely on authority where it appears legitimate, and conservative interpretation where points seemed to remain controversial. For example, the term "trance" in connection with the hypnotic state is eschewed in deference to Barber's (1979) contention that the "trance" as a special state is not supported by evidence. In his view, the processes of hypnosis "overlap with such social psychological influence processes as conformity, attitude change and persuasion." Since the "special state" argument is unsettled, notwithstanding Barber's emphatic position, the term "hypnotic state" can be employed to indicate the clinically induced frame of mind during which symbolic stimuli (words, suggestions) directly affect psychological and physiological behaviours of a subject.

Since the nature of the hypnotic state is still in question, the topic will be defined for further discussion by referent to its generally accepted characteristics. Hilgard (1965, pp 5-10), who with Orne is credited with bringing hypnosis into the light of valid methodological inquiry, compiled such a list of characteristics:

1. Loss of initiative
2. Selective inattention
3. Increased memory and fantasy
4. Reduced reality testing (acceptance of distortion)
5. Increased suggestibility
6. Acceptance of congenial role behaviour
7. Posthypnotic amnesia

Hilgard noted that most of these characteristics are not unique to hypnosis, rather are represented in this discussion as being more pronounced incidence of behaviours commonly found in varying degrees in the normal waking state. He theorised that the hypnotic state may be a special case of similar states that commonly arise, such as being lulled to sleep in a lecture, being absorbed by some experience, regression experiences, and trust. (1965, pp. 297) Hypnotic susceptibility may be strongest among people who can become deeply involved in reading, theatre, music, religious experience or adventures. (1965, pp. 349) He noted that the induction process involves relaxation and passivity which are conducive to diffusion of the subject's ego boundary so that an "inner voice" associates itself with the hypnotist. Such a state is similar to an infant incorporating a parent as part of its ego -- possibly simulating a regression to the beginning of the developmental process -- as confidence in the hypnotist is important to successful hypnotic induction. (1965, pp. 24, 387) It is in this state that the



hypnotist is able to facilitate what Hilgard believed is a voluntary response to suggestion. (1965, pp113) The voluntary nature of responsiveness is indicated by the finding that suggestions in conflict areas creates defensiveness in subjects. However, the issue of voluntariness is still open to debate and further study. (Lynn et al, 1990; Zamansky, 1995) Studies exploring this defensive mechanism (e.g. Sherman et al., 2008) indicate the presence of separate mental processes in unconscious processing, probably showing this counterarguing process at work.

In his discussion of susceptibility, Hilgard summarises his experience in identifying other traits that correlate to heightened susceptibility. He found that sex is not significant, but age is, 8 to 12 years being the most suggestible. This may be because youths of this age embody most strongly those traits Hilgard believes are conducive to susceptibility -- facility with sensation, fantasy, involvement, excitement and freedom. It is just this point about childhood susceptibility to advertising messages that is the focus of concern in the Nairn and Fine (2008) study. They argue that young people of all ages up to adulthood may not have developed the defensive mechanisms to a sufficient degree to provide an adequate defence against subconscious suggestions.

Traits antithetical to susceptibility, Hilgard notes, are reality-boundedness, competitiveness, task-orientation and strong ego pride. It can be argued that children are underdeveloped in each of these traits. However, early research in this matter find that most of the correlates appear to be personality characteristics rather than demographic ones, with moderator variables fragmenting the typologies into inconvenient sub-types. (Rosehan, 1969) The possibility remains that this line of inquiry can provide some indicators to how advertisements affects different categories of audience in different contexts.

Susceptibility as a trait is not totally elusive, however. The trait appears to be stable; and standardised, reliable and valid tests of the trait have been developed and implemented on sufficient scale to describe the presence of the trait in study populations (Pekala, 1995). Since there is a type of virtuosity in hypnotic susceptibility that does not seem to be teachable, a bimodal overlap of two normal distributions seems to represent the presence of the trait in the general population and within all sub-populations. For advertising purposes, this suggests that there is no useful way to target for susceptibility.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE GENERAL THEORY OF MENTAL PROCESSES**

From his experiments, Hilgard (1977) proposed a theory of mental processes that derive from an early theory of hypnosis called dissociation theory. The theory is exemplified by common experiences such as listening to a speaker while formulating a response, or by driving on the highway while thinking about some totally absorbing subject. Dissociation refers to such instances that indicate the presence of divided consciousness, where two or more mental processes can be operating simultaneously. Normally, only one process at a time is available to conscious awareness, so the existence of another one is only inferentially indicated. For example, studies of creative individuals in many areas such as mathematics or the arts repeatedly produce references to sudden solutions to creative problems that appear spontaneously, while the mind is seemingly occupied on some other matter, or mostly unoccupied in relaxation. The inference here is that some portion of the mind is working at a preconscious, subconscious or unconscious level. With the aid of hypnosis, some of these covert processes can be made overt.

To explain the operations of these parallel information processing systems, Hilgard postulates two modes of mental functioning -- a passive mode or Monitor which selectively scans the environment; and an active mode or Executive which processes information and plans for future activities. These functions are not independent or discrete, since normally they can be functioning simultaneously and interactively, but Hilgard proposed them as theoretical constructs for explanatory purposes. The veracity of the concept of two modes is reinforced by generalised experiences where one mode seems to remain functioning while another becomes temporarily inoperational. For example, becoming totally absorbed in reading and not hearing your name called may represent the Monitor function being incapacitated. Laboratory tests on absorption in meditation, where sounds in the environment are perceived, but no mental processing ensues, indicate the possibility of the Executive function being incapacitated. Hilgard also theorises another type of division of consciousness between the normal conscious awareness and a parallel awareness he calls the "Hidden Observer" which is below conscious awareness -- preconscious, subconscious or unconscious. In his experiments, he has demonstrated the circumstance where the Hidden Observer can become affiliated with the Monitor or Executive mode, or both, while the conscious mind is dissociated from these functions. For example, he cites experiments where the Hidden Observer can recall stimuli that were made imperceptible through hypnotic suggestion to the conscious mind. The evidence from similar inquiries suggests that consciousness does not alternate between these functional divisions, rather that the processes coexist in parallel.

Recent discourse in mainstream psychology through the 1990s has absorbed this parallel processing as the Dual Process Model with various names such as Implicit and Explicit for these processing modes. These are adequately and thoroughly cited in the Nairn and Fine (2008) study, though the implications and arguments remain similar to those in the hypnosis

literature, namely that implicit (unconsidered ) attitudes can be absorbed from the environment without conscious engagement.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR ADVERTISING**

Hilgard notes that his dissociation theories should have substantial implications for other areas of psychology. One area he proposes is the topic, currently non gratis in psychological inquiry, of subliminal perception. Experimental demonstrations of physiological perceptions that remain recorded in some portion of memory while the subject remains in a state of conscious imperception indicate, in terms of Hilgard's theories, that either the Executive mode or Monitor mode can be dissociated from conscious awareness while remaining functional. That is, the Hidden Observer can perceive and remember stimuli that the conscious mind does not monitor or process through the Executive.

This finding is made significant when it is tied to other theoretical implications of hypnosis. One of these implications is of the power of verbal suggestion. Hilgard writes: "We find that hypnotic procedures (have been) designed that produce a readiness for dissociative experiences by disrupting the ordinary continuities of memories and by distorting or concealing reality orientation through the power that words exert by direct suggestion, through selective attention and inattention, and through stimulating the imagination appropriately." (1977, p. 226)

If the "power that words exert" were characteristic of the hypnotic state exclusively, this would not be significant to advertising psychology. However, many hypnotists believe that the fact that many behaviours associated with hypnotic induction can be duplicated by highly motivated waking subjects, e.g. employing as simple a technique as eye fixation and the belief that this will produce hypnotic response, indicates that the "profoundly compelling imaginal fantasy" that

operates in hypnosis is on a quantitative continuum with other normal functions of human imagination. (Fromm and Shaw, 1979) Hypnosis is just a dramatic demonstration of heightened susceptibility to suggestion.

Consider the parallel to advertising. Although the medium for transmitting suggestions in advertisements is different, the messages appear to be strikingly similar. Field (1979) performed a content analysis on the hypnotic induction techniques employed by practitioners and compared it to normal verbal discourse. His conclusions read very much like the recommendations for advertising copy found in any copywriting textbook. He found that induction employs vivid, redundant, personal and intimate language -- in his words, more "vividness and concreteness of language, immediacy of communication, intimacy and closeness,... redundancy and monosyllabic words" than appear in a comparison with normal verbal communication. Further, he found less static, abstract conceptualisation and categorisation; in his words, "rejection of abstract argumentation, and the primacy of the subjective experience." Indeed, these views are mirrored in the more recent Kaplan (2007) study and elaborated in their criteria for assessing hypnotic content, which does not, regrettable, reference this earlier study by Fields.

Since much of the visual content of advertising is fantastical portrayals of reality, advertising and hypnosis also share the aspect of fantasy-orientation. If one accepts the view of advertising messages as fantasy mixed with direct and indirect suggestion, a new perspective is possible on the effect of advertising generally discussed as the Low Involvement Model. Though Information Processing models are well suited to discussing the impact of advertising on the conscious mind where both Monitor and Executive are functioning at the conscious level, in situations where the Executive is diverted, disconnected or temporarily relinquished,

the influence of compelling suggestions in the form of advertisements may be increased. Once the suggestion is imbedded in the subject, it may become a functionally autonomous portion of the subject's habitual patterns (an implicit attitude), or at least create a temporary impulse, without the conscious mind being able to account for it. Hypnosis appears to increase the sense of confidence that the remembered experience is valid (Dywan, 1995). In advertising terms, this suggests that mediated experiences accepted during low involvement states may become integrated with personal experiences much in the manner proposed by the Preston's (1982) Association Model.

This conception of mental processes appears to mimic the theories that support the efficacy of the practice popularly referred to as subliminal advertising, but may also apply to the simple case of the relaxed and mildly attentive 'couch potato'. Graffin (1995) found physiological correlates to the hypnotic state that suggests that a relaxed, passive state is ideal for receptivity to advertising messages. However, there is a notable confound to this view of how unconsciously perceived messages can influence behaviour. It is that in the case of hypnosis as an analogy to this subliminal procedure, the susceptibility to external influence comes not from a decrease in cognitive control by the subject, but rather from an increase in control. (Kroeber-Riel, 1979) That is, hypnotic suggestion works only when the subject submits the conscious level of functioning over to suggestibility. Subjects without the capability or inclination to relinquish control of part of their mental functioning are uninfluencable. Subjects with this susceptibility must relinquish control voluntarily. In both cases the Hidden Observer remains fully aware of the perceptions, suggestions and actions that the subject is experiencing. Because the conscious mind is not aware of these activities and cannot report controlling them, researchers and lay persons have assumed that control has been removed from the subject. This raises the question whether subjects can be considered to be in control

of their actions if they do not know they are in control. This question in turn brings up a hornet's nest of ontological brouhaha about who the subject really is, and by extension, who the sovereign consumer really is. (Gould, 1992)

## **CONCLUSIONS**

***Hypnosis and advertising are both cases of persuasive communication and as such may share similar techniques with other forms of effective persuasive communication.***

Three points of relatedness between hypnosis (and dual process models) and advertising are noted: the role of fantasy, direct or indirect suggestion, and message style. As Hilgard already has pointed out, and now confirmed by Kaplan, there appears to be a continuum or overlap of techniques at play in persuasive communication generally and a possible overlap in cognitive processing of these modes. The comparison of advertising to hypnosis, though imperfect, is valuable because an understanding of clinical hypnosis may yield greater insight into how advertising works, particularly in regard to low involvement contexts, the role of distraction in persuasion, and the issue of subliminal perception..

***Some audiences may be more susceptible to suggestion, notably children, and may be disadvantaged.***

As Kroeber-Riel (p. 242) pointed out in 1979, "consumer sovereignty" is a topic for passionate debate largely driven by trends in ideology and politics of science. The Nairn and Fine article (2008) confirms that the topic remains lively, particularly in regard to the susceptibility of children to undue persuasion. Until the issue of "who's in control" is resolved, advertising, hypnosis and all other forms of persuasion, influence and suggestion will continue to remain ethical dilemmas. The debate about whether advertising is mainly either manipulation or suggestion will partly be answered when we can better understand how advertising imitates hypnosis as a mechanism

of control. There is evidence from hypnosis research that communication with a pre-, sub- or unconscious portion of the human mind is possible, and that behaviour can be induced without conscious participation. However, a key lesson from hypnosis may be that only behaviour that is already approved can be evoked; we can't get children to want to buy things they would not wish to buy anyway, e.g. accountancy software. What has not been addressed here is the perpetual finding in the marketing world that whether children are unduly susceptible to advertising, marketers, even with enormous effort and resource, have not been pronouncedly successful in taking advantage of this, given the rate of new product failures directed to this segment. Indeed, the resistance of consumers, including children, to persuasion by advertisers is a major theme in advertising practitioner and academic literature.

***Some people within each audience segment are more susceptible to suggestion than others in the segment.***

It has been noted in the hypnosis literature that some individuals, irrespective of their demographics, are more susceptible to suggestion than others. That means that any study that is done to estimate the level of suggestibility of an audience such as children will reveal a range of susceptibility from highly resistant to highly vulnerable. All that marketers expect to see as practical outcomes from advertising are minor percentage changes in behaviour; that is, no marketer expects everyone or even a large percentage of a potential market to start buying their product as a result of advertising alone. Further, they would only expect that audience members already prone to wish to purchase their products would be influenced by the suggestion to do so. If an audience member has no inclination to purchase in the first place, they have already consciously or unconsciously unaccepted the option and thus are resistant to suggestion. There is yet little support for the notion that people do what they would not wish to do anyway because they see (or not actually see) advertising.



## **IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH**

Possibly what these findings and arguments suggest is that there is no research agenda that will resolve the issues raised in this area. If one begins thinking about these matters in politicized terms such as “Who’s messing with my mind?” as do Nairn and Fine, then the probably interpretation of any research findings that come from studies such as Kaplan’s will be that advertising takes unfair advantage of consumers, particularly children, because it causes them to do things without their conscious consent they do not necessarily wish to do anyway, thus advertising is a covert and unethical form of manipulation.

If the lesson from hypnosis is noted that only actions, attitudes and other mental processes that are already acceptable to the subject can be stimulated through suggestion, then the consumer remains in control, even if the control is not consciously asserted. Thus, possibly there are two factions at work in the unconscious portion of the Dual Process Model, one which accepts unconscious suggestions such as advertising, and an unconscious monitor that vets the suggestions for acceptability. This then places advertising in the Weak Theory position and consumer sovereignty is preserved.

How researchers can investigate the unconscious acceptance of suggestion being moderated by unconscious filtering for acceptability is problematic. If, as a consumer, I don’t know I am receiving suggestions from advertising and don’t know I am also vetting them for acceptability, I will have a hard time reporting this in any direct way in a research situation.

Nairn and Fine recommend three strains of research: 1) to validate whether children, adolescents and adults can resist implicit persuasion, 2) to discover whether children and

adolescents understand the marketing selling intent of brands, 3) to discover the effectiveness of media literacy programmes in preparing young people to deal with advertising.

First, a test such as the Kaplan study will probably find that audiences of all types are more or less susceptible to advertising messages, at least if short-term effects such as immediate post-test are used as evidence, despite the long-standing finding that short term measures are poor predictors of actual purchase behaviour. However, the issue that really needs addressing is not whether advertising can have effects; they obviously can, and the history of advertising research and practice supports that certain creative aspects of the visual and verbal content of advertising can even modulate these effects.

A test of unconscious effects and counter-effects is more problematic. It has already been ascertained that misdirection (not paying direct attention to advertising while distracted by other activity) still can produce message effects, in fact may enhance some effects. (Anand & Sternthal, 1992) The problem will lie in assessing implicit attitude change. If subjects can report an attitude explicitly, it is not implicit. If subject self-reportage is avoided in favour of direct behavioural measures such as selecting an advertised product from a menu of choices, then it will still be unclear whether the choices selected were approvable anyway – that is, the choice made was approved by the implicit approval process, thus still within the realm of controlled behaviour.

Second, research has already ascertained that children increase their understanding of the intent of advertising as they grow older. Whether they attain a suitable defence against advertising is less clear. The key to interpretation of this research strain will rest mainly on

what level of understanding is considered sufficient, and the political interpretation of what the “intent of advertising” is.

Third, the assessment of educational programmes in general rests mainly on how evidence is collected and interpreted. No matter how much cognitive learning can be generated in an educational programme, whether this necessarily transfers to behavioural change depends on the amount of congruence the programme has with the environment outside of the education process. For example, anti-smoking campaigns are likely to have some influence on the margins of the target population who were not committed to smoking anyway, but not sufficient to claim significant success with portions of the population under pressure to smoke from other influencers. The deployment of such programmes also rests on the political will to prioritise them over other pressing social issues. In this case, will whomever is footing the bill consider saving children from crass commercialism more important than, for example, teen pregnancy?

Whatever the research programmes undertaken, the end result will probably reiterate what we know to date – that some advertising influences some people to buy some things some of the time. Otherwise, we would have stopped doing it a hundred and fifty years ago. Whether advertising is taking unfair advantage of some people’s susceptibility to unconsciously received but possibly also unconsciously filtered suggestions is going to be, as Kroeber-Riel pointed out, mainly an ideological and political issue, rather than one for solid science.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Assessing hypnotic-suggestive communication in advertisements**

1. Rapport – warmth, caring, trust.
2. Suggestive speaking manner – clear and confident speech.
3. Positive expectancy regarding the benefits
4. Avoids impossible and direct demands of the viewer.
5. Repetition of the main message several times.
6. Messages using various sensory modalities
7. Gradual escalation of suggestions
8. Begins with a prominent emotion of the viewer
9. Positive Suggestion, avoiding negative associations
10. Complimenting and encouraging actions from previously given suggestions
11. Creates Acceptance or Yes-Set'
12. Create immersion and interest in the storyline of the spot.
13. Using the Customer's Own Language
14. Directive suggestions present solutions
15. Indirect suggestions – use of stories, analogies, jokes, puns, etc.
16. Supportive and action-encouraging suggestion to enhance viewer's sense of self-efficacy
17. Negative suggestion as a paradoxical way to motivate
18. Describing the product/service in a clear and explicit manner
19. Open messages enabling the viewer to take things associatively to wherever it might suit her.
20. Suggestions to activate the viewer subsequently in purchase situation.
21. Simple and easy to follow language and suggestions.
22. Present tense or alternatively begins in the past or future tenses, ending at the present tense .
23. Appeals to different senses.
24. Sound and demeanour befitting its purpose.
25. Logical sequence between things and behaviours that have no natural connection
26. Suggestion covering all the possibilities
27. Asks questions evoking an active search by the viewer for answers.
28. Confusion to create tension, later send a clear message reducing the stress.
29. Creates a balance between opposite experiences
30. Forced choice so the customer must choose the product.
31. Presupposition as a supposedly evident fact.
32. Correct, well-known truths and continues with a marketing message
33. The advertisement uses concealed commands.
34. The advertisement uses nonverbal suggestions.
35. Ideo-dynamic responses
36. In summation, how 'hypnotic' is the advertisement?