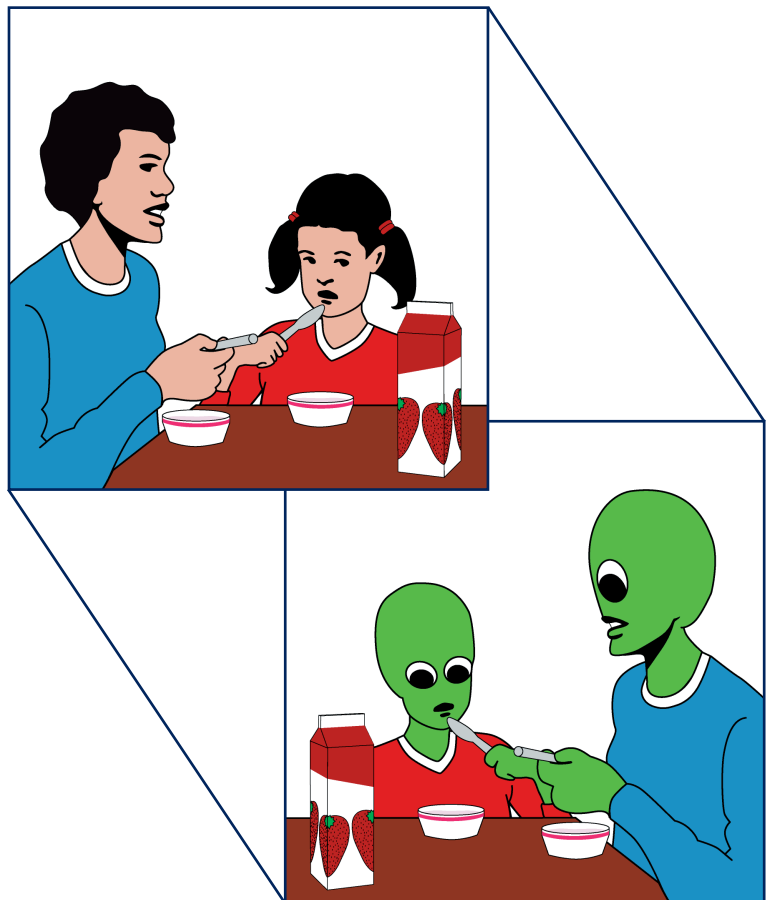


JOOST LOEF

Incongruity between Ads and Consumer Expectations of Advertising



**INCONGRUITY BETWEEN ADS AND
CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS OF ADVERTISING**

Incongruity between Ads and Consumer Expectations of Advertising

Discrepantie tussen Reclames en Consumentenverwachtingen ten aanzien van Reclame

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aan de Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam
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Voorwoord (Acknowledgements in Dutch)

Een proefschrift over reclame kan niet zonder een pakkende reclameleus. Aangezien dit proefschrift in twee versies (TI en ERIM) verkrijgbaar is, lijkt de klassieke reclameslogan “twee voor de prijs van één” mij hier toepasselijk. Net zoals de reclames in dit proefschrift afwijken van reclameverwachtingen, heeft het A.I.O.-schap weleens afgeweken van mijn verwachtingen, maar zoals we uit de marketingliteratuur leren maakt dat het juist interessant en kun je je daardoor later alles beter herinneren. Uiteraard schrijf je een proefschrift niet alleen of zoals in de reclame gezegd zou worden “dit proefschrift werd mede mogelijk gemaakt door...”

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Nowadays, consumers are confronted with a large number of advertisements for many products and services. In such a cluttered media environment, one of the major challenges for advertising is to attract and retain the attention of consumers. Good examples of such attention-getting ads are television commercials that were awarded the Dutch Golden Loeki, because television viewers selected these ads as “the best, most amusing or original commercial of the year” (www.ster.nl). However, marketing managers ultimately require that ads are effective, i.e., contribute to managing consumer brand perceptions, increasing brand equity and sales. Good examples of such effective ads are the ones from marketing-communication campaigns that were awarded the Dutch Golden Effie, because experts (captains of industry, marketing research and communication professionals, marketing scientists) selected these ads as “communication efforts that made a decisive contribution to the brand’s marketing campaign” (www.ffi.nl).

Table 1.1: Award winning television commercials

Year	Golden Loeki award ^d	Golden Effie award ^c
2001	Centraal Beheer Achmea	Lassie rice
2000	Dommelsch	Volkswagen Lupo Monsterboard.nl
1999	Yellow Pages	Cup-A-Soup <i>Calvé peanut butter</i> ^d
1998	<i>Calvé peanut butter</i>	<i>Melkunie</i>
1997	<i>Melkunie</i> <i>Nestlé Fruit Joy</i> ^b	<i>Nestlé Fruit Joy</i> Hans Brinker Budget Hotel
1996	Nestlé Rolo	Smiths Volkswagen
1995	KLM	Nescafé <i>Melkunie</i> Intergamma

^aTelevision commercials that won the Golden Loeki award (started in 1995), ^bGolden Loeki nominee, ^cTelevision commercials from marketing-communication campaigns that won the Golden Effie award, ^dSilver Effie award

Although some ads were both highly likable and very effective, table 1.1 shows that ads that are liked by consumers are not necessarily the most effective ads. Television commercials that are popular in the Golden Loeki awards, including both award winners and nominees, are generally humorous ads with an unexpected twist at the end of the commercial, whereas television ads that are considered in the competition of the Effie awards are much more varied in terms of executional characteristics. Commercials from the Loeki awards are likable, but may not be effective in achieving the brand's communication objectives. Particular commercials from the Effie awards may be perceived as neither amusing nor original by consumers, but are nonetheless considered effective in realizing favorable brand perceptions.

Analogously, advertising agencies often position themselves as makers of either "creative" or "effective" ads. The distinction between creativity and effectiveness made by advertising agencies is somewhat exaggerated, because these concepts are not mutually exclusive. However, it does illustrate that in some instances "straightforward" ads may be more effective than "creative" ads. Furthermore, it emphasizes that firms in the advertising industry differ in their views of what

determines advertising effectiveness. The common saying with regard to advertising effectiveness is that most companies believe that half of their advertising expenses are wasted – they just don't know which half. This underlines the importance of gaining more insight into how consumers process ads and how ads contribute to consumer perceptions of brands, especially when the amount of advertising continues to increase.

Brands can distinguish themselves from other brands in the perception of consumers by advertising. However, brand managers should take into account that consumers encounter an increasing number of ads in daily life. This affects advertising effectiveness in several ways. First, the probability that consumers notice a particular ad decreases. In general, attention to ads is likely to decrease and irritation with advertising is likely to increase. Furthermore, it will become increasingly difficult to develop creative ad executions that are surprising and novel to consumers. Related to this, it is important to ascertain when “creative” and “straightforward” ads could be effective for brands. Finally, the conditions in which advertising contributes to brand concept management need to be identified.

1.2 Defining Consumer Expectations of Advertising

Sujan & Tybout (1988) observed that consumers face a complex choice environment with many brands that have both common and unique features. Furthermore, we argued in section 1.1 that consumers are also overwhelmed with ads and other communication efforts for brands. Consumers can manage such a complex marketing environment, because they know what to expect from brands, products, and ads to some extent. Existing knowledge about brands, products and ads is used to guide the perception of new marketing information and make inferences about new brands, products and ads (Fiske & Taylor 1984). Therefore, consumer expectations of advertising are important to understand how advertising works.

In Chapter 2, we will explain that consumer expectations of advertising are based on both brand and ad schema knowledge. In line with research from social cognition (Fiske & Taylor 1984, Mandler 1982), schemas are defined as cognitive structures that represent consumer knowledge and expectations about brands, products and ads that are used in information processing. The specific content of brand,

product and ad schemas and the relation between these schemas are discussed in detail in Chapter 2. In this section we only give a brief definition of brand and ad schema knowledge.

Perceived brand positioning represents the essence of the consumers' brand schema. In accordance with positioning theory (Rossiter & Percy 1997, Carpenter & Nakamoto 1989, Ries & Trout 1986) perceived brand positioning refers to a uniquely identifiable position of the brand in consumers' minds. In principle, any element from consumers' cognitive structure of brands may define brand meaning to consumers. Thus, specific product attributes, benefits, images, emotions or values may determine consumer perceptions of the brand's position in the product category (see also Chapter 2). The brand's positioning benefit is the specific reason why consumers value the brand, which is often related to the underlying motivation to purchase from the product category (Rossiter & Percy 1997, Fennell 1978). In accordance with Goodstein (1993), the ad schema is defined as consumer knowledge and expectations about ads for a particular product category, which includes information about typical ad executions and claims (Goodstein 1993, Olney, Holbrook & Batra 1991). Together with brand schema-based expectations, ad schema-based expectations determine consumer expectations of advertising.

In this dissertation, we focus on the effects of ads that do not match consumer expectations of advertising. In line with schema theory (Fiske & Taylor 1984, Fiske & Pavelchak 1986, Mandler 1982) and schema-based approaches in marketing (e.g., Sujon 1985, Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989), we refer to mismatches with consumer expectations as *incongruity*. Schema-based research suggests that ads that do not match advertising expectations draw consumers' attention and are likely to be processed more extensively than ads that match advertising expectations. Thus, the use of ads that are incongruent with advertising expectations provide a way for brands to stand out amidst the ad clutter that was discussed in the introduction.

Most studies in marketing equate incongruent information with unexpected information and define schema incongruity as any information that is not consistent with prior expectations (e.g., Desai & Gencturk 1995). In addition to this view of incongruity, we employ Heckler & Childers' (1992) conceptualization of incongruity that distinguishes between expectancy and relevancy dimensions of incongruity. In line with our definition of advertising expectations, ads can be incongruent with brand and ad schema knowledge. Incongruity with the brand schema is substantive in nature

and concerns the message that is conveyed by the ads, whereas incongruity with the ad schema is cosmetic in nature and is related to the execution of ads. The two-dimensional approach to incongruity with advertising expectations is discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

1.3 Objective of the Dissertation and Research Questions

The main objective of this dissertation is to gain more insight into the effects of ads that are incongruent with consumer expectations of advertising. Thus, we explain advertising effectiveness and ad processing from consumers' cognitive structure of brands, products and ads. A large body of advertising literature exists, but there is not much research that explicitly focuses on consumer expectations as a way of relating advertising effectiveness to consumer perceptions of brands. The advertising literature often focuses on the effects of specific ad elements, e.g., humor or the use of a celebrity presenter, and attends less to differences in effectiveness of such advertising strategies that may exist between brands or products. The studies that have provided frameworks that specify the relations between brand positioning and advertising, e.g., means-end chain theory and advertising grids have not been tested systematically, even though their recommendations are widely accepted as guidelines for advertising in the marketing domain.

This thesis aims at developing and empirically validating a framework based on consumer expectations of advertising that extends and refines the aforementioned models of advertising effectiveness among others by including ad schema expectations in addition to brand schema expectations. Furthermore, this dissertation tries to provide a deeper understanding of the processes that underlie consumers' judgments of ads that are incongruent with advertising expectations. Marketers may employ these insights into consumer expectations of advertising in developing and testing ads for brand positioning and brand concept management. Specifically, we address the following research questions in this thesis:

- What are the determinants of consumer expectations of advertising?
- In which way are ads related to consumer perceptions of brands and products?
- How do consumer expectations of advertising determine processing and evaluation of both brands and ads?

- What are the effects of ads that are incongruent with advertising expectations?
- How do consumers determine incongruity with advertising expectations?
- In which way can examination of advertising expectations improve the recommendations made in existing theories of advertising effectiveness?

In this thesis, we provide an answer to these questions by carrying out experiments, each testing different aspects of our framework based on consumer expectations of advertising.

1.4 Scientific and Managerial Relevance

This thesis provides a systematic test of the general recommendation made by theories of advertising effectiveness, specifically means-end chain theory and advertising grids (see Chapter 2), that ads should match consumer perceptions of brand positioning. Although some studies have empirically tested the advertising implications of means-end chain theory (e.g., Reynolds, Gengler & Howard 1995), many means-end chain studies are either descriptive in nature (e.g., Olson & Reynolds 1983, Reynolds & Craddock 1988) or focus on consumers instead of ads (e.g., Pieters, Baumgartner & Allen 1995, Ter Hofstede, Steenkamp & Wedel 1996, Walker & Olson 1991).

Likewise, advertising grids, of which we discuss the FCB grid (FCB grid: Vaughn 1980, 1986) and the Rossiter-Percy advertising grid (RP grid: Rossiter, Percy & Donovan 1991, Rossiter & Percy 1997) in this thesis, also received limited testing in the marketing literature. Ratchford (1987) suggests that insights from the FCB grid have been applied in advertising practice, but that the results have not been made publicly available. Furthermore, there are some tests of the RP grid in the advertising literature, but these present only cursory examinations of the effectiveness of their advertising tactics (e.g., Kover & Abruzzo 1993, Kover, Goldberg & James 1995).

In their examination of advertising for food products Dubé, Chattopadhyay & Letarte (1996) find only limited evidence that the prescriptions of advertising planning grids are followed in advertising practice. This underlines the importance of thoroughly testing whether ads that match consumer perceptions of brands and products are more effective than mismatching ads. Our research addresses this gap in the marketing-communication literature. Furthermore, we provide a more realistic account of ad processing than assumed in means-end chain theory and advertising

grids by explicitly taking consumer perceptions of existing product category ads into account. In contrast with the studies that do consider consumer expectations from the ad schema (e.g., Olney et al. 1991, Goodstein 1993), we also account for consumer perceptions of brands that may determine consumer expectations of advertising.

In addition to addressing the knowledge gap on advertising effectiveness, we aim to make a contribution to research on the effects of incongruity with schema-based expectations. Most studies in marketing equate incongruent information with unexpected information (e.g., Sujan 1985, Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989). We involve Heckler & Childers' (1992) two-dimensional conceptualization of incongruity in our studies to increase understanding of the processes that determine consumer perceptions of incongruity with advertising expectations.

More insight into how incongruity affects consumer judgments is needed, because the literature shows conflicting findings. Some studies have reported positive evaluations in case of incongruity with advertising expectations (e.g., Olney et al. 1991, Lee & Mason 1999), whereas other studies have reported negative evaluations (e.g., Goodstein 1993, Wansink & Ray 1996). This is in line with our discussion of advertising awards in the introduction, which showed that incongruity-related concepts such as humor and creativity in ads could have positive consequences in terms of ad liking. However, incongruity with advertising expectations may also have negative consequences if it leads to disconfirmation of prior brand beliefs. In this dissertation, we argue that consumers can use two schemas in ad processing, the brand schema and the ad schema, which also determines the way in which incongruity affects consumer judgments. This approach may also be useful for research on brand extensions, because brand extensions also present incongruent information to consumers that can be related to two different schemas, the brand schema and the product schema (cf. Broniarczyk & Alba 1994).

The managerial relevance of our research is that it offers guidelines for more effective advertising and the insights can be used for brand positioning and managing consumer brand perceptions. This thesis is related to research on advertising planning models that specify the relevant relations that exist between brands and advertising. Furthermore, we employ brand concept management, which is an important part of marketing management, as one of the inputs of our theoretical framework based on consumer expectations of advertising (see Chapter 2). Thus, brand managers may gain more insight in how consumers process ads from our research and use this knowledge

in their marketing-communication campaigns. Together with the advertising tactics from the RP grid, managers may use our findings as a diagnostic instrument that could be applied as a component of advertising pre-tests to give advice with regard to the positioning of brands in advertising.

1.5 Outline of the Dissertation

The dissertation is structured as follows. In Chapter 2 we discuss the literature on consumer expectations of advertising from which two origins of advertising expectations are identified. Research from both psychology and marketing shows that consumers relate ads to their expectations of advertising. Schema theory from psychology suggests that consumer expectations of advertising are represented in brand and ad schemas. Both brand and ad schemas are discussed, and we explain the relations between brand, product, and ad schemas. Furthermore, we discuss positioning theory from marketing that focuses on the brand schema in consumer expectations of advertising. We elaborate on theories that have specified advertising tactics and normative recommendations for advertising based on their assumptions of brand positioning. In the following chapters, we employ the insights from one of these theories, the RP grid.

The empirical Chapters 3 through 5 test the effectiveness of ads that match consumers expectations of advertising in comparison to mismatching ads, which includes the evaluation of brands and ads, cognitive and affective processing of ads, and brand categorization. Adaptations of these chapters appeared in the ERIM Report Series Research in Management (Loef, Antonides & Van Raaij 2001, Loef, Antonides & Van Raaij 2002, Loef & Verlegh 2002).

Chapter 3 provides an experimental test of the predictions of the RP grid. The RP grid states that advertising that matches the brand schema, specifically the underlying brand purchase motivation, is more effective than advertising that does not match the brand schema. Furthermore, we formulate conditions in which the matching hypothesis of the RP grid is likely to hold based on a review of findings from schema theory and research on attitude persuasion. Thus, the first empirical study tests the effectiveness of ads that match advertising expectations that are based on the brand

schema. In doing this, we take into account the necessary conditions for the matching hypothesis of advertising to hold.

Based on the findings from the first study, we identify brand schema salience as an additional requirement for the matching hypothesis of advertising to hold. This proposition is tested in Chapter 4. Specifically, we test whether consumer evaluations of brands and ads are in line with RP grid predictions if they are encouraged to actively use their knowledge of brands. This study consists of two experiments that employ the same brands and ads but differ with regard to the schema that consumers use in ad processing. The schema that is salient in ad processing determines whether consumers relate ads to expectations based on the brand schema or to expectations based on the ad schema. In our experiments, schema salience is manipulated such that consumers employ the brand schema in the first experiment and the ad schema in the second experiment. Thus, the second empirical study tests the role of schema saliency in the matching hypothesis of advertising.

In Chapter 5, we further investigate the notion of incongruity with advertising expectations. Based on our increased insight into the role of both brand and ad schemas in ad processing, we identify two types of incongruity with consumer expectations of advertising, viz. incongruity with the brand schema and incongruity with the ad schema. In the experiment of Chapter 5, we test whether these two types of incongruity have different effects on consumer judgments. Based on Heckler & Childers' (1992) two-dimensional conceptualization of incongruity, we argue that the schema that is used to determine incongruity also affects how incongruity is determined. Hence, incongruity with the brand schema is hypothesized to have predominantly cognitive consequences, whereas incongruity with the ad schema is hypothesized to have predominantly affective consequences. Thus, the third empirical study tests the cognitive and affective consequences of two types of incongruity with advertising expectations.

Chapter 6 provides a general discussion of the findings and implications of the research presented in this dissertation. First, we give an overview of the findings from the three empirical studies of this thesis and discuss the main results. Then, we identify implications for marketing management and advertising practice with the emphasis on how brand managers can incorporate our findings with the advertising tactics proposed in the RP grid. Finally, issues for future research on the effects of incongruity with advertising expectations are identified and discussed.

Chapter 2: Consumer Schemas and Advertising Expectations

2.1 Introduction

In this thesis, we are interested in how consumer expectations of advertising determine the effectiveness of ads. Based on literature from psychology and marketing, we assume that consumer expectations of advertising determine consumer reactions to ads. Ads can either match or mismatch consumer expectations of advertising. These matches and mismatches with advertising expectations affect consumer judgments like brand attitude, information processing of the ad, and perceptions of the brand's position within the product category.

The assumption that consumers form expectations based on prior knowledge is a central element of schema theory from psychology. Schemas are defined as cognitive structures that represent knowledge about concepts like brands, products and ads. We identify two sources of consumer expectations of advertising. Firstly, consumers may use brand knowledge to form expectations of advertising. Secondly, consumer expectations of advertising may be based on knowledge about ads in a particular product category. The schema-based approach to advertising expectations is particularly relevant for explaining information processing associated with ads that match or mismatch consumer expectations. Schema theory and its implications for consumer expectations of advertising are explained in section 2.2.

Positioning theory from marketing provides an alternative way of conceptualizing consumer knowledge. The focus in positioning theory is on how brands and product categories are related in consumers' minds. Contrary to schema theory, positioning is not purely a descriptive theory of consumers' cognitive structures with regard to brands and products. Positioning theory is also used as a normative framework to provide managerial recommendations for brand image communication. In the normative view of positioning, advertising is an instrument that brand managers use to influence consumer brand perceptions. Consequently, positioning theory considers brand knowledge as the most important source of advertising expectations. Brand positioning is discussed in section 2.3.

The implications of positioning theory for consumer expectations of advertising are explained in section 2.4. Section 2.4 discusses several theories from marketing that have formulated specific tactics for advertising based on assumptions of how consumers perceive brands. The general recommendation from these theories is that advertising should match brand knowledge to realize favorable brand attitudes. Thus, the theories relating brands and advertising focus on evaluations that result from ads that match or mismatch consumer expectations of advertising.

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of the ways in which the relations between brands, products and ads have been conceptualized in psychology and marketing. Furthermore, we identify the general implications for ads that match or mismatch consumer expectations of advertising. In the theory sections of the empirical Chapters 3 through 5, different views with respect to consumer expectations of advertising are compared and discussed in detail.

2.2 Schema Theory and Consumer Expectations of Advertising

2.2.1 Introduction to Schema Theory

Schema theory assumes that cognitive processing is guided by prior knowledge. The notion of schemas, which are defined as cognitive structures that represent knowledge about a particular concept, has been applied in fields like cognitive psychology, social cognition and marketing. Schemas contain both the attributes of the concept and the relationships among the attributes. If people did not have schemas many environments would otherwise be perceived as chaotic and complex (Smith & Medin 1981). Schemas provide general expectations that guide processing of specific data (Fiske & Taylor 1984). In cognitive psychology, the schema view has been proposed to explain the categorization of (natural) objects (e.g., Komatsu 1992). In social cognition, the schema view is used to explain person impression formation (e.g., Fiske & Neuberg 1990). In marketing, the schema view has been used to study product categorization and information processing (e.g., Sujjan 1985).

A schema-based approach is relevant to understanding consumer behavior, because consumers face a complex choice environment replete with brands having both shared and unique features in which categorization is used to structure and

simplify the environment (Sujan & Tybout 1988). Categorization processes involve determining whether a given schema might be applied to a specific instance, and schematic processes explain the effects that a schema has once it has been applied (Fiske & Taylor 1984).

Thus, product schemas reflect consumer knowledge about product categories that is used for the categorization of new brands (Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989). Furthermore, product schemas do not only provide a way of dealing with new brand information, but also allow consumers to go beyond the information given (Alba & Hutchinson 1987). Consumers that identify a new brand as member of particular product category may infer from the product schema that the brand also has certain attributes that are not explicitly mentioned in the brand's advertising (Sujan & Bettman 1989). To sum up, schemas guide the perception of new information, memory for old information and inferences that go beyond both (Fiske & Taylor 1984).

In marketing, the term schema is often used to refer to expectations and knowledge represented in consumers' cognitive structure without considering the basis for those expectations as specified in the structural assumptions of the schema view (e.g., Sujan 1985, p. 32). This might explain the prevailing use of the schema view of consumer knowledge in marketing, even though the structural assumptions about the cognitive representation of knowledge in the schema view have been criticized (Alba & Hasher 1983, Komatsu 1992, Medin 1989). Alba & Hasher (1983) note that there are few systematic, contemporary explications of schema theory in research on memory with the exception of frame theory (Minsky 1975) and script theory (Schank & Abelson 1977). Komatsu (1992) underlines that there is considerable vagueness about the meaning of the term schema, but concludes that the schema view is essentially a hybrid approach in which both abstracted information and information about particular category exemplars is stored in schemas. Furthermore, he defines the characteristics of a schema, based on research from cognitive scientists concerned about the representation of knowledge in computers such as Minsky (1975) and Rumelhart & Ortony (1977). The structural assumptions of representation of consumer knowledge in schemas (Komatsu 1992) are listed in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Characteristics of schemas

Slots and slot values	Examples in the context of product schemas
Slots contain all kinds of information, including information about specific instances. Possible slot values are specified, and the distribution of slot values may be known.	Specific instances of a product category are brands, such as Mars and Snickers for the candy bar category. Slots may include product attributes, such as ingredients and benefits like taste. Slot values are attribute values, such as small, medium and large size package variants.
Default values	Examples in the context of product schemas
If no value is specified for a slot, then the default value is inferred. Default values can be overridden. Furthermore, default values can either be context free or contingent on the values assigned to other slots.	Consumers know that regular soft drinks contain calories. However, there are also diet variants that contain no calories. If consumers order a coke they may expect to get a regular coke in a restaurant, and a diet coke in a health club.
Relationships among slots	Examples in the context of product schemas
The schema view is related to the network model of semantic memory, in terms of the explicit coding of relationships among slots. Information about the relationships between slots and slot values is stored in the schema: there is information about the relationships among the attributes of a concept and the relationships among concepts (e.g., class inclusion).	The inclusion of natural ingredients in a shampoo may contribute to hair that feels soft, representing a relation between two different shampoo attributes. Furthermore, consumers may indicate that shampoo is part of the category of personal care products, which also includes related products such as hair gel, representing relations between different product concepts.

Most research in marketing has focused on the product schema. However, consumers not only have schemas for product categories, but also for brands and ads. Consumer knowledge about products, brands and ads are closely related. Product categories consist of several brands, but specific brands may also compete in several product categories as is shown by brand extensions. Furthermore, both product category and brand perceptions may be determined by advertising. Product, brand and ad schemas are discussed in the next section.

2.2.2 Product, Brand and Ad Schemas

In the introduction to schema theory we argued that products, brands and ads are closely related, thus it is important to distinguish between these schemas for conceptual reasons. Roughly, the product schema contains information about product attributes, and relations with other products. The brand schema represents knowledge

about brand benefits and the positioning of the brand within the product category (see also section 2.3), and the ad schema reflects knowledge about advertising in a particular product category. Thus, the product schema might be considered as the general schema to which the more specific brand and ad schemas are related. Two aspects of product schemas have received attention in marketing: the structure that exists between product categories and the structure that exists within product categories. These studies also provide information about the brand schema.

First, marketing has investigated the structure that exists between product categories, which has implications for the competition among brands and products. Product categories are hierarchically related in a product taxonomy (Sujan & Dekleva 1987, Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989). In this categorical structure, three categorical levels can be distinguished viz., superordinate, basic and subordinate level categories (Rosch 1978). Categories at the basic level differentiate objects from each other in the cognitively most efficient way (Rosch, Mervis, Gray, Johnson & Boyes-Braem 1976). Put differently, basic-level categories are the most inclusive level of categories for which it is possible to form a mental image of the product class as a whole (Rosch 1978). This implies that product schemas cognitively represent basic level categories and includes superordinate and subordinate links between products. Research shows that there may be some ambiguity in determining basic level categories in product taxonomies. Both product categories e.g., cars (Rosch 1978, Johnson & Fornell 1987) and product types e.g., sport cars (Sujan & Dekleva 1987, Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989) have been identified as the basic level in a hierarchical categorical structure.

Johnson & Fornell (1987) related this product taxonomy to competition. In their conceptualization, the superordinate category level (e.g., modes of transportation) corresponds with generic competition, the product category level (e.g., cars) corresponds with form or type competition, and the brand level corresponds with brand competition. Johnson & Fornell (1987) find that choice alternatives in generic competition are made comparable by cognitively representing the alternatives at a higher level of abstraction. Thus, knowledge about products can be represented at different levels of abstraction (see also sections 2.3 and 2.4).

In addition to hierarchical links, a product schema also includes non-hierarchical links e.g., relations between product attributes (Collins & Loftus 1975, Komatsu 1992). Across-category competition that has been studied by Johnson & Fornell (1987) from a hierarchical viewpoint in the form of generic competition can

also be explained by non-hierarchical links that exist between products. Ratneshwar, Pechmann & Shocker (1996) show that consumers sometimes form goal-derived categories that consist of choice alternatives from unrelated product taxonomies (Barsalou 1985), e.g., consumers may choose between flowers or chocolate as a gift. Their goal-derived categories consist of brands from two different product categories that are both associated with a particular consumption goal that relates products in a non-hierarchical way.

Normally, brands within a given product category are developed to satisfy one salient concrete consumption goal or multiple related consumption goals. However, Ratneshwar et al. (1996) show that in case of goal conflict (multiple salient goals that cannot be realized by one product) or goal ambiguity (no salient goals, which causes consumers to rely on extrinsic information) consumers' consideration sets may include alternatives from different product categories. Thus, the brand schema may not only include goal-related attributes that are shared with its own product category (Loken & Ward 1990), but also goal-related attributes that are shared with other product categories. Brand attributes that are relevant to other product categories provide a basis for brand extensions (Aaker & Keller 1990, Park, Milberg & Lawson 1991, Broniarczyk & Alba 1994).

Secondly, product categories have a graded structure, which means that some brands are better examples or more prototypical of the product category than others (Nedungadi & Hutchinson 1985). This indicates that there is a relation between the brand schema and the product schema, especially for typical brands. Typical brands are generally evaluated more favorably than atypical brands (Loken & Ward 1990, Nedungadi & Hutchinson 1985). Loken & Ward (1990) suggest that the relation between preference and typicality may exist because typical brands are perceived to possess valued product attributes related to the consumption goal of the category (see also Barsalou 1985). Thus, brand and product schemas have important attributes in common.

However, Ward & Loken (1988) also suggest that there are product categories in which atypical brands are likely to be evaluated more favorably than typical brands e.g., product categories that are purchased for prestige, exclusiveness or novelty. In these categories, consumers may value uniqueness in itself, value attributes that are not typical of the product category, or prefer unusual brands because this leads to higher levels of stimulation in variety seeking (Ward & Loken 1988). In these types

of categories, the important attributes of the brand schema are not part of the product schema.

Research by Viswanathan & Childers (1999) shows that even if brand typicality and preference are correlated in product categories, this may only indicate a relationship, which exists at the product level. These authors measure typicality at the *product attribute level* by direct questioning e.g., “in terms of mileage (product attribute) how good an example (typicality) of an economy car (product category) is a Ford Contour (brand)?” Overall product typicality is calculated by summing typicality ratings at the attribute level across attributes. This attribute-level approach of typicality compares favorably with Loken & Ward’s (1990) product-level approach, and in addition allows attribute-level analyses. These attribute-level analyses in Viswanathan & Childers’ (1999) study show that the product attributes that are important for brand categorization (attributes that determine typicality) differ from the product attributes that are important for brand evaluation (attributes that determine preference). Thus, attributes that are important for the product schema are not necessarily important in the brand schema.

Besides schemas for products and brands, consumers also have schemas for ads. Goodstein (1993) states that consumers’ knowledge about advertising is related to product category knowledge. This means that consumers have expectations for advertising in a particular product category, which includes knowledge about claims that are commonly used in category ads and typical ad executions. Goodstein (1993) and Olney et al. (1991) have shown that consumers use ad schema knowledge in ad processing. However, advertising grids and other advertising theories like means-end chain theory (Gutman 1982) identify the brand schema as the relevant schema for ad processing (see section 2.4). Thus, consumer expectations of advertising can be based on brand and/or ad schema knowledge. Only, if consumers do not have brand or ad schemas, consumer expectations of advertising may be based on the product schema. The effects of ads that match or mismatch advertising expectations are discussed in the next section.

2.2.3 Effects of Incongruity with Schema Knowledge

Schema theory uses the term incongruity to refer to deviations from schema-based expectations. Thus, ads that do not match consumer expectations of advertising are incongruent with brand and/or ad schemas. The specific effects of ads that are

incongruent with consumer expectations of advertising are discussed in the theory sections of the empirical Chapters 3 through 5. In this chapter, we provide a general overview of the effects of incongruity with schema knowledge from marketing.

Research in marketing on the effects of incongruity with schema knowledge mainly applied insights from social cognition. Specifically, the schema theory approaches of Fiske & Pavelchak (1986) and Mandler (1982) have been commonly applied with most studies focusing on the effects of incongruity with the product schema (see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2: Schema theory approaches in marketing

Study	Schema theory	Relevant schema	Incongruity
Goodstein (1993)	Fiske & Pavelchak (1986)	Ad schema	Ads that use an atypical execution
Meyers-Levy & Tybout (1989)	Mandler (1982)	Product schema	Product description that features attributes from another product schema than the primed schema
Ozanne, Brucks & Grewal (1992)	Mandler (1982)	Product schema	Product description that features attribute values that that are associated with different product schemas
Peracchio & Tybout (1996)	Mandler (1982)	Product schema	Product description that features attributes from another product schema than the primed schema
Stayman, Alden & Smith (1992)	Mandler (1982)	Product schema	Product description that features attributes from another product schema than the primed schema
Sujan (1985)	Fiske & Pavelchak (1986)	Product schema	Product description that features attributes from another product schema than the primed schema
Wansink & Ray (1996)	Fiske & Pavelchak (1986)	Brand schema	Ads that promote use of the brand in a new situation

Fiske & Pavelchak (1986) distinguish between schema-based and piecemeal processing, depending on whether information matches or mismatches schema knowledge, without predicting brand evaluations that result from information processing. In the context of product schemas, Fiske & Pavelchak's (1986) theory implies that consumer evaluation of a new brand that is congruent with the product schema is based on their attitude toward the product category (schema-based processing), which is referred to as category affect (Fiske 1982). Evaluation of a new brand that is incongruent with the product schema will not be based on category affect but on evaluation of the brand's individual attributes (piecemeal processing).

Unlike Fiske & Pavelchak (1986), Mandler (1982) assumes that consumers will first try to process incongruent information in a schema-based manner by assimilation or accommodation, depending on the degree of incongruity. Furthermore, Mandler (1982) argues that incongruity with schema expectations leads to heightened feelings of arousal, whereas Fiske & Pavelchak (1986) do not attend to the affective consequences of incongruity. Mandler (1982) states that a moderate degree of incongruity will be evaluated more positively than either complete congruity or extreme incongruity. Moderate incongruity can be resolved by assimilation, which is evaluated positively. In the case of extreme incongruity, consumers will attempt accommodation of incongruent information, which is usually accompanied by negative affect. Fiske & Pavelchak (1986) predict that consumers will switch from schema-based to piecemeal processing, which differs from the notion of accommodation in that restructuring of the initially cued schema is not assumed (Stayman, Alden & Smith 1992). In the context of product schemas, Mandler's (1982) theory implies that consumer evaluation of a brand that is moderately incongruent with the product schema is evaluated more favorably than either a congruent brand or a strongly incongruent brand.

Table 2.3 shows that incongruity with schema knowledge affects processing, evaluation and memory. The results for processing and memory are more consistent than the results for evaluation. Generally, incongruent information leads to more extensive processing, and better recall compared to information congruent with schema knowledge. The specific effects of ads that are incongruent with advertising expectations as reflected in brand and ad schemas are discussed in detail in the theory sections of the empirical Chapters 3 through 5. The general prediction from schema theory is that ads that are incongruent with advertising expectations attract attention,

which leads to more extensive processing and better recall. Furthermore, incongruent ads may be evaluated more favorably than ads that are congruent with advertising expectations, provided that the ads are not strongly incongruent.

Table 2.3: Effects of incongruity in marketing

Study	Processing	Evaluation	Memory
Incongruent vs. congruent stimuli lead to...			
Goodstein (1993)	More thoughts in total, greater proportion of incongruity-related (=ad-related) thoughts; Longer ad viewing times	Smaller effect of prior category affect on the valence of thoughts, attitude toward the ad and brand attitude; Lower proportion of positive thoughts, higher percentage of negative thoughts, less favorable attitude toward the ad and brand attitude	Better aided ad claim recall; Less unaided recall of brands
Meyers-Levy & Tybout (1989)	More thoughts related to incongruent attribute (for both moderate and strong incongruity)	Inverted-U relationship with brand attitude (i.e., moderate incongruity is valued more positively than congruity and strong incongruity); Evaluations are held with greater certainty (for moderate incongruity)	Better recall of product description and incongruent attribute (for both moderate and strong incongruity); Evaluations are retrieved faster, i.e., are more accessible from memory (for moderate incongruity)
Ozanne, Brucks & Grewal (1992)	Inverted-U relationship with information search behavior and categorization uncertainty (for weak, moderate, strong degree of incongruity)		
Peracchio & Tybout (1996)	More questions and confusion (for both moderate and strong incongruity, for novices)	Moderate incongruity is evaluated more favorably than congruity and strong incongruity (for novices)	
Stayman, Alden & Smith (1992)	More thoughts in total and more thoughts related to the incongruent attribute; Inverted U-relationship with total thoughts (i.e., moderate incongruity leads to more total thoughts than congruity and strong incongruity)	Inverted-U relationship with brand attitude (i.e., moderate incongruity is valued more positively than congruity and strong incongruity)	More attributes from product description are recalled, and higher recall of incongruent attribute
Sujan (1985)	Slower impression formation times; Less verbalizations related to the product category, more verbalizations related to product attributes; More references to subtypes (for experts)		
Wansink & Ray (1996)	Less support arguments and more counterarguments	Less simple evaluative thoughts; Less positive attitude toward the new use	Better situation-cued recall of the brand

2.3 Positioning Theory and Consumer Expectations of Advertising

2.3.1 Positioning and Brand Schemas

Positioning theory from marketing focuses on how brands and product categories are related in consumers' minds (Ries & Trout 1986, Rossiter & Percy 1997). Ries & Trout (1986) state that the basic approach of positioning is not to create something new, but to manipulate what is in the mind, to strengthen connections that already exist. They state that brand managers should take competitors' positions into account in brand positioning, and in marketing a truly new product the brand should be positioned as a new category against the old. When it is no longer possible for a brand to find an appealing position in consumers' minds that has not already been claimed by competitor brands, advertising that repositions the competition by undercutting an existing concept is recommended (Ries & Trout 1986).

The basis of positioning theory is similar to schema theory, because both approaches assume consumers have expectations based on prior knowledge. In comparison with schema-based approaches in marketing, positioning theory focuses on the brand schema rather than the product schema, and positioning theory is not only descriptive but also normative. Park, Jaworski & MacInnis (1986) apply positioning theory as a framework to provide managerial recommendations for brand image communication. In the normative view of positioning, advertising is an instrument that brand managers use to influence consumer brand perceptions, which implies that positioning theory identifies the brand schema as the most important source of advertising expectations. Thus, positioning theory provides an alternative way of conceptualizing consumer knowledge with respect to products, brands and ads.

Carpenter & Nakamoto (1989) have experimentally studied the effectiveness of different positioning strategies. Positioning as a leader is ideal, since almost all benefits accrue to the leader (Ries & Trout 1986). Carpenter & Nakamoto (1989) explain such pioneering advantage by specifying the process of consumer preference formation. They state that in product categories for which the contribution of specific product attributes to overall brand performance and the ideal attribute combination is ambiguous, buyers learn how to value attribute combinations through trial. Because

consumer experience is limited to a single brand, they learn to value the pioneer's attribute combination and update their preferences accordingly.

Introduction of competing brands can occur in two ways. Competitors can claim to be like the pioneer but less expensive, a me-too response, or offer significantly different attribute combinations, resulting in a differentiated positioning (Ries & Trout 1986, Carpenter & Nakamoto 1989). Carpenter & Nakamoto (1989) show that later entrants can diminish the impact of the pioneer's distinctiveness and increase its own by moving away from the pioneer i.e., offering a differentiated positioning. This shows that product schemas in marketing originate from brand schemas. Furthermore, positioning theory shows that differentiated brands are often preferred to me-too brands. Brands with a differentiated positioning will be perceived as less typical of the product category than me-too brands, because they have fewer attributes in common with other brands. Thus, Carpenter & Nakamoto's (1989) findings are in line with Viswanathan & Childers' (1999) study, which shows that the attributes that are used to determine typicality differ from those that determine preference.

Sujan & Bettman (1989) investigated brand positioning strategy from a schema theory perspective. Thus, their study provides insight into the effects of brand positioning if consumers already have a product schema, whereas Carpenter & Nakamoto (1989) study the formation of product schemas. Two brand positioning strategies, brand differentiation and brand subtyping are investigated by advertising that features a brand attribute that is respectively moderately and strongly incongruent with the product schema. Sujan & Bettman (1989) find that a brand differentiation strategy results in a differentiated brand position in the product category through a process of assimilation, whereas a brand subtyping strategy results in a subtyped position through a process of accommodation. Differentiated and subtyped brands both have differentiating features. Contrary to subtyped brands, differentiated brands are perceived to be generally like other brands.

Compared to the introduction of a differentiated brand, introduction of a subtyped brand leads to greater perceived variability and importance of the focal attribute in product category perceptions, better recall of the brand's incongruent attributes and fewer inferences about the brand's attributes from the product schema (Sujan & Bettman 1989). Thus, the positioning strategy that is chosen determines the degree to which the brand and product schemas will be related in consumers' minds.

It is important to realize that consumers simultaneously perceive the brand as similar and dissimilar to other brands and the product category (Pechmann & Ratneshwar 1991, Dubé & Schmitt 1999). Similarity is required for brand categorization, whereas dissimilarity is required to achieve brand differentiation or brand subtyping (see Tversky 1977 and Medin, Goldstone & Gentner 1993 for reviews of similarity).

Rossiter & Percy (1996, 1997) distinguish three levels of positioning that identify the relevant theoretical relations between brands and products. At the *macro-level* of positioning, the brand manager decides on a central or differentiated positioning strategy, and makes a choice between concentrating on the target user or on the product itself. In the first place it is important to determine category need, which is defined as the primary purchase motivation associated with the product category. In some product categories, a secondary purchase motivation can also be identified. An overview of purchase motives for products (Fennell 1978, Rossiter et al. 1991) is shown in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Purchase motives

Informational motives	Examples of negatively oriented motivations
Problem removal	Brand of washing liquid aimed at removing difficult lasting stains
Problem avoidance	Toothpaste brand that contributes to protection against cavities
Incomplete satisfaction	Brand of cooking oil that overcomes problems with regular oil and margarine
Mixed approach-avoidance	Aspirin brand that gets rid of headache while avoiding an upset stomach
Transformational motives	Examples of positively oriented motivations
Sensory gratification	Brand of chocolate that has a delicious rich taste
Intellectual stimulation	Brand of wine aimed at the connoisseur
Social approval	Car brand that is associated with status

The central position in a category is reserved for the market leader. For the successful pioneer, the main brand benefit is category need. All other brands should choose a differentiated positioning strategy by focusing on an existing benefit that is important to consumers or promote some new benefit that partitions the product category into one or more subcategories. Most differentiated brands will choose to position on the primary purchase motivation associated with the category, but it is also possible to position the brand on a secondary purchase motivation (Rossiter &

Percy 1997). This implies that brand and product category motivations are not necessarily the same. Park et al. (1986) even state that in principle brand managers may position any product with a functional, symbolic or experiential brand image. Functional, symbolic and experiential images relate to consumer needs that correspond with Rossiter & Percy's informational, social approval and sensory gratification purchase motivations. In the second place, it is important to decide whether the brand will focus on target brand users, e.g., expert consumers or on specific product benefits in the macro-level positioning strategy.

The selection of these brand benefits is determined at the *meso-level* of positioning and should reflect consumer purchase motivations associated with the category. Benefits represent specific reasons why consumers buy brands. Each purchase motive is very broad, so there are differential benefit opportunities for brands, which result in unique positions in consumers' minds and at the same time satisfy the general reason why consumers buy the product. Three aspects are important in benefit selection. Selected benefits should be relevant to the brand purchase motivation. Furthermore, consumers have to believe that the brand provides the selected benefit. Finally, a brand has to deliver the selected benefit relatively uniquely compared to other brands (Rossiter & Percy 1997). Although brands are strongly associated with their unique benefits, it is also important that consumers perceive brands to perform well on benefits that are necessary to compete in the product category. These entry-ticket benefits are an important part of the product schema (Loken & Ward 1990). Carpenter, Glazer & Nakamoto (1994) show that consumers value unique brand benefits, even if these benefits are irrelevant to brand performance in terms of satisfying category need. At the *micro-level* of positioning Rossiter & Percy (1997) explain how the selected brand benefit can be communicated in advertising (see section 2.4).

Rossiter & Percy (1997) show that the brand schema includes consumer knowledge of the brand purchase motivation, unique brand benefits, and benefits that are shared with the category. Krishnan (1996) finds that unique brand benefits determine consumer brand equity, which implies that perceived brand positioning reflects the essence of brands to consumers. In line with this, Park et al. (1986) identify brand concept management as a fundamental and strategically important marketing activity that must be managed throughout the life of the brand. Advertising is an important instrument in communicating brand positioning to consumers (Ries &

Trout 1986, Park et al. 1986, Rossiter & Percy 1997). The general relation between advertising and brand positioning is discussed in the next section. Section 2.4 explains theories that have formulated specific advertising tactics based on their view of brand positioning.

2.3.2 Positioning and Advertising

In this section, we focus on how measures of advertising effectiveness are related to brand positioning. Brand managers can determine the effectiveness of an advertising campaign by means of communication objectives. Communication effects of advertising include category need, brand awareness, brand knowledge, brand attitude, brand purchase intention, brand purchase facilitation, brand purchase, and brand satisfaction (Pieters & Van Raaij 1992). The communication objectives category need, brand awareness, and brand attitude are closely related to brand positioning. Rossiter & Percy (1997) identify brand awareness and brand attitude as universal communication objectives that should be included in any advertising campaign.

Category need has to be present for a brand purchase to occur, but it is not always necessary to include category need as a communication objective. For a pioneer brand it is important to communicate category need in advertising, because consumers have to learn how the product taps into the purchase motivations, how it functions and what are the relevant product attributes and uses. Later entrants profit from the communication efforts of the market leader, and can omit category need as a communication objective (Rossiter & Percy 1997). Furthermore, it may be necessary to remind consumers of category need for brands from product categories that are bought infrequently e.g., a pain killer (Pieters & Van Raaij 1992, Rossiter & Percy 1997).

Brand awareness represents the link between the brand and category need. Brand awareness is always a communication objective in advertising, because consumers have to be able to identify the brand as a member of the product category. Depending on the characteristics of the purchase situation, brand recognition and/or brand recall is required. Brand recognition suffices if there is some external characteristic of the brand present in the purchase situation e.g., a brand logo in the supermarket. In this type of situation, consumers do not need active knowledge of the brand. Brand recall is required if consumers have to think of the brand themselves before or in the purchase situation (Pieters & Van Raaij 1992).

Brand attitude is considered to be a universal communication objective, because consumers are aware of several brands in most purchase situations and choose a particular brand based on their brand attitudes. Pure brand awareness advertising is usually not enough to elicit brand purchase. Only if consumers infer that the brand is desirable from the brand awareness-ad or if the brand awareness-ad elicits a previously established favorable attitude, pure brand awareness advertising may be effective (Rossiter & Percy 1997). Advertising can be aimed at creating, increasing, maintaining, modifying or changing brand attitudes for consumers that have no prior attitudes, moderately favorable attitudes, maximally favorable attitudes, undesirable attitude bases or negative brand attitudes (Pieters & Van Raaij 1992, Rossiter & Percy 1997). Pieters & Van Raaij (1992) state that it is important to realize that brand attitude is often a relative consumer judgment that requires comparison to other brands or specification of the product use situation, which is in line with positioning theory. Furthermore, perceived brand positioning is reflected in the weighted brand benefit beliefs that are part of brand attitudes (Fishbein & Ajzen 1975).

Research on affective responses to advertising indicates that *attitude toward the ad* is another important communication objective in advertising. In early models of advertising, the communication effects of advertising identified in this section were assumed to reflect a hierarchy-of-effects in which ads first affected cognition, then affect and finally conation (e.g., Lavidge & Steiner 1961). These models have been criticized because of the strict order implied in the hierarchy and the view of consumers as rational information processors primarily concerned with cognition (e.g., Krugman 1965, Vaughn 1980). Consequently, attention shifted to the role of affective responses in advertising, which includes research on emotions, feelings and mood (e.g., Batra & Ray 1986, Edell & Burke 1987, Gardner 1985). The inclusion of such affective responses contributed to a fuller understanding of advertising (Edell & Burke 1987). Nowadays, it is widely accepted that both cognitive and affective responses are important in advertising (Vakratsas & Ambler 1999). Furthermore, several models of advertising (e.g., Petty & Cacioppo 1986, Chaiken 1980) have specified the conditions in which cognitive and affective responses to advertising are important to consumers in ad processing.

The focus on affective responses to advertising resulted in the development of attitude toward the ad as a measure of advertising effectiveness. Mitchell & Olson (1981) showed that advertising does not only affect brand attitude cognitively through

brand beliefs, but also affectively through affective responses to the ad that are reflected in attitude toward the ad. Thus, attitude toward the ad mediates brand attitude formation. Although attitude toward the ad is predominantly assumed to reflect consumers' affective responses to advertising in line with Mitchell & Olson (1981), cognitive responses to ads also determine attitude toward the ad (MacKenzie & Lutz 1989, Olney et al. 1991). Olney et al. (1991) find that consumers evaluate ads on utilitarian, hedonic and interestingness dimensions. The utilitarian dimension of attitude toward the ad measures how informative and useful ads are, which reflect cognitive responses to ads. Furthermore, ad cognition is involved in ad content perceptions (MacKenzie & Lutz 1989, Olney et al. 1991) and in determining the uniqueness of ad content compared to other category ads, which in turn determine attitude toward the ad (Olney et al. 1991, Goodstein 1993).

MacKenzie, Lutz & Belch (1986) tested four structural specifications of the mediating role of attitude toward the ad, including the affect transfer model in which consumers' affective responses to the ad transfer to the brand via attitude toward the ad (e.g., Mitchell & Olson 1981). The authors find that a dual mediation model fits better than the affect transfer model. In the dual mediation model, consumers' affective reaction to the ad do not only transfer to the brand via attitude toward the ad, but also increase consumers' propensity to accept the claims in the ad. MacKenzie et al.'s (1986) study shows that attitude toward the ad is an important mediator of brand attitude formation in ad pretest settings for new brands in low-importance product categories. Hence, many marketing studies include attitude toward the ad as a measure of advertising effectiveness.

However, attitude toward the ad is not always an important communication objective in advertising campaigns. Rossiter & Percy (1991, 1997) argue that attitude toward the ad is important for brands that are purchased for transformational reasons, but not for brands that are purchased for informational reasons. This implies that attitude toward the ad may be more important for brands with transformational positioning than for brands with informational positioning. Furthermore, Mittal (1990) suggests that the effect of attitude toward the ad might be overstated if brand beliefs are not measured correctly. Brand image beliefs (see section 2.4) and attitude toward the ad may be correlated, and therefore the exclusion of image beliefs from measurement of brand beliefs may overstate the effect of attitude toward the ad on brand attitude. Mittal's (1990) study shows that brand image beliefs affect brand

attitude both directly (cognitive route) and indirectly through attitude toward the ad (affective route). This underlines the importance of measuring all brand beliefs that are part of consumers' brand schema. However, even though the effect of attitude toward the ad on brand attitude decreased, attitude toward the ad continued to be a significant predictor of brand attitude (Mittal 1990).

2.4 Theories Relating Brands and Advertising

2.4.1 Introduction and Attribute Typologies

This section discusses theories from marketing that have formulated tactics for advertising based on their assumption of how consumers perceive brands and competition among brands. Specifically, we explain the advertising recommendations made on the basis of means-end chain theory and by advertising grids. Although many more theories relating brands and advertising may exist in both science and business, these studies have received most attention in marketing. The common element in these theories is that the brand schema is considered to be the main source of advertising expectations, and that their specific views of brand positioning are used to arrive at recommendations for effective advertising.

Olson & Reynolds (1983) formulated advertising tactics based on means-end chain theory (Gutman 1982) and Rossiter & Percy (1991, 1997) and Vaughn (1980, 1986) made recommendations for advertising based on their advertising grids. These studies use positioning theory as a normative framework and generally recommend advertising that matches consumer brand perceptions. Thus, ads that match consumer expectations of advertising are expected to be more effective than ads that do not match advertising expectations. Contrary to schema theory, advertising expectations based on knowledge of advertising in the product category are not included in these theories. A detailed comparison of the predictions made by advertising grids and schema theory is provided in Chapter 3. Before explaining means-end chain theory and advertising grids in detail, we discuss typologies of attributes, because both theories use them to connect brands with consumers and advertising. In discussing attribute typologies, we use the term property as a general, unspecified predicate.

Lefkoff-Hagius & Mason (1993) identify three types of attributes based on a review of attribute typologies from several marketing studies. It is important to realize that classifying attributes in these types is always subject to debate to some extent. Their distinction in characteristic, beneficial and image attributes reflects different meanings of attribute types to consumers, but also ranges from concrete to abstract from a dimensional perspective. Characteristic attributes are physical properties of products, beneficial attributes represent what the product will do for the user, and image attributes reflect how the product represents the user to others or to himself.

Lefkoff-Hagius & Mason (1993) note that causal linkages between attribute types may exist. Particularly, characteristic attributes are often linked to beneficial attributes, e.g., presence of an airbag determines safety of a car. However, consumers are not always able to make such linkages between attribute types, especially if consumers can only discover linkages through experience (e.g., Carpenter & Nakamoto 1989). Furthermore, linkages between attribute types may not be present at all (Lefkoff-Hagius & Mason 1993). Lefkoff-Hagius & Mason (1993) find that characteristic attributes are more important in similarity than in preference judgments, whereas the reverse is true for beneficial attributes. This finding is similar to Viswanathan & Childers (1999) who find that different attributes are used in typicality and preference judgments (see section 2.2) and indicates that consumers use different aspects of brand schema knowledge for different types of judgments.

The attribute typologies employed in means-end chain theory and advertising grids differ somewhat from the general attribute typology advanced by Lefkoff-Hagius & Mason (1993). Gutman (1982) distinguishes between means and ends in means-end chain theory. Means are defined as the physical aspects of products, which corresponds with Lefkoff-Hagius & Mason's (1993) characteristic attributes. Ends represent valued end states that can be achieved through consumption. At the highest level of abstraction these ends are preferred end states of existence or values e.g., security or a sense of accomplishment (Kahle, Beatty & Homer 1992). Values fall outside Lefkoff-Hagius and Mason's (1993) attribute typology. In means-end chain theory, means and ends are connected by consequences that are defined as direct and indirect physiological (e.g., soft drink that quenches thirst), psychosocial (e.g., clothes that give self-esteem) or sociological (e.g., car that enhances status) results of consumptive behavior (Gutman 1982). Physiological and psychosocial consequences

largely correspond with beneficial attributes, whereas sociological benefits are closely related to image attributes in Lefkoff-Hagius & Mason's (1993) typology.

Related to their advertising grid, Rossiter & Percy (1997) distinguish between attributes, benefits and emotions. Attributes describe the product's properties, which corresponds with Lefkoff-Hagius & Mason's (1993) characteristic attributes. Benefits represent what the buyer wants from a product, which can be either beneficial or image attributes in terms of Lefkoff-Hagius & Mason's (1993) typology. Emotions represent what the buyer feels, and are defined as specific emotional associations that are not tied to specific brand benefit beliefs but do determine brand attitude (Rossiter & Percy 1997). Emotions resemble Lefkoff-Hagius & Mason's (1993) image attributes, because both represent abstract meaning of brands to consumers, but emotions are not necessarily related to symbolic meaning like image attributes.

To sum up, the distinction between the brand's concrete properties (attributes) and what the consumer values about the brand (benefits) seems widely accepted in marketing. However, a further refinement of what the consumer values about brands into beneficial attributes, image attributes, emotions, consequences and values is neither clear-cut nor generally agreed upon. Furthermore, the typologies from means-end chain theory and Rossiter & Percy (1997) shows that the brand schema may contain other types of attributes in addition to the characteristic, beneficial and image attributes identified by Lefkoff-Hagius & Mason (1993). Means-end chain theory and advertising grids are explained in detail in the next sections.

2.4.2 Means-End Chain Theory

Means-end chain theory (Gutman 1982) specifies a cognitive structure of products and brands that is ultimately determined by consumers' personal values. Means-end chain theory presents an alternative to positioning theory (see section 2.3) in which values represent the underlying consumer purchase motivations. The implications of means-end theory for advertising are explained in the MECCAS model, which stands for the means-end conceptualization of the components of advertising strategy (Olson & Reynolds 1983).

Gutman (1982) identifies three levels of distinctions in his account of means-end chain theory, values, consequences, and groupings of products. At the values level, desirable consequences are determined for a particular value. Rarely can all desired consequences be achieved in one situation, and often achieving some desired

consequences implies giving up other desired consequences. At the consequences level, achievable consequences in a particular consumption situation are determined. Grouping distinctions reflect hierarchical categorizations of products into sets based on their ability to achieve desired consequences. At the grouping level, products that bring about the desired consequences are determined. Brands are chosen based on their ability to deliver benefits that are relevant to the desired consequences. If several potential brands remain, following choices are no longer made on the basis of the value orientation that controls the structure of the means-end chain (Gutman 1982). Thus, in means-end theory, means-end chains consisting of attributes, consequences and values that are linked in consumers' minds represent consumers' cognitive structure of brands. Means-end chains are uncovered by laddering tasks that elicit consumer meaning at increasing levels of abstraction (Reynolds & Gutman 1988).

Olson & Reynolds (1983) formulated recommendations for advertising based on means-end chain theory. The MECCAS model (Olson & Reynolds 1983) consists of five elements: driving force, consumer benefit, message elements, executional framework and leverage point. The driving force of advertising strategy is the value orientation associated with the brand, which constitutes the end-level to be focused on in advertising. Message elements are the specific attributes and consequences communicated in the ad with the major positive consequences representing the consumer benefit. Message elements, consumer benefit and driving force are derived from the brand's attributes, consequences and values respectively. The executional framework provides the ad scenario and tone of the advertisement, and should reflect an understanding of the brand-specific means-end chain. The (latent) value level in advertising is activated by the (manifest) leverage point, which links message elements, consumer benefit, and executional framework to consumers in a personally relevant way (Olson & Reynolds 1983, Reynolds & Gutman 1984). The MECCAS model specifies that effective advertising features brand-differentiating product attributes and important consumption-related consequences, while simultaneously activating personally relevant values, thus covering all levels of the means-end chain for a particular brand (Reynolds & Craddock 1988).

Both means-end chain theory and the MECCAS model have been criticized. Firstly, Grunert & Grunert (1995) argue that it is impossible to distinguish cognitive structure from cognitive processing. This implies that the means-end chain structure is a result of the data collection procedure used to elicit this cognitive structure. In their

view “true” cognitive structure is a latent construct and any elicited cognitive structure is only a partial representation of the “real” cognitive structure. Grunert & Grunert (1995) conclude that the cognitive structure with the highest predictive ability in explaining consumer behavior in a given situation should be elicited. The assumption that consumer choice behavior and advertising are both primarily motivated by values as suggested in means-end chain theory and the MECCAS model is questionable (Rossiter & Percy 1996). This is even acknowledged to some extent by proponents of means-end chain theory, because both critics (e.g., Grunert & Grunert 1995) and proponents (e.g., Reynolds & Craddock 1988) describe the laddering procedure as “forcing” consumers up the ladder of abstraction.

Secondly, the implied causal relations between attributes, consequences and values in means-end chain theory are not justified, because consumers are not always able to identify linkages between attribute types (Lefkoff-Hagius & Mason 1993). Particularly, image brands often do not have an identifiable attribute basis. Furthermore, the recommended inclusion of all levels from the means-end chain and their hierarchical linking in advertising is too strict. Reynolds & Craddock (1988) suggest that unique product attributes are necessary in advertising to provide consumers with a rationalization to buy the brand, but the success of transformational ads refutes this assumption. Moreover, the recommended sequence attributes-consequences-values does not guarantee effective advertising. Notably, if brands are bought for a particular value it may be more effective to remind consumers of the value before mentioning product attributes (Rossiter & Percy 1996).

Thirdly, Rossiter (1996) identifies a number of methodological problems associated with the laddering procedure. Empirical studies of laddering show that the self-reported incidences of attribute, consequence and value levels decline, which is in contrast with the assumption that all levels are operative in consumer behavior. Furthermore, the linkages between attributes, consequences, and values in aggregated ladders for brands do not necessarily correspond with individual ladders and may include (value) levels not present in individual ladders. Finally, there are no importance weights in the laddering procedure that can be used to select relatively persuasive ladders for advertising.

Together, the criticisms on both the cognitive structure and the advertising implications of means-end chain theory make this a theory with limited validity for advertising. Rossiter & Percy (1996, 1997) proposed the *a-b-e* model of benefit focus,

which distinguishes between attributes, benefits and emotions, as an alternative to the MECCAS model, which employs the distinction in attributes, consequences and values, for communicating brand positioning in advertising (see section 2.4.1). Both the *a-b-e* model and the MECCAS model relate elements from consumers' brand schema to advertising. Rossiter & Percy (1996, 1997) identify six ways of focusing on attributes, benefits and emotions in advertising compared to one recommended strategy of relating attributes, consequences and values in the MECCAS model. The *a-b-e* model of benefit focus is closely related to their advertising grid, which are both discussed further in the next section on advertising grids.

2.4.3 Advertising Grids

Advertising grids were developed to assist professionals and researchers in assessing the effectiveness of advertising for specific brand-ad or product-ad combinations.

In the remaining chapters of this dissertation we focus on Rossiter & Percy's advertising grid (RP grid: Rossiter et al. 1991, Rossiter & Percy 1997). The RP grid is an alternative to the well-known advertising grid developed at Foote Cone & Belding advertising agency (FCB grid: Vaughn 1980, 1986). Both advertising grids are compared in this section. Furthermore, the RP grid is related to the *a-b-e* model of benefit focus (Rossiter & Percy 1996, 1997), which has been proposed as an alternative to the MECCAS model (Olson & Reynolds 1983) for communicating brand positioning in advertising (see section 2.4.2). The *a-b-e* model also presents some exceptions to the advertising recommendations made in the RP grid (see also Chapter 3).

The RP grid and the FCB grid both state that the effectiveness of advertising depends on the characteristics of the advertising situation as represented by consumer perceptions of brands and products. The RP grid focuses on brands, whereas the FCB grid does not clearly distinguish between brands and products. Brand and product choice motives can differ in the RP grid (Rossiter et al. 1991). However, if a brand is positioned on a benefit that is related to the primary purchase motivation associated with the product category, brand and product choice motives are largely the same (Rossiter & Percy 1997, see section 2.3). In both advertising grids two dimensions determine consumer perceptions of brands and products. The first dimension reflects the nature of the brands and products involved and the second dimension represents consumer involvement with brands and products. Although the dimensions employed

in both grids are superficially similar to each other, there are some important differences in the definition of these dimensions.

In the RP grid, the nature of brands is reflected in the type of purchase motivation associated with the brand. In the FCB grid the nature of products is represented by the type of information processing associated with the product. Specifically, the RP grid distinguishes between informational and transformational brand purchase motives, whereas the FCB grid distinguishes between think and feel products. The informational-transformational dimension in the RP grid is more directly related to consumers' cognitive structure than the think-feel dimension in the FCB grid. Furthermore, the informational-transformational distinction represents a broader range of motivations than the think-feel distinction. Think products from the FCB grid are primarily purchased for utilitarian or problem-removal motives (Ratchford 1987), which is only one of five informational motives identified in the RP grid (see section 2.3). Feel products from the FCB grid are purchased for sensory gratification and social approval motives (Ratchford 1987), whereas transformational motives in the RP grid include intellectual stimulation as an additional motive (see section 2.3). Moreover, the FCB grid focuses on positive feelings and neglects negative feelings that constitute an important motivational drive for informational motives in the RP grid and think motives in the FCB grid (Rossiter et al. 1991). Finally, the think-feel dimension is correlated with the involvement dimension in the FCB grid (Ratchford 1987), whereas both dimensions are independent in the RP grid (Rossiter et al. 1991).

In the RP grid involvement is defined as perceived risk associated with the advertised brand by a target audience member (Rossiter et al. 1991). In the FCB grid involvement comprises decision importance and degree of thought required for purchase, in addition to perceived risk associated with buying the "wrong" brand (Ratchford 1987). Thus, the definition of involvement in the FCB grid is broader than the definition in the RP grid. Furthermore, the involvement dimension in the FCB grid is confounded in two respects. Firstly, product category involvement is measured operationally by brand involvement, which represents a confound between brands and products. Secondly, the involvement and think-feel dimensions are confounded in the FCB grid, because the involvement measure also includes aspects that measure think products (Rossiter et al. 1991). Comparisons of the dimensions that are used to

distinguish brands and products in both advertising grids suggest that the RP grid has a more sound theoretical foundation than the FCB grid.

Both advertising grids recommend that advertising should match consumer perceptions of brands and products as represented by the two dimensions (Rossiter et al. 1991, Rossiter & Percy 1997, Vaughn 1980, 1986). Thus, similar to the MECCAS model (see section 2.4.2) advertising grids recommend ads that match the brand schema. Contrary to the MECCAS model, advertising grids do not specify one general advertising strategy for all brands. Instead the RP grid offers specific advertising tactics for each quadrant in their grid, whereas the FCB grid gives the general recommendation that advertising should reflect the differences between products. The RP grid recommends that ads for low-involvement informational brands should use simple problem-solution formats and include only one or two (extremely stated) benefits. For high-involvement informational brands, benefit claims should be convincing enough to change the initial attitude toward the brand into a positive direction. Ads for low-involvement transformational brands should display emotional authenticity, which is related to the brand by association. For high-involvement transformational brands, both emotional authenticity and personal identification with the product in the ad is advised (Rossiter et al. 1991, Rossiter & Percy 1997, see also Chapter 3).

The RP grid is related to the *a-b-e* model of benefit focus (Rossiter & Percy 1996, 1997). This model explains how brand positioning can be communicated in advertising (see section 2.3) by focusing on attributes, benefits and emotions (see section 2.4.1). The advertising tactics from the RP grid for informational brands elaborate on the general $e^- \rightarrow b$ path that is recommended for informational brands in the *a-b-e* model (Rossiter & Percy 1996, 1997). The $e^- \rightarrow b$ path indicates that advertising shows both the negative emotion associated with the informational purchase motive and the brand's benefit that will reduce consumer problems. The advertising tactics from the RP grid for transformational brands elaborate on the general $b \rightarrow e^+$ and e^+ paths that are recommended for transformational brands in the *a-b-e* model (Rossiter & Percy 1996, 1997). The $b \rightarrow e^+$ and e^+ paths indicate that advertising shows the positive emotions that enhance consumers' use experience of the brand respectively with and without linking the emotions to specific brand benefits in advertising.

In total the *a-b-e* model identifies six ways of focusing on attributes, benefits and emotions in advertising. The other paths for communicating brand positioning present exceptions to the general recommendations for informational and transformational brands from the RP grid. These paths take differences in consumer expertise with the product category, presence of strongly held brand attitudes, and characteristics of competition among brands in the product category into account (Rossiter & Percy 1996, 1997). The *a-b-e* model recommends advertising that focuses on brand attributes for expert consumers. Furthermore, ads that provide rational arguments are advised for competitor brands if consumers have brand attitudes based on emotional associations, and emotional advertising is advised if consumers have brand attitudes based on rational arguments (see also Chapter 3). Finally, the *a-b-e* model recommends advertising that focuses either on attributes or on emotions if brands have easy-to-imitate benefits, whereas advertising that provides rational arguments is recommended if brands have hard-to-imitate benefits (see Rossiter & Percy 1996, 1997 for a detailed discussion).

Chapter 3: The Effectiveness of Advertising

Matching Brand Purchase Motivation

3.1 Introduction

Advertising grids have been developed to assist professionals and researchers in assessing the effectiveness of brand–ad combinations. The Rossiter-Percy advertising grid (RP grid: Rossiter et al. 1991, Rossiter & Percy 1997) distinguishes between brands based on the type of purchase motivation (informational vs. transformational) and the level of involvement. Another well-known advertising grid is the FCB grid (FCB grid: Vaughn 1980, 1986) that distinguishes between products on a think/feel dimension reflecting the type of information processing associated with the product and the level of involvement.

The RP grid suggests that informational advertising is more effective than transformational advertising for utilitarian brands, because informational advertising reflects the purchase motivation associated with utilitarian brands (informational motivation). Likewise, transformational advertising is more effective than informational advertising for hedonic brands (transformational motivation). The FCB grid also recommends advertising that reflects the differences between products.

Thus, both advertising grids state that there is no single way in which ads work, but that it depends on the advertising situation. The normative recommendation from these grids is that the ad appeal should match the attitude base. However, Dubé et al. (1996) note that the evidence in support of this recommendation is anecdotal at best and neither systematically nor empirically investigated. Furthermore, they state that research in psychology on attitudes and persuasion provides inconclusive findings with respect to the matching hypothesis. In the light of their remarks, the purpose of this study is to test the matching hypothesis of the RP grid by means of an experiment. The RP grid is better suited for testing than the FCB grid because it offers specific advertising tactics for different advertising situations, while the FCB grid only gives general recommendations.

In section 3.2, we describe the RP grid in more detail, and deal with alternative predictions from schema theory and the theory of attitudes and persuasion.

We then describe our experiment and its results. Contrary to RP grid predictions, we found that mismatching advertising is more effective than advertising matching the purchase motivation. We discuss our findings in the final section.

3.2 Theory

In this section, the concepts and terminology used in the RP grid are explained and related to similar distinctions made in the marketing and advertising literature. Next, predictions of the RP grid are compared with findings from two streams of research that yield further insights into the relationships between advertising and purchase motivation. This review of psychological research on attitudes and persuasion, and schema theory leads to the identification of conditions in which the matching hypothesis proposed by the RP grid is likely to hold. Finally, schema theory is discussed to arrive at hypotheses about information processing associated with ads matching or mismatching the purchase motivation.

3.2.1 Concepts and Terminology of the Rossiter-Percy Grid

The RP grid specifies that the effectiveness of advertising depends on the type of purchase motivation (informational vs. transformational) and the level of involvement. Rossiter et al. (1991) define informational motives as “negatively originated purchase motivations that can be satisfied by providing information about the product or brand” (p. 16). Transformational motives are defined as “purchase motives that promise to enhance the brand user by effectuating a transformation in the brand user’s sensory, mental or social state” (p. 16).

Low-involvement decisions are characterized by trial experience, whereas high-involvement decisions require search and conviction prior to purchase. In the RP grid, the attitude toward the brand is considered to be the main indicator of advertising effectiveness, given awareness of the brand. When transformational motives prevail, the attitude toward the ad may mediate the attitude toward the brand, especially for low-involvement brands. However, in the case of informational motives, the processing of the advertising message is more likely to determine the brand attitude rather than the attitude toward the ad.

In their advertising tactics, Rossiter et al. (1991) recommend that ads for low-involvement informational brands should use simple problem-solution formats and include only one or two (extremely stated) benefits. For high-involvement informational brands, benefit claims should be convincing enough to change the initial attitude toward the brand into a positive direction. Ads for low-involvement transformational brands should display emotional authenticity, which is related to the brand by association. For high-involvement transformational brands, both emotional authenticity and personal identification with the brand in the ad is advised. These advertising tactics are generally referred to in the advertising literature as informational and transformational advertising, respectively (Puto & Wells 1984, Aaker & Stayman 1992).

Holbrook & Hirschman (1982) introduced a similar distinction between utilitarian and hedonic goods in marketing. Utilitarian goods are primarily bought for informational reasons, including instrumental and utilitarian reasons, whereas hedonic goods are mainly purchased for transformational reasons, including consummatory affective (hedonic) gratification (Batra & Ahtola 1990). Irrespective of whether attitude toward the ad or informational processing influences the brand attitude, it is plausible that both attitude toward the ad and brand attitude are determined by the match or mismatch of brand type and ad type. The matching hypotheses can now be restated as follows:

H1: For utilitarian brands, informational ads will lead to more favorable brand and ad evaluations than transformational ads.

H2: For hedonic brands, transformational ads will lead to more favorable brand and ad evaluations than informational ads.

3.2.2 Conditions in which the Matching Hypothesis is Likely to Hold

Rossiter and Percy (1991, 1997) formulated their advertising tactics as general recommendations. Both psychological research on attitudes and persuasion and schema theory suggest that ads that match brand purchase motivation are not always more effective than mismatching ads. These two streams of research are discussed to identify the specific conditions in which the matching hypothesis advanced in the advertising grid is likely to hold and is not likely to hold.

Attitude and persuasion research. Research on attitudes and persuasion has provided conflicting findings with respect to the matching hypothesis proposed in advertising grids (Dubé et al., 1996). This stream of research is concerned with the effectiveness of different types of arguments in changing consumer attitudes. Ads may also be perceived as arguments intended to change brand attitudes. In line with predictions from the RP grid, Edwards (1990) finds that arguments that match consumers' attitude basis are more effective in attitude persuasion than arguments that do not match attitude basis. In her study affective-based attitudes change more under affective than under cognitive means of persuasion, and vice versa for cognitive-based attitudes. In contrast with the RP grid, Millar & Millar (1990) show that mismatching rather than matching arguments are more persuasive. They find that affective-based attitudes are more susceptible to cognitive than to affective arguments, whereas the reverse is true for cognitive-based attitudes.

Before these conflicting findings are explained, it is important to note two differences with attitude research in advertising. Firstly, in psychology a distinction is made between cognitive and affective attitudes. Cognitive attitudes are defined as attitudes that result from beliefs and thoughts associated with an attitude object, whereas affective attitudes are defined as attitudes that result from emotions and feelings associated with an attitude object (Edwards 1990, Millar & Millar 1990). This distinction does not necessarily correspond with the distinction between utilitarian and hedonic attitudes made in advertising. However, if brand purchase motivations are examined, the two attitude distinctions are very similar. Based on consumer associations, Head & Shoulders and Johnson & Johnson baby shampoo can be identified as brands based on cognitive and affective attitudes (Drolet & Aaker 2002). Accordingly, Head & Shoulders and Johnson & Johnson baby shampoo presumably also represent utilitarian (e.g., dandruff control) and hedonic (e.g., soft and mild hair wash) purchase motives to consumers. Secondly, the studies from psychology focus on counterattitudinal information. As a rule, ads contain positive information about the brand. Consequently, only in the case of negative brand attitudes, advertising contains counterattitudinal information.

Millar (1992) explains the conflicting effects of matching on attitude persuasion by arguing that counterattitudinal information directly targeted at the base of the attitude leads to counterarguing for individuals with strong attitudes, while counterattitudinal information is likely to overwhelm individuals with weak attitudes.

In line with this explanation, Drolet & Aaker (2002) find that individuals with weak attitudes, such as those used by Edwards (1990) are persuaded more by matching ad appeals, whereas individuals with strong attitudes, such as those used in Millar & Millar (1990), are persuaded more by mismatching ad appeals. This suggests that the matching hypothesis from the RP grid does not hold if consumers have strong negative brand attitudes (see Table 3.1). In line with the attitude persuasion literature, Rossiter & Percy (1996, 1997) explain in their *a-b-e* model of benefit focus (see section 2.4.3) that the RP grid tactics (Rossiter et al. 1991) do not apply in case of “entrenched” attitudes. The *a-b-e* model (Rossiter & Percy 1996, 1997) advises mismatching rather than matching advertising if advertising is targeted at users who have strong attitudes of competitor brands (see section 2.4.3).

The studies cited in the preceding paragraph mainly employed counterattitudinal messages. However, advertising often contains proattitudinal information aimed at creating, increasing or maintaining positive brand attitudes (Pieters & Van Raaij 1992, Rossiter & Percy 1997). Millar & Millar (1990) also investigated proattitudinal messages in one of their studies but found no argument type \times attitude type interaction. The authors argue that this is understandable because it is difficult to characterize agreement with a proattitudinal message as attitude change when a strong attitude is present. However, this reasoning does not seem valid for weak attitudes. Compared to proattitudinal messages that do not match the attitude basis, proattitudinal messages that match the attitude basis are likely to increase consumer confidence in their weakly held attitudes. This suggests that in case of weak brand attitudes, matching ads might lead to more favorable brand evaluations than mismatching ads for both proattitudinal and counterattitudinal ads. This is consistent with predictions from the RP grid (see Table 3.1).

Schema theory. Several studies based on schema theory contradict the matching hypothesis from the RP grid. The premise of schema theory is that an initially cued schema guides information processing and influences the way evaluations are formed. According to schema theory, the RP grid specifies that consumers relate advertising information to their brand schema, which includes information about the brand purchase motivation. Schema theory focuses on processing of schema-incongruent information, but also deals with differences in the

evaluation of congruent and incongruent information. Advertising that matches the purchase motivation is congruent with consumers' brand schema, whereas advertising that does not match the purchase motivation is incongruent with their brand schema.

In marketing, the schema theory approaches from Fiske & Pavelchak (1986) and Mandler (1982) are commonly applied (e.g., Sujan 1985, Goodstein 1993, Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989, Stayman et al. 1992). Fiske & Pavelchak (1986) distinguish between schema-based and piecemeal processing, depending on whether information matches or mismatches schema knowledge, without predicting brand evaluations resulting from information processing. Unlike Fiske & Pavelchak (1986), Mandler (1982) assumes that consumers will first try to process incongruent information in a schema-based manner by assimilation or accommodation, depending on the degree of incongruity. Mandler (1982) states that a moderate degree of incongruity will be evaluated more positively than either complete congruity or extreme incongruity. Moderate incongruity can be resolved by assimilation, which will be evaluated positively. In the case of extreme incongruity, consumers will attempt accommodation of incongruent information, which is usually accompanied by negative affect. Fiske & Pavelchak (1986) predict that consumers will switch from schema-based to piecemeal processing, which differs from the notion of accommodation in that restructuring of the initially cued schema is not assumed (Stayman et al. 1992). Several marketing studies have found evidence for Mandler's (1982) inverted U-shaped relationship between incongruity and evaluation (e.g., Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989, Stayman et al. 1992).

Thus, contrary to the matching hypothesis from the RP grid, schema theory suggests that a moderate degree of mismatch or incongruity between advertising and the brand schema may lead to more favorable evaluations than matching advertising. For strong incongruity between brand and advertising, schema theory and the RP grid make similar predictions. Research on the relation between incongruity and evaluation by Lee & Mason (1999) suggests that if ads are incongruent with the brand schema, the evaluation of incongruent advertising information depends on relevancy to the brand. Their study implies that moderately incongruent ads are only evaluated more favorably than congruent ads if consumers perceive the ads as relevant to the brand (see Table 3.1).

It is important to note that schema theory assumes that consumers perceive schema-incongruent information as unexpected. Although consumers may perceive

advertising that does not match the brand purchase motivation (incongruent with the brand schema) as unexpected for the brand, the type of advertising as such may not be unexpected for the product category. In an application of schema theory to ad processing, Goodstein (1993) shows that consumers may also use knowledge about advertising in the product category i.e., the ad schema in information processing. This suggests that brand purchase-mismatching advertising, which can be qualified as incongruent with the brand schema, is not necessarily equally unexpected to consumers. In our research, the role of ad schema knowledge in the relative effectiveness of brand purchase matching advertising is explored further.

Table 3.1: Conditions for the matching hypothesis of advertising

Conditions in which the matching hypothesis is likely to hold	
1.	Weak brand attitudes
2.	Strong incongruity between brand and advertising
3.	Moderate incongruity between brand and advertising and advertising presents irrelevant information to the brand
Conditions in which the matching hypothesis is not likely to hold	
4.	Strong negative brand attitudes (assuming advertising contains positive brand information)
5.	Moderate incongruity between brand and advertising and advertising presents relevant information to the brand

3.2.3 Ad Processing

Information processing is an important aspect of advertising that is not discussed in the RP grid. Schema theory suggests that ads that do not match the purchase motivation are incongruent with the brand schema, and consequently processed more extensively than congruent ads that match brand purchase motivation. The more elaborate processing associated with incongruent information is supported by several marketing studies, irrespective of whether they were intended to test Fiske & Pavelchak's (1986) or Mandler's (1982) conceptualization of processing. The number of thoughts elicited in mismatch conditions is higher than in match conditions (Goodstein 1993, Stayman et al. 1992), whereas the focus of processing is on the source of incongruity (Goodstein 1993, Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989, Stayman et al. 1992, Sujan 1985). This leads to the following hypotheses:

H3: For utilitarian brands, transformational ads will lead to more thoughts in total and more incongruity-related thoughts than informational ads.

H4: For hedonic brands, informational ads will lead to more thoughts in total and more incongruity-related thoughts than transformational ads.

Thoughts elicited in response to incongruity represent the cognitive aspects of processing. In addition, an important part of Mandler's (1982) theory is concerned with the affective aspects of processing, which received only limited testing. Mandler (1982) suggests that processing of incongruent information is accompanied by feelings of heightened arousal. Peracchio & Tybout (1996) find that consumers raised more questions and expressed more confusion as incongruity increased in the context of new product evaluation. This leads to the following hypotheses:

H5: For utilitarian brands, transformational ads will lead to more arousal than informational ads.

H6: For hedonic brands, informational ads will lead to more arousal than transformational ads.

3.3 Method

The hypotheses will be tested with respect to the motivational bases of attitudes for low-involvement products. This pragmatic choice of products allows for relatively simple experimental advertising stimuli. Additionally, for low-involvement products, prior brand attitudes are far less important than in the case of high-involvement products. This facilitates the use of fictional brands in an experiment, which in turn enables us to observe the expected effects in the absence of potentially disturbing associations with real brands.

Design. A 2 (brand purchase motivation) \times 2 (type of advertising) between-subjects design was employed. Utilitarian and hedonic product descriptions of hypothetical deodorant and chewing gum brands were used to elicit the main purchase

motivation associated with these product categories. Ad scenarios were constructed according to the tactics outlined in the RP grid, resulting in both an informational and a transformational ad description for each brand (see Appendix 1). The featured attributes in the informational and transformational ads were also consistent with the advertising tactics, thus preventing within-ad incongruity. This implies that the ads matching the brand purchase motivation featured attributes from the brand description, and the mismatching ads featured attributes associated with the alternative purchase motivation (not part of the brand description). Ad scenarios were employed because transcripts allow for more precise control of the ad stimuli than other preproduction versions of a television ad, and such a format is commonly used for testing alternative messages in the advertising industry (Wansink & Ray 1996). Ad scenarios provide a conservative test of the feelings generated in response to advertising, especially when ads are designed to generate high levels of feeling, such as transformational ads (Goodstein, Edell & Moore 1990).

The experimental stimuli were designed in agreement with the conditions in which the matching hypothesis of the RP grid is likely to hold. Since hypothetical brands were used, only weak brand attitudes would result. Furthermore, the utilitarian and hedonic attributes used in both brand descriptions and ad scenarios were respectively cognitive and affective in nature to be consistent with psychological attitude research. Compared to matching ads, ads that do not match the brand purchase motivation were expected to reflect cases of moderate incongruity with the brand schema for two reasons. Firstly, the attributes featured in the mismatching ads were not uncommon for the products concerned. Secondly, the ad scenarios may not represent unexpected advertising for the product category as such. In line with the RP grid, we expect that ads that do not match the brand purchase motivation will be perceived as less relevant than matching ads.

Pretests. Two pretests were carried out to verify whether the products selected for the experiment, deodorant and chewing gum, are successful in cueing the intended purchase motivations and eliciting the accompanying brand perceptions. In the first pretest, 24 subjects classified each of eight products in two categories representing either utilitarian or hedonic purchase motivations. The classification of the two experimental products was as intended. Deodorant was categorized as a product bought primarily for utilitarian reasons by 75% of the subjects and chewing gum was

categorized as a hedonic product by 75% of the subjects. Deodorant and chewing gum did not represent extreme examples of utilitarian and hedonic purchase motivations, thus providing a strong test of the RP grid. Furthermore, the ad schemas for deodorant and chewing gum were examined with Goodstein's (1993) questionnaire to gain more insight into how unexpected the experimental ads would be to consumers. Subjects indicated they had stronger expectations for deodorant than for chewing gum ads. Both informational and transformational ads could be expected for deodorant, whereas chewing gum ads were likely to be transformational.

In the second pretest, we selected the deodorant and chewing gum that would be used for product trial in the experiment. Nine participants each tested four real deodorant brands, the container and brand name not visible (wrapped with tape), and two real chewing gum brands, presented without the packaging, in balanced order. Subjects indicated which of two descriptions, the experimental brand description or a description based on the alternative purchase motivation, fitted best to verify that the selected products would match the experimental brand descriptions. The experimental description was preferred to the alternative description for two of the four deodorant brands and for both chewing gum brands. Subjects also evaluated the test brands and rated them on a number of sensory characteristics. From the two deodorants and chewing gums that matched the experimental brand description, we selected the deodorant and chewing gum that were evaluated relatively favorably and possessed sensory characteristics consistent with the brand description for use in the experiment.

Subjects and procedure. Subjects were 81 Dutch undergraduate students of psychology who received credit for their participation. Subjects were run in groups of eight persons at the most. Data were collected in October and November 2000 and January 2001.

Subjects were told that they were about to participate in a product test and that the experimenter was interested in their evaluation of a new brand. First, participants received the brand description and the ad scenario. The first questionnaire included manipulation checks for brand perceptions, general questions about the product category, free elicitation of thoughts in response to the ad, ratings of feelings elicited by the ad scenario, and a global measure of attitude toward the ad. After returning the first questionnaire, subjects received the product, which they could try. Then, they were given a second questionnaire containing questions on perceived product quality,

manipulation checks for ad and incongruity perceptions, brand attitude measures and attitude toward the ad measures. After handing in the product and the second questionnaire, subjects were debriefed.

Measures. The independent variables in this study were type of purchase motivation and type of advertising. Incongruity with the brand schema resulted from the interaction between brand and ad perceptions, which were measured both. The dependent variables in this study were processing and evaluation (see Appendix 2).

3.4 Results

Manipulation checks. In general, the experimental manipulations were successful. The fictional deodorant Protect was perceived as a utilitarian brand, and the fictional chewing gum Coolchew was perceived as a hedonic brand. The informational ads were perceived to feature informational content, and the transformational ads were perceived to feature transformational content. The RP grid specifies that informational advertising matches the purchase motivation for Protect, and transformational advertising matches the purchase motivation for Coolchew. Accordingly, the informational ad was perceived as relatively congruent with Protect's brand schema, and the transformational ad was perceived as relatively congruent with the Coolchew brand schema. Furthermore, the information in the congruent ads was more relevant to the brands than the information in the incongruent ads. Subjects also indicated that ads that matched the brand purchase motivation were more typical of advertising in the product category than ads that did not match the purchase motivation. The manipulation checks for brand, ad and incongruity perceptions are discussed in detail below (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Manipulation checks

BRANDS	Utilitarian brand (P)		Hedonic brand (C)	
Utilitarian attributes	Protection against perspiration	5.34	Prevention of tooth decay	3.75
	Prolonged effect	5.15 ^a	Contribution to dental hygiene	3.80 ^b
Hedonic attributes	Attractive to others	3.44	Fresh and cool breath	6.47 ^c
	Seductive scent	3.61 ^a	Active and trendy image	5.88 ^{b,c}
Product typicality		5.07		5.00
ADS	Informational ads		Transformational ads	
Informational ad content		4.91 ^{d,f}		3.59 ^{e,f}
Transformational ad content		4.21 ^{d,g}		5.37 ^{e,g}
INCONGRUITY	Utilitarian brand (P)		Hedonic brand (C)	
Informational ads	Expectancy (brand schema)	6.84 ^h	Expectancy (brand schema)	5.10 ⁱ
	Relevancy (brand schema)	4.21	Relevancy (brand schema)	3.85
	Ad typicality (ad schema)	6.61 ^k	Ad typicality (brand schema)	4.23 ^k
Transformational ads	Expectancy (brand schema)	6.05 ^h	Expectancy (brand schema)	6.05 ⁱ
	Relevancy (brand schema)	3.41	Relevancy (brand schema)	4.35
	Ad typicality (ad schema)	5.21 ^k	Ad typicality (ad schema)	5.68 ^k

Figures with the same superscripts differ significantly from each other. Figures represent scores on 1–7 bipolar scales, where 1 = lowest and 7 = highest score for all measures.

Brand perceptions. Protect was perceived as a utilitarian brand, because it was rated higher on utilitarian than on hedonic deodorant attributes ($t(40) = 5.676, p < .001$). Subjects thought it was likely that Protect offered the utilitarian benefits “prolonged working” (5.15) and “good protection against perspiration” (5.34), and unlikely that Protect possessed the hedonic benefits “having a seductive scent” (3.61) and “being helpful in making an attractive impression on others” (3.44). Coolchew was perceived as a hedonic brand, because it was rated higher on hedonic than on utilitarian chewing gum attributes ($t(33) = 7.645, p < .001$). Subjects thought it was likely that Coolchew caused one “to have a fresh and cool breath” (6.47) and that it had an “active and trendy image” (5.88), representing hedonic benefits. It was unlikely that Coolchew offered the utilitarian benefits “prevention of tooth decay” (3.75) and “contribution to dental hygiene” (3.80). Furthermore, both Protect and Coolchew were perceived as typical examples of their respective product categories chewing gum and deodorant. Thus, the manipulation of brand perceptions was successful with brands that were positioned on the main purchase motivation

associated with their respective product categories. Deodorant and chewing gum are both identified as low involvement products in the marketing literature (cf. Rossiter et al. 1991). The subjects in our study indicated that they were relatively more involved with deodorant than with chewing gum (4.72 vs. 3.77, $t(79) = 3.789$, $p < .001$).

Ad perceptions. The ad type manipulation was examined on the base of the average informational and transformational ad content perceptions. Compared to informational ads, transformational ads carried more transformational content (5.37 vs. 4.21, $t(79) = 4.274$, $p < .001$) and less informational content (3.59 vs. 4.91, $t(79) = 5.226$, $p < .001$). The differences in transformational and informational ad content were also significant within each ad type (5.37 vs. 3.59, $t(41) = 7.213$, $p < .001$ for transformational ads; 4.21 vs. 4.91, $t(38) = 2.439$, $p < .05$ for informational ads). Thus, the manipulation of ad perceptions was successful.

Incongruity perceptions. The ANOVA for expectancy of the ad's message showed both a product main effect ($F(1,77) = 9.152$, $p < .01$) and an ad type \times product interaction effect ($F(1,77) = 9.248$, $p < .01$). The ad type \times product interaction showed that the informational ad was less expected than the transformational ad for the hedonic brand Coolchew, while the reverse was true for the utilitarian brand Protect. Thus, ads that did not match the purchase motivation were relatively incongruent with the brand schema. The ANOVA for relevancy of the ad to the brand also showed an ad type \times product interaction ($F(1,77) = 3.112$, $p < .10$). The interaction effect showed that the transformational ad was more relevant for the hedonic Coolchew than the informational ad, while the reverse was true for the utilitarian Protect. This implies that the mismatching ads were not as relevant to the brand as the matching ads, consistent with the RP grid.

Consumer expectations of the experimental ads were further investigated by ad typicality, which measured the degree to which the ads were expected for the product categories concerned. The ANOVA for ad typicality showed a product main effect ($F(1,77) = 8.340$, $p < .01$) and an ad type \times product interaction ($F(1,77) = 18.583$, $p < .001$). The ad type \times product interaction showed that the informational ad was more typical than the transformational ad for deodorant, while the reverse was true for chewing gum. Thus, ads matching the Protect and Coolchew purchase motivations were also relatively typical of advertising in their respective product categories. This suggests that the matching ads are congruent with both brand and ad

schemas. The product main effect of ad typicality indicated that on average the Protect ads were more typical of advertising in the product category than the Coolchew ads (estimated marginal means: 5.91 vs. 4.95). This might be explained by the first pretest, which indicated that consumers have stronger advertising expectations for deodorant than for chewing gum.

Hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested using MANOVAs with product and ad type as independent variables. The RP grid states that ad type \times product interaction effects reflects differences in consumer reactions to ads matching and mismatching the brand purchase motivation. The manipulation checks for incongruity show that mismatching ads are incongruent with both brand and ad schemas. The main results are given in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Results

Attitude toward the ad (hypotheses 1 and 2)			
	<i>Utilitarian brand (P)</i>	<i>Hedonic brand (C)</i>	<i>Ad type average</i>
Informational ads	3.08 (.24)	3.60 (.29)	3.34 (.19)
Transformational ads	4.84 (.22)	3.89 (.24)	4.37 (.16)
Brand attitude (hypotheses 1 and 2)			
	<i>Utilitarian brand (P)</i>	<i>Hedonic brand (C)</i>	<i>Ad type average</i>
Informational ads	4.07 (.30)	4.88 (.35)	4.48 (.23)
Transformational ads	4.06 (.28)	5.05 (.30)	4.56 (.20)
Total thoughts (hypotheses 3 and 4)			
	<i>Utilitarian brand (P)</i>	<i>Hedonic brand (C)</i>	<i>Ad type average</i>
Informational ads	3.58 (.28)	3.30 (.27)	3.44 (.20)
Transformational ads	4.14 (.26)	3.55 (.27)	3.84 (.19)
Incongruity-related thoughts (hypotheses 3 and 4)			
	<i>Utilitarian brand (P)</i>	<i>Hedonic brand (C)</i>	<i>Ad type average</i>
Informational ads	0.00 (.12)	0.45 (.12)	0.23 (.08)
Transformational ads	0.46 (.11)	0.00 (.12)	0.23 (.08)
Congruity-related thoughts (no hypotheses)			
	<i>Utilitarian brand (P)</i>	<i>Hedonic brand (C)</i>	<i>Ad type average</i>
Informational ads	0.90 (.16)	0.30 (.16)	0.60 (.11)
Transformational ads	0.59 (.15)	0.75 (.16)	0.67 (.11)
Arousal (hypotheses 5 and 6)			
	<i>Utilitarian brand (P)</i>	<i>Hedonic brand (C)</i>	<i>Ad type average</i>
Informational ads	2.68 (.24)	3.26 (.29)	2.97 (.19)
Transformational ads	4.64 (.22)	4.35 (.24)	4.49 (.16)

Figures represent estimated marginal means (standard errors in parentheses).

Ad evaluation. Hypotheses 1 and 2 stated that the informational ad would be evaluated more favorably than the transformational ad for the utilitarian brand, while the reverse pattern was expected for the hedonic brand. The MANOVA for attitude toward the ad showed an ad type main effect ($F(1,68) = 17.163, p < .001$) and an ad type \times product interaction effect ($F(1,68) = 8.776, p < .01$). Transformational ads were evaluated more favorably than informational ads for both brands. Contrary to our hypotheses, inspection of the means suggested a mismatching effect. The ads that did not match brand purchase motivation had above-ad type-average means, while the matching ads had below-average-average means (see Table 3.3). Thus, given the main

effect of ad type, mismatching ads were evaluated more favorably than matching ads (see Figure 3.1).

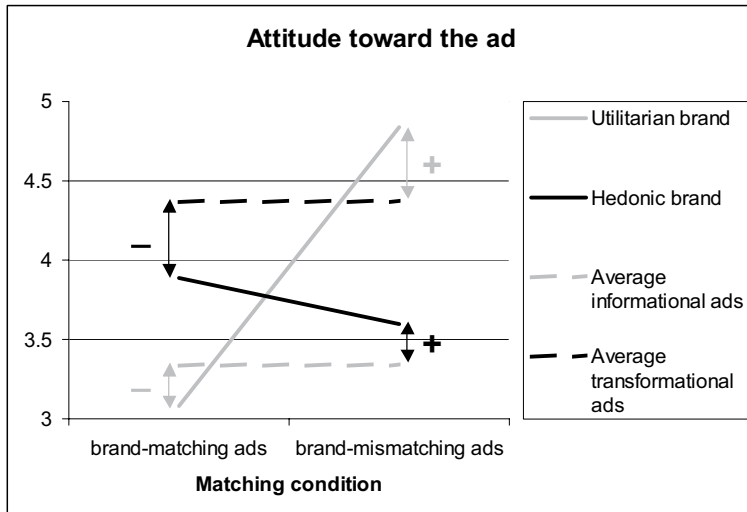


Figure 3.1: The mismatching effect of ad evaluations

This mismatching effect was investigated further by running separate regressions on ad evaluations for Protect and Coolchew with incongruity with the brand schema (expectancy of the ad’s message, relevancy to the brand and their interaction), incongruity with the ad schema (ad typicality), and perceived informational and transformational content as independent variables (see table 3.4, attitude toward the ad). The regressions showed that ads that were incongruent with the ad schema were evaluated more favorably than congruent ads, indicating the mismatching effect. Incongruity with the brand schema did not affect ad evaluations. In addition, transformational ad content led to higher ad evaluations for both brands.

In conclusion, Hypotheses 1 and 2 on ad evaluations were not confirmed. Transformational ads were more effective than informational ads for both brands, and although there was a significant ad type × product interaction it was not in the expected direction. Possible explanations for the mismatching hypothesis are given in the discussion in section 3.5.

Table 3.4: Regression analyses of attitude toward the ad and arousal

1. Attitude toward the ad	β	p-value	β	p-value
	<i>Utilitarian brand (P)</i>		<i>Hedonic brand (C)</i>	
Constant	2.978	(.245)	1.081	(.549)
a. Expectancy	0.147	(.659)	0.404	(.225)
Relevancy	0.289	(.638)	0.819	(.054)
Expectancy \times Relevancy	-0.046	(.619)	-0.125	(.091)
b. Ad typicality	-0.326	(.089)	-0.248	(.031)
c. Informational	-0.232	(.158)	-0.004	(.975)
Transformational	0.548	(.012)	0.255	(.068)
R ² (adj.)	0.345		0.323	
F-Value (p-value)	4.508 (.002)		2.541 (.040)	
2. Arousal	β	p-value	β	p-value
	<i>Utilitarian brand (P)</i>		<i>Hedonic brand (C)</i>	
Constant	7.182	(.003)	2.196	(.377)
a. Expectancy	0.009	(.976)	0.151	(.739)
Relevancy	-0.063	(.908)	0.426	(.454)
Expectancy \times Relevancy	0.016	(.849)	-0.081	(.415)
b. Ad typicality	-0.495	(.005)	-0.093	(.541)
c. Informational	-0.438	(.004)	-0.097	(.597)
Transformational	0.187	(.315)	0.392	(.042)
R ² (adj.)	0.462		0.000	
F-Value (p-value)	6.734 (.000)		0.997 (.444)	

β denotes the non-standardized regression coefficient
a. = Incongruity with the brand schema, b. = Incongruity with the ad schema, c. = Ad content

Brand evaluation. The MANOVA results for brand evaluation showed that the hedonic brand was evaluated more favorably than the utilitarian brand ($F(1,70) = 8.678, p < .01$, estimated marginal means: 4.97 vs. 4.07). This is consistent with the fact that the consumption of hedonic products is generally associated with enjoyment, positive feelings and fun (Holbrook & Hirschman 1982). Neither the ad type main effect nor the ad type \times product interaction was significant, although a pattern similar to that for ad evaluation was expected. Thus, contrary to Hypotheses 1 and 2 brand evaluations were not affected by matching. Regression analyses for both Protect and Coolchew (not included in Table 3.4) showed that brand attitude was determined by perceived product quality but not by attitude toward the ad. This indicates that

subjects based their brand evaluations exclusively on product trial and ignored the ads. The findings for brand evaluations are explained in the discussion in section 3.5.

Cognitive processing. Content analysis of thoughts showed that both thoughts about incongruity and thoughts about congruity (e.g., “this is just another standard deodorant ad”) were elicited in response to ads. Hence both types of thoughts were included in the analysis. Hypotheses 3 and 4 stated that for the utilitarian brand the transformational ad would lead to more thoughts in total and more incongruity-related thoughts than the informational ad, while the reverse was expected for the hedonic brand. In line with these hypotheses, more congruity-related thoughts were expected for ads matching the brand purchase motivation than for mismatching ads.

The MANOVA results for incongruity-related thoughts showed a significant ad type \times product interaction effect ($F(1,77) = 15.587, p < .001$). The transformational ad led to more incongruity-related thoughts than the informational ad for the utilitarian Protect, and the reverse pattern was found for the hedonic Coolchew. Furthermore, there was a significant ad type \times product interaction for congruity-related thoughts ($F(1,77) = 5.656, p < .05$). The transformational ad led to more congruity-related thoughts than the informational ad for Coolchew, while the reverse was true for Protect (see Table 3.3). No effects were found for total number of thoughts. This suggests that the degree of incongruity was not large enough to cause more elaborate information processing. Thus, hypotheses 3 and 4 were only partly confirmed.

Affective processing (arousal). Hypotheses 5 and 6 stated that the transformational ad would lead to a higher level of arousal than the informational ad for Protect, while the reverse was expected for Coolchew. The MANOVA for arousal showed an ad type main effect ($F(1,68) = 38.044, p < .001$) and a marginally significant ad type \times product interaction effect ($F(1,68) = 3.006, p < .10$). The ad type main effect indicated that transformational ads led to more arousal than informational ads (see Table 3.3). The interaction effect supported the reasoning that incongruity leads to more arousal. The ads that did not match the purchase motivation had above-average-average means, while the matching ads had below-average-average means (see Table 3.3).

This interaction effect was investigated further by running separate regressions on arousal for Protect and Coolchew including incongruity with the brand schema

(expectancy of the ad's message, relevancy to the brand and their interaction), incongruity with the ad schema (ad typicality), and perceived informational and transformational content as independent variables (see table 3.4, arousal). The regression results for the utilitarian Protect showed that both incongruity with the ad schema and informational ad content led to higher levels of arousal. The regression for the hedonic Coolchew was not significant. Thus, hypothesis 5 was confirmed, but hypothesis 6 was not confirmed.

3.5 Discussion

Generally, our findings are inconsistent with the assumptions and recommendations made in the RP grid. In contrast with the matching hypothesis proposed by the RP grid, we find that ads that do not match the brand purchase motivation are evaluated more favorably than matching ads. However, it should be noted that the RP grid considers brand evaluations rather than ad evaluations as the main measure of advertising effectiveness. In this section we give an explanation of our findings based on schema theory.

First, it is important to observe that the conditions in this experiment were in agreement with the conditions in which the matching hypothesis is likely to hold (see Table 3.1). We used fictional brands so weak attitudes would result. Furthermore, the ads that did not match the brand purchase motivation were incongruent with the brand schema and presented relatively irrelevant information to the brand. However, the regression analyses indicated that incongruity with the brand schema did not determine ad evaluations and arousal. Instead, ad evaluations and arousal were determined by incongruity with the ad schema. Thus, consumers did *not* relate advertising to the brand schema, but used their ad schema in ad processing. The use of ad schema-based expectations in ad processing has been supported by Goodstein (1993) and Olney et al. (1991). However, the RP grid assumes that consumers use brand schema knowledge in ad processing.

The findings in our experiment imply that the criterion of brand awareness specified in the RP grid is not sufficient for the matching hypothesis to hold. The implicit assumption in the RP grid that consumers relate advertising to the brand purchase motivation, simply because they are aware of the brand's characteristics, is

not correct. However, this does not necessarily imply that the tactics from the RP grid are incorrect. If consumers are encouraged to actively use the knowledge from their brand schema the matching hypothesis may still apply. Given that consumers did not automatically employ brand schema knowledge even in the context of a product test, suggests that schema salience is necessary as an additional requirement in the RP grid.

The findings in our experiment suggest that the ad schema was used in ad processing. The experimental procedure might have encouraged consumers to use their ad schema because they read the ad scenario twice, and the brand description once. The ads that did not match the brand purchase motivation were also incongruent with the ad schema, and the brand-matching ads were congruent with the ad schema. In line with schema theory, incongruity with the ad schema led to more arousal than congruity with the ad schema. The relatively favorable evaluation of ads that were incongruent with the ad schema is consistent with Mandler's (1982) hypothesis that a moderate amount of incongruity is evaluated more favorably than either congruity or extreme incongruity. It is likely that consumers perceived the degree of incongruity with the ad schema to be moderate, because only the focus of processing (number of incongruity-related thoughts) changed as a result of incongruity and not the amount of processing (total number of thoughts).

Psychological research on attitudes and persuasion suggest that there may also be another explanation for the relatively favorable evaluation of ads that are incongruent with the ad schema. If consumers hold strong negative attitudes about advertising in a product category, a particular ad may function as a counterattitudinal message, which is more persuasive in the case of incongruity (mismatch) rather than congruity (match) with the ad schema. This explanation may apply for deodorant, because consumers had strong ad-related expectations, and relatively unfavorable evaluations of typical (informational) category ads.

In addition to the mismatching effect for ad evaluations, there was an ad type main effect, which indicated that transformational ads led to more arousal and were evaluated more favorably than informational ads. This shows that ad content had a strong effect on ad processing and evaluation, irrespective of whether the ad matched or mismatched the brand purchase motivation. The transformational ads probably contained stronger heuristic cues than informational ads (cf. Puto & Wells 1984). This may have led to heuristic processing of transformational ads, which in turn affected ad evaluations positively (Chaiken 1980).

Contrary to ad evaluations, brand evaluations were not affected by the experimental ads or incongruity with schema knowledge. The findings suggested that product trials rather than the ad scenarios influenced brand evaluations. Hoch & Ha (1986) state that ads are likely to influence brand evaluation when trial experience is ambiguous. We assumed that trial would be ambiguous with regard to the benefits that were used for the brands and ads. It seems difficult, for example, to determine how well the brands perform in terms of prolonged protection against perspiration or in making an attractive impression on others for deodorant, and contributing to dental hygiene or having an active image for chewing gum. However, the findings show that consumers did not attend to these brand benefits in trial, but simply focused on the sensory characteristics of the products in their brand evaluations. The experimental procedure that posed questions about product quality (measured by sensory characteristics) directly after the product test might have contributed to consumers ignoring the benefits from the brand and ad descriptions in their brand evaluations. However, in favor of the RP grid, the finding that ads did not affect brand evaluations may also imply that the ad appeals used in the experiment were not strong enough to produce changes in consumer brand attitudes.

The main argument put forward in this discussion is that the matching hypothesis from the RP grid requires brand schema salience instead of mere brand awareness, which was the case in this experiment. Consumers employing the ad schema in ad processing explain the results in this study. However, a competing explanation is that the ad and brand descriptions in our study only incompletely matched or mismatched the purchase motivations, and therefore no effects of incongruity with the brand schema were found. Unintended, the ad and brand descriptions might have appealed to other informational and transformational purchase motives (Rossiter et al. 1991, Rossiter & Percy 1997). The utilitarian Protect brand was meant to correspond with RP's problem avoidance motive, whereas the hedonic Coolchew brand was meant to correspond with RP's sensory gratification and social approval motives. However, Coolchew might also have appealed to a problem avoidance motive, e.g., preventing bad breath. The informational and transformational ads were intended to relate to the problem avoidance and sensory gratification/social approval motives, respectively. However, the informational Protect ad might also have appealed to a social approval motive, e.g., being like a successful businesswoman, while the transformational Protect ad might have appealed to a

problem avoidance motive, e.g., it even works in a hot disco. Likewise, the transformational Coolchew ad might have appealed to a problem avoidance motive, e.g., preventing bad breath. Thus, the informational Protect ad might not have matched the purchase motivation completely, whereas the transformational Protect ad might not have mismatched completely. A similar reasoning applies to the Coolchew ads. Although our manipulation checks were successful, this alternative interpretation cannot be ruled out completely.

3.6 Study Limitations and Issues for Future Research

From the discussion of the results a number of issues for further research emerge.

Firstly, advertising grids such as the RP and FCB grids assume that consumers relate the ad to brand perceptions. This study showed that even under conditions in which consumers had full brand awareness, and brand perceptions might be expected to be salient (a product test), consumers related ads to the ad schema. Thus, it is important that future research on the matching hypothesis considers schema salience as an additional requirement. Furthermore, more insight into the use of ad schemas can be gained by investigating the role of ad schema knowledge in the evaluation of brand purchase matching and mismatching ads when the brand schema is salient to consumers. We suggest that the schema that is used to process advertising may depend on the setting in which consumers view the ad. If a person is oriented toward buying a brand from a certain product category, it is likely that the brand schema is salient when an ad for such a product is shown. However, when somebody sees the ad while watching television, the ad schema for the product category is probably salient.

Secondly, brands and products were confounded in this study. Although our manipulation checks showed that consumers associated the experimental brands with either utilitarian or hedonic product attributes, it is important to clearly distinguish between brand and product effects. In future research this might be done by using two different brands from the same product category.

Thirdly, it is interesting to investigate whether brands associated with different purchase motives also lead to different sensitivity to incongruity. In psychological attitude research it has been suggested that affect-based attitudes are more susceptible to incongruity than cognition-based attitudes, because affective attitudes are

unidimensional, whereas cognition-based attitudes are multidimensional. Hence, it is harder to establish a complete mismatch with a cognition-based attitude than with an affect-based attitude. It seems likely that this argument also holds for utilitarian and hedonic attitudes. However, in marketing it has also been argued that the tolerance for incongruity-related phenomena such as arousal is greater for hedonic than for utilitarian products e.g., leading to higher potential for variety seeking for hedonic product categories (e.g. Holbrook & Hirschman 1982). This seems to be an important issue for further exploration.

In Chapter 4, we investigate the hypothesis that was put forward in the Discussion of this experiment (section 3.5) by testing whether brand and ad evaluations are in line with the RP grid if the brand schema salience requirement is met. Furthermore, we address the second limitation of this study by employing brands with a different positioning (utilitarian and hedonic) from the same product category in the experiments of Chapter 4.

Appendix 1: Brand Descriptions and Ad Scenarios

Utilitarian brand. Protect is a new deodorant that lasts all day long. Now you don't have to worry anymore about the unpleasant effects of perspiration. This deodorant is available in both roller stick and spray variants. The brand will be on sale in supermarkets and drug stores.

Informational Protect ad. A woman in her early thirties, wearing a suit looks in the camera and says that she always has to look good in her job. She says: "I have to trust that I always make a self-assured impression, no matter how busy I am. Thanks to Protect deodorant I feel fresh and secure all day and can concentrate fully on my work." The voice-over ends with the claim "Protect deodorant protects you all day."

Transformational Protect ad. The camera shows images of a crowded disco with young people dancing on steamy R&B music. Then the camera zooms in on a seductive woman and follows her while she dances to the center of the floor with sensual movements. She immediately attracts attention and admiring looks from all the men she passes. The voice-over ends with the claim "Protect deodorant for an unforgettable impression."

Hedonic brand. Coolchew is a new chewing gum that gives you a fresh and cool breath. This active and trendy chewing gum is very tasty. It is available either separately or in five-piece packaging. The brand will be on sale in supermarkets from June 2001.

Informational Coolchew ad. A dentist sitting in his office looks in the camera and says that dental care among young people has been decreasing strongly in the past few years. He says: "In my practice I'm confronted daily with the unpleasant effects of bad dental care. Hence my advice to young people: don't let it go that far. Except for brushing your teeth regularly, the choice of your chewing gum also contributes to dental hygiene. That's why I recommend Coolchew chewing gum." The voice-over ends with the claim "Coolchew for healthy gums and prevention of cavities."

Transformational Coolchew ad. The camera shows images of two friends waiting for their dates. One of the boys is chewing a piece of chewing gum. Then their girl friends come out the front door and both couples kiss. The girl friend of the boy with the chewing gum winks to her girl friend and smiles while she nods her head. In the meantime, the other boy is getting the car. Then the girl friend of the boy with the car unexpectedly walks to the boy with the chewing gum and also kisses him. Then the three laugh and walk to the car. The voice-over ends with the claim “Coolchew for fresh and cool breath.”

Appendix 2: Overview of Independent and Dependent Measures

Brand perceptions. Seven-point attribute belief ratings indicated the extent to which the brands were associated with utilitarian and hedonic purchase motives. Four attributes were rated, two from the brand description and two from the accompanying mismatching ad. Furthermore, the perception of the brand as a good example of the product category was measured. This product typicality judgment was measured with bipolar 7-point scales: “good example-poor example”, “typical-atypical”, “representative-unrepresentative” (Loken & Ward 1990). Finally, product involvement was measured with four bipolar 7-point scales: “important-unimportant”, “means a lot to me-means nothing to me”, “interested-uninterested”, “significant-insignificant”, taken from Zaichkowsky’s (1985) PII-scale.

Ad perceptions. Informational ad content was measured with the following Likert-type scales: “the advertisement suggests the solution to a problem”, “the commercial is factual and informative”, and “the ad focuses on usage benefits associated with the brand” (adapted from Holbrook & Batra 1987, Olney et al. 1991). Transformational ad content scales were “the advertisement presents a slice of life”, “the commercial tries to create a mood”, and “an enjoyment appeal is used in the ad”. This type of measurement was preferred to the Puto & Wells (1984) scale that uses the intended effects associated with informational and transformational advertising to measure ad type perceptions.

Incongruity perceptions. Two items reflecting expectancy of the ad’s message and relevancy to the brand (adapted from Heckler & Childers 1992), measured incongruity with the brand schema, and were included in the statements about ad content. The statement “the way in which the ad communicates its message is unexpected” measured the unexpectedness of the ad message. The statement “the ad’s content is relevant to this brand” measured the relevancy of the ad for the brand. Furthermore, expectancy of the ad was further investigated by ad typicality. The adjectives “different”, “typical”, and “unique” were used to measure how congruent the ad was compared to other ads from the product category (Goodstein 1993).

Processing

The cognitive aspects of processing were measured with free elicitation of thoughts, in response to the first reading of the ad. The affective aspects of processing were measured with rating of feelings, in response to the second reading of the ad.

Cognitive processing. Total thoughts and incongruity-related thoughts were used in this study to measure information processing in line with Sujan's (1985) coding scheme.

Affective processing. The dimensions of arousal and pleasure are often used to distinguish feelings (e.g. Olney et al. 1991, Russell 1980). Arousal was measured with the items "stimulated-relaxed", "excited-calm", "frenzied-sluggish", "jittery-dull", and "wide awake-sleepy" (Olney et al. 1991). The items "happy-unhappy", "pleased-annoyed", "satisfied-unsatisfied" (Olney et al. 1991), "in good mood-in bad mood", "surprised-bored", "enthusiastic-reserved" (Mano & Oliver 1993), "gloomy-cheerful" (Russell 1980) measured pleasure. The items from Mano & Oliver (1993) and Russell (1980) were adapted to obtain meaningful translations into Dutch.

Evaluation

Both brand and ad evaluation measures were included in this study. In addition to overall brand attitude and attitude toward the ad, a two-dimensional brand attitude and a three-dimensional attitude toward the ad measure were included. Perceived product quality was also measured.

Brand evaluation. The items "good-bad", "positive-negative", and "favorable-unfavorable" were used to measure overall brand attitude. The utilitarian component of brand attitude was measured with the items "useful-useless", "valuable-worthless", and "wise-foolish". The hedonic component of brand attitude was measured with the items "pleasant-unpleasant", "nice-awful", and "agreeable-disagreeable". Both overall and two-dimensional brand attitude measures were taken from Batra & Ahtola (1990).

Ad evaluation. The items "good-bad", "like-dislike", "irritating-not irritating", "interesting-uninteresting" (Mitchell & Olson 1981) were used to measure overall attitude toward the ad. The three-dimensional attitude-toward-the-ad measure was

taken from Olney et al. (1991). The utilitarian component reflecting how informative and useful ads are, was measured with the items “informative-uninformative”, “helpful-not helpful”, and “useful-not useful”. The hedonic component, capturing how entertaining and pleasurable ads are, was measured with the items “pleasant-unpleasant”, “entertaining-not entertaining”, and “enjoyable-not enjoyable”. The interestingness component is a judgment of curiosity caused by the ad, measured with the items “makes me curious-does not make me curious”, “not boring-boring”, and “keeps my attention-does not keep my attention”.

Perceived product quality. Perceived product quality was measured with ratings of the brands’ sensory characteristics. Protect’s perceived quality was measured with six items related to the deodorant’s scent and four items related to the sensation of deodorant on the skin. Coolchew’s perceived quality was measured with six items related to the chewing gum’s taste and four items related to the chewing experience.

Chapter 4: The Role of Schema Salience in Ad Processing and Evaluation

4.1 Introduction

Advertising grids, such as the Rossiter-Percy grid (RP grid: Rossiter et al. 1991, Rossiter & Percy 1997) and the FCB grid (FCB grid: Vaughn 1980, 1986) related the type of brand–ad combination to advertising effectiveness. The normative recommendation from both grids is that the ad appeal should match the brand attitude basis. However, Dubé et al. (1996) note that the evidence in support of this recommendation is anecdotal and neither systematically nor empirically investigated. Furthermore, research on attitudes and persuasion (Edwards 1990, Millar & Millar 1990) and schema theory (Mandler 1982, Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989, Lee & Mason 1999) has yielded results conflicting with the matching hypothesis advanced in the advertising grids. Together, these studies point to the importance of further investigating the assumptions regarding the effectiveness of brand-matching advertising.

In the experimental test of the RP grid in Chapter 3 we found evidence for a mismatching hypothesis. Contrary to RP grid predictions, ads that did not match the purchase motivation for the brand were more effective than matching ads. A possible explanation of this result is that the brand schema was not salient in the processing of the ad. Furthermore, salience of the ad schema might have played a role in ad processing and evaluation (Goodstein, 1993). For the matching hypothesis from advertising grids to hold, it seems necessary that consumers consciously relate ad information to the brand schema.

In section 4.2, we discuss the schemas used in ad processing and evaluation and explain how schema salience affects ad processing and evaluation. We continue by describing two experiments employing the same brands and ads but different schemas that are salient in ad processing and evaluation. Brand–ad combinations were evaluated in agreement with the matching hypothesis in the first experiment when the brand schema was salient. However, in the second experiment, when the ad schema was salient, matches or mismatches between ad types and brand schemas did not

influence brand–ad evaluations. We discuss the implications of our findings in the final section.

4.2 Theory

Two schemas have been proposed in the literature as being relevant for ad processing. Both the RP grid and the FCB grid assume that advertising effectiveness is related to the brand schema. The brand schema includes knowledge about the brand and its position in the product category (Krishnan 1996, Park et al. 1986). Alternatively, Goodstein (1993) assumes that advertising effectiveness is related to the ad schema, which includes knowledge about advertising in the product category. In this section, ad processing and evaluation based on the brand schema, as specified by the RP grid, is explained. Next, the moderating role of the ad schema in resolving incongruity between the brand and its advertising will be discussed. Finally, we will explain ad processing and evaluation when the ad schema rather than the brand schema is salient.

4.2.1 Brand Schema Salience

The RP grid specifies the relationships between brand–ad combinations and advertising effectiveness. For a detailed discussion of these relationships and the advertising tactics developed for each of the four quadrants identified in the advertising grid we refer to Rossiter et al. (1991) and Rossiter & Percy (1997). However, the main implication of their theory on advertising effectiveness is that the type of advertising should reflect the brand purchase motivation. This approach acknowledges the perceived differences between brands of the same product category (Broniarczyk & Alba 1994, Park et al. 1991).

An important implication of the RP grid concerns the use of informational and transformational advertising for utilitarian and hedonic brands. Given a functional purchase motivation for a utilitarian brand, the RP grid recommends advertising that provides information about the brand. Likewise, given a purchase motivation of receiving pleasure for hedonic brands, the RP grid recommends transformational advertising, containing associations with the positive experiences of using the brand. Thus, the RP grid predicts that informational advertising is more effective than transformational advertising for utilitarian brands. Likewise, transformational

advertising is presumably more effective than informational advertising for hedonic brands.

In the shampoo category, for example, widely divergent brand concepts exist (Drolet & Aaker 2002). Head & Shoulders (H&S) is strongly associated with dandruff control, and is likely to be bought out of a problem-solving motive (utilitarian brand). Johnson & Johnson Baby Shampoo (J&J) is associated with softness and mildness and therefore likely to be purchased because of sensory gratification motives (hedonic brand). The advertising grid states that advertising should take differences in purchase motivation into account. According to the tactics in the advertising grid, the H&S advertisement should use a simple problem-solution format, and include one or two extremely stated benefits (informational advertising), whereas the J&J ad should display emotional authenticity associated with the brand (transformational advertising).

In the RP grid, brand attitude is considered the main indicator of advertising effectiveness, given brand awareness. The implicit assumption in the advertising grid is that consumers relate the information in the ad to their knowledge of the brand, which is included in the brand schema. However, the results of Chapter 3 suggest that mere awareness of the brand may not be enough for the predictions of the advertising grid to hold. Their results are inconsistent with recommendations of the RP grid, although the participants in their study had full brand awareness. In addition to brand awareness, it seems that brand schema salience is required. The notion of brand schema salience differs from brand awareness in that consumers do not only know whether a particular brand has utilitarian or hedonic features, but also actively use this knowledge in information processing of the ad (Fiske & Taylor 1984).

In line with the advertising grid, schema theory suggests that if advertising information does not match the brand purchase motivation, less favorable evaluations will result. This is explained by the superiority of relevant over irrelevant information (Lee & Mason 1999). If the brand schema is salient, consumers have a clear mental image of the brand and its defining features. If an ad is incongruent with the brand purchase motivation the ad represents irrelevant information to the brand's positioning in the product category and will be evaluated negatively. Likewise, if an ad is congruent with the brand purchase motivation the ad contains relevant brand information (Heckler & Childers 1992, Lee & Mason 1999) and will be evaluated

positively. This implies that the matching hypothesis from the RP grid is likely to hold if the brand schema is salient in ad processing. This leads to hypotheses 1 and 2.

H1: If the brand schema is salient, informational advertising leads to higher brand and ad evaluations for a utilitarian brand than transformational advertising.

H2: If the brand schema is salient, transformational advertising leads to higher brand and ad evaluations for a hedonic brand than informational advertising.

4.2.2 The Moderating Role of the Ad Schema

When advertising does not match the purchase motivation for the brand, consumers will try to resolve this incongruity (Mandler 1982, Stayman et al. 1982). Consumers can resolve incongruity by referring to knowledge available from related schemas. Note that consumers will not refer to knowledge from other schemas in case of congruity with the salient schema. For example, consumers who try to categorize a new product that has features incongruent with the relevant existing category but congruent with a different product category, use the latter type of knowledge to resolve the incongruity (Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989, Peracchio & Tybout 1996, Stayman et al. 1992). Similarly, when the brand schema is salient, ad schema knowledge may be employed by consumers to resolve incongruity between the brand and its advertising. So if an advertisement does not match the purchase motivation for the brand, this incongruity may be resolved by the assertion that the ad is congruent with other ads in the product category. Consequently, the ad's congruity with the ad schema diminishes the mismatch between the brand and its advertisement (Mandler 1982). In the studies on new product evaluation (e.g., Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989), resolving incongruity has led to relatively favorable evaluations. This implies that brand-mismatching advertising that is congruent with the ad schema will lead to more favorable evaluations than brand-mismatching advertising that is incongruent with ad schema knowledge.

A related stream of research arrives at similar predictions. Heckler & Childers (1992) explicitly identify two dimensions of incongruity. They state that advertising can be incongruent because the ad presents irrelevant information, unexpected information or both. In case of brand-mismatching, the ad represents irrelevant information to the brand's positioning. A match with the ad schema implies that the

ad is not uncommon for the product category itself and hence represents relatively expected information. However, when the ad does not match the ad schema, the ad will represent relatively unexpected information in addition to being irrelevant. Lee & Mason (1999) show that ads containing irrelevant but expected information are less incongruent and evaluated more favorably than ads containing irrelevant and unexpected information. In conclusion, schema theory suggests that the ad schema may improve ad evaluations that do not match the purchase motivation for the brand.

H3: If the brand schema is salient, brand-mismatching advertising that is congruent with the ad schema leads to more favorable brand–ad evaluations than brand-mismatching advertising that is incongruent with ad schema knowledge.

The moderating role of the ad schema in brand-mismatching advertising is expected only if the ad schema is uniform in nature, i.e., the ad schema contains either informational or transformational ads but not both. Goodstein (1993) suggests that an ad schema, i.e., a notion about what to expect from ads in a certain product category, cannot exist when consumers perceive variety among ads in the product category. However, Chapter 3 shows that there are also product categories for which strong ad schemas exist even though consumers perceive variety among ads in the product category. In those product categories both types of advertising identified in the RP grid are perceived as relatively typical ads. Consequently, in those product categories the presence of an ad schema may not distinguish between brand-mismatching ads in terms of advertising effectiveness. In our research, the role of ad schema variety will be explored further.

4.2.3 Ad Schema Salience

The ad schema contains knowledge about advertising in a particular product category (Goodstein 1993). Contrary to advertising grid assumptions, the ad schema rather than the brand schema may be salient in ad processing and evaluation. This implies that consumers do not necessarily relate ads to brand knowledge but may primarily judge whether ads match other ads from the product category. In the case of ad schema salience, the matching hypothesis of the RP grid is not likely to hold, because the ad's relevancy to the brand is of secondary importance. When an ad matches the ad

schema, the ad presents expected information to the consumer, and when the ad does not match the ad schema knowledge it is likely to be perceived as unexpected information (Heckler & Childers 1992). Only if the ad is incongruent with the ad schema, consumers might consider the brand schema (Mandler 1982, Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989).

Goodstein's findings (1993) suggest that ads that are congruent with the ad schema (typical ads) are evaluated more favorably than ads that are incongruent with the ad schema (a-typical ads). This implies that the pattern of evaluations formulated in hypothesis 1 and 2 may still occur in case of incongruity with the ad schema, but only if the type of advertising recommended in the RP grid is also typically associated with the product category (and consequently with the ad schema). However, even when the pattern of evaluations is similar to the advertising grid, this will not be caused by the brand \times ad type interaction that is central to the RP grid.

H4: If the ad schema is salient, brand and ad evaluations will not be affected by the brand-matching or brand-mismatching nature of advertising as specified in the RP grid.

Our hypotheses will be examined in two experiments in which the salient schema for ad processing and evaluation is different. In experiment 1 the brand schema is made salient and consequently evaluations are expected to follow predictions from the advertising grid, i.e., brand-matching advertising is more effective than brand-mismatching advertising (hypotheses 1 and 2). Furthermore, the moderating role of the ad schema in evaluations of brand-mismatching advertising is investigated (hypothesis 3). In experiment 2, the ad schema is made salient and the greater effectiveness of brand-matching advertising compared to brand-mismatching advertising is not expected (hypothesis 4).

4.3 Experiment 1: Brand Schema Salience

In the first experiment, we tested the matching hypothesis from the RP grid with different brands and different ads. The brand schema was made salient and advertising that matched the brand's purchase motivation was expected to be more

effective than advertising that did not match the purchase motivation for the brand. Furthermore, the moderating role of the ad schema in the evaluation of brand-mismatching advertising was investigated.

4.3.1 Method

Design. A 2 (brand purchase motivation) \times 2 (type of advertising) experimental design was used. Brand and ad perceptions were manipulated by means of hypothetical brand descriptions and ad scenarios (see appendix 1). This resulted in four brand–ad combinations that were constructed according to the tactics outlined in the RP grid. In two brand–ad combinations, the ad matched the brand purchase motivation, i.e., an informational ad for a utilitarian brand, and a transformational ad for a hedonic brand. In the other two brand–ad combinations, the ad did not match the purchase motivation for the brand, i.e., a transformational ad for a utilitarian brand, and an informational ad for a hedonic brand.

The experiment was conducted for each of two product categories: deodorant and soft drinks. The ad schema was expected to be different across these categories. Subjects in the experiment received either two matching or two mismatching brand-ad combinations from one of the product categories. This means that brand purchase motivation and type of advertising were within-subject factors, but brand-matching that resulted from the interaction between brand purchase motivation and type of advertising was a between-subjects factor.

Subjects and procedure. Data were collected in June 2001. 76 Dutch undergraduate students were told that they took part in a study on advertising and that we were interested in their opinions about brands, ads and brand–ad combinations.

The questionnaire was constructed as follows. First subjects read two brand descriptions from the same product category, one for a utilitarian brand and another for a hedonic brand, before answering questions about their initial brand attitudes and brand perceptions. Then they read two ad scenarios, an informational and a transformational ad scenario, and subsequently answered questions about their initial attitudes toward the ad and ad perceptions. Next, subjects were asked to choose the ad

that fitted each of the brands best. The choice task served to make the brand schema salient in ad processing and evaluation for the remainder of the questionnaire.

Collection of the dependent measures in the questionnaire started with the second part of the choice task, in which participants had to rank all four brand–ad combinations in order of preference. This task will be referred to as the *ranking* task. Next, subjects were requested to rate each of two brand–ad combinations, either the two brand-matching combinations or the two brand-mismatching combinations. The ads in the brand–ad combinations were introduced as if the respective manufacturers selected them in their marketing campaigns. This task will be referred to as the *rating* task. Subjects provided attitude ratings for the utilitarian and hedonic brands and their accompanying ads from the marketing campaign on 7-point scales. Finally, ad schema and incongruity perceptions were measured in this part of the questionnaire.

Measures. The independent variables in this study were brand purchase motivation, and type of advertising. Incongruity resulted from the interaction between brand and ad perceptions, possibly moderated by ad schema perceptions. The dependent variables in this study were brand and ad evaluation measures (see appendix 2). Most Cronbach α 's of the constructs were higher than 0.7, and a few were in the 0.5–0.7 range (see table 4.1). Although some constructs were not measured reliably for specific brands or ads, the same scale items were used for reasons of comparability.

Table 4.1: Reliability coefficients (both experiments)

	EXPERIMENT 1 (n = 76)	EXPERIMENT 2 (n = 51)
Brand purchase motivation^a		
<i>Utilitarian brands</i>		
- Utilitarian purchase motivation	.59	n.a.
- Hedonic purchase motivation	.62	n.a.
<i>Hedonic brands</i>		
- Utilitarian purchase motivation	.80	n.a.
- Hedonic purchase motivation	.81	n.a.
Type of advertising^a		
<i>Informational ads</i>		
- Informational ad content	.64	n.a.
- Transformational ad content	.54	n.a.
<i>Transformational ads</i>		
- Informational ad content	.71	n.a.
- Transformational ad content	.82	n.a.
Ad schema^a		
<i>Ad schema characteristics</i>		
- Schema strength	.84	.78
- Schema affect	.90	.83
<i>Ad schema content</i>		
- Informational ad content	.84	.67
- Transformational ad content	.83	.75
Incongruity^a		
<i>Ads paired with utilitarian brand</i>		
- Relevancy	.96	.93
- Expectancy (atypicality)	.88	n.a.
<i>Ads paired with hedonic brand</i>		
- Relevancy	.86	.85
- Expectancy (atypicality)	.91	n.a.
<i>Informational ad</i>		
- Expectancy (atypicality)	n.a.	.58
<i>Transformational ad</i>		
- Expectancy (atypicality)	n.a.	.79
Brand attitude^b		
<i>Utilitarian brands</i>		
- Prior attitude	.95	n.a.
- Post-manipulation attitude	.92	.94
<i>Hedonic brands</i>		
- Prior attitude	.94	n.a.
- Post-manipulation attitude	.96	.95
Attitude toward the ad^b		
<i>Informational ads</i>		
- Prior attitude	.80	.86
<i>Transformational ads</i>		
- Prior attitude	.86	.82
<i>Ads paired with utilitarian brand</i>		
- Post-manipulation attitude	.76	.91
<i>Ads paired with hedonic brand</i>		
- Post-manipulation attitude	.92	.92

n.a. = not available for this experiment, ^aIndependent variables, ^bDependent variables

4.3.2 Results

Manipulation checks. Overall, the manipulation checks were successful. The brand descriptions reflected utilitarian and hedonic purchase motivations, and the ad scenarios were perceived as informational and transformational ads. The ads reflected matches and mismatches with the brand schemas. The manipulation checks are discussed in detail below.

Brand perceptions. The paired-samples t-tests for brand purchase motivation showed that the utilitarian and hedonic brand descriptions were perceived as intended (see table 4.2). Both for deodorants and soft drinks, the utilitarian brand was more likely to possess utilitarian product attributes than the hedonic brand, while the reverse was true for hedonic product attributes. Independent-samples t-tests showed that the differences between utilitarian and hedonic product attributes were also significant within each brand for both product categories. Finally, the initial attitude toward the utilitarian brand was more favorable than toward the hedonic brand in both product categories. This result is somewhat surprising for the soft drink category, because consumers predominantly buy soft drinks for hedonic reasons (sensory excitement).

Table 4.2: Manipulation checks of brand and ad perceptions (experiment 1)

SOFT DRINK BRANDS	Utilitarian brand	Hedonic brand	Between brands (paired-samples t-test)
Utilitarian purchase motivation	5.75 ^a	3.11 ^b	p < .001
Hedonic purchase motivation	4.35 ^a	5.58 ^b	p < .001
Prior brand attitude	5.43	4.81	p < .001
SOFT DRINK ADS	Informational ad	Transformational ad	Between ad types (paired-samples t-test)
Informational ad content	5.04 ^e	2.65 ^f	p < .001
Transformational ad content	4.01 ^e	6.03 ^f	p < .001
Prior attitude toward the ad	3.58	4.89	p < .001
DEODORANT BRANDS	Utilitarian brand	Hedonic brand	Between brands (paired-samples t-test)
Utilitarian purchase motivation	6.39 ^c	2.98 ^d	p < .001
Hedonic purchase motivation	3.39 ^c	6.18 ^d	p < .001
Prior brand attitude	5.85	4.95	p < .05
DEODORANT ADS	Informational ad	Transformational ad	Between ad types (paired-samples t-test)
Informational ad content	5.52 ^g	3.22 ^h	p < .001
Transformational ad content	4.09 ^g	5.92 ^h	p < .001
Prior attitude toward the ad	3.88	4.93	p < .001

Figures with the same subscript indicate significant differences within each brand (a-d: independent-samples t-test: p < .001) or within each ad type (e-h: independent-samples t-test: p < .001).

Ad perceptions. The paired-samples t-tests for type of advertising showed that the ad descriptions were perceived as intended (see table 4.2). Both for deodorants and soft drinks, the informational ad was likely to feature more informational ad content than the transformational ad, while the reverse was true for transformational ad content. Independent-samples t-tests showed that the differences between informational and transformational ad content within each type of ad were also significant for both product categories. Finally, the initial attitude toward the transformational ad was more favorable than for the informational ad in both product categories. This is not surprising because transformational ads are intended to elicit positive emotions that enhance the user's brand experience (Aaker & Stayman 1992).

Ad schema perceptions. The ad schema for deodorants was different than for soft drinks. Paired-samples t-tests for ad schema content showed that the ad schema for soft drinks was more likely to feature transformational ad content than

informational ad content (5.59 vs. 2.77, $t(49) = 13.370$, $p < .001$), whereas the ad schema for deodorant did not differ significantly in terms of transformational and informational ad content (4.98 vs. 4.51, $t(20) = 1.646$, $p > .10$). Furthermore, the affect associated with typical soft drink ads was more positive than the affect associated with typical deodorant ads (independent-samples t-test: 4.30 vs. 3.45, $t(72) = 3.418$, $p < .01$).

Incongruity perceptions. Incongruity perceptions associated with the four brand–ad combinations were investigated through the relevancy and expectancy dimensions identified by Heckler & Childers (1992). We measured the relevancy dimension of incongruity with the brand schema, indicating relevancy of the ad to the brand, and the expectancy dimension of incongruity with the ad schema, indicating expectancy of the ad compared to typical category ads. The relevancy and expectancy dimensions of incongruity were examined separately for both product categories, using GLM repeated measures with brand-matching condition (referred to as *matching* from here on) as between-subjects factor and brand as within-subjects factor. The estimated marginal means of relevancy and expectancy are displayed in table 4.3.

The GLM repeated measures for ad relevancy in the soft drink category showed a significant main effect of matching ($F(1,52) = 195.091$, $p < .001$), indicating that consumers perceived ads in the brand-matching condition as more relevant to the brand than ads in the brand-mismatching condition. Furthermore, there was a significant brand \times matching interaction ($F(1,52) = 15.975$, $p < .001$), which showed that the difference in perceived ad relevance caused by mismatching brand perceptions was greater for the utilitarian brand than for the hedonic brand. The matching main effect for ad relevancy showed that the manipulation of the ads' incongruity with brand perceptions was successful.

The GLM repeated measures for ad expectancy in the soft drink category showed a significant brand \times matching interaction ($F(1,52) = 22.928$, $p < .001$). The estimated marginal means for expectancy (see table 4.3) showed that the ad in the brand-matching condition was relatively atypical for the utilitarian brand, while the ad in the mismatch condition was relatively atypical for the hedonic brand. Both ads were informational and consequently did not match the transformational ad schema

for soft drinks. Thus, the ad schema is uniform and expected to moderate brand and ad evaluations in accordance with hypothesis 3.

The GLM repeated measures for ad relevancy in the deodorant category showed a significant main effect of matching ($F(1,20) = 104.140, p < .001$), indicating that consumers perceived ads in the brand-matching condition as more relevant to the brand than ads in the brand-mismatching condition. Furthermore, there was a significant brand main effect ($F(1,20) = 5.714, p < .05$), which showed that on average perceived ad relevance was larger for the utilitarian brand than for the hedonic brand. The matching main effect for ad relevancy showed that the manipulation of the ads' incongruity to brand perceptions was successful.

The GLM repeated measures for ad expectancy in the deodorant category showed a significant brand \times matching interaction ($F(1,19) = 6.900, p < .05$). The estimated marginal means for expectancy showed that for the hedonic brand, the ad in the brand-mismatching condition was relatively atypical, while for the utilitarian brand, the ads were equally typical in both conditions. No brand \times matching interaction was expected, because both informational and transformational ads were congruent with the deodorant ad schema (see Ad schema perceptions and Chapter 3). This suggests that the deodorant ad schema may moderate brand and ad evaluations even though the ad schema is varied. In addition to the brand \times matching interaction, the brand main effect ($F(1,19) = 9.858, p < .01$) and the matching main effect ($F(1,19) = 3.774, p < .10$) for ad expectancy were also significant, but these effects were probably caused by the unexpected brand \times matching interaction.

Table 4.3: Manipulation checks of incongruity perceptions (experiment 1)

SOFT DRINK	Util +	Util +	Hed +	Hed +
BRAND-AD COMBINATIONS	Inf^a	Transf^b	Transf^a	Inf^b
Relevancy	5.40	2.21	4.66	2.57
Expectancy (atypicality)	3.45	2.44	2.59	3.81
DEODORANT	Util +	Util +	Hed +	Hed +
BRAND-AD COMBINATIONS	Inf^a	Transf^b	Transf^a	Inf^b
Relevancy	6.00	2.92	5.62	2.22
Expectancy (atypicality)	2.75	2.89	2.90	4.53

^aBrand purchase-matching advertising, ^bBrand purchase-mismatching advertising

The ad stimuli were also compared directly with the ad schemas in terms of informational and transformational ad content. The paired-samples t-tests for soft drinks showed that the informational ad was less transformational ($t(50) = 9.349, p < .001$) and more informational ($t(49) = 12.442, p < .001$) than the soft drink ad schema, while the transformational ad was more transformational ($t(51) = 4.561, p < .001$) than the soft drink schema and equally informational ($t(49) = 1.016, p > .10$). This implies that the transformational ad was congruent with the ad schema (even more transformational) and the informational ad was incongruent with the ad schema in terms of perceived ad content. Thus the soft drink ads' incongruity with the ad schema was perceived as intended.

For deodorant the paired-samples t-tests showed that the informational ad was less transformational ($t(20) = 3.893, p < .01$) and more informational ($t(20) = 4.420, p < .001$) than the deodorant ad schema, while the transformational ad was more transformational ($t(20) = 4.908, p < .001$) and less informational ($t(20) = 3.660, p < .01$) than the deodorant ad schema. This suggests that the deodorant ads were good examples of the informational and transformational ads that are both part of the deodorant ad schema.

Hypotheses. Hypotheses 1 through 3 were investigated by means of both the ranking and the rating task. The results showed strong evidence for the matching hypothesis in both product categories. Furthermore, we found evidence for a moderating effect of the ad schema, but only in the ranking task.

Ranking task. The hypotheses for the ranking task were examined with Wilcoxon signed rank tests. The mean ranks for each of the brand-ad combinations are shown in table 4.4. The Wilcoxon test showed that the utilitarian-informational combination was ranked higher than the utilitarian-transformational combination ($p < .001$), and the hedonic-transformational combination was ranked higher than the hedonic-informational combination ($p < .001$) for both deodorant and soft drinks, thus confirming hypotheses 1 and 2.

Table 4.4: Results of ranking and rating tasks (experiment 1)

SOFT DRINKS	Util +	Util +	Hed +	Hed +
BRAND–AD COMBINATIONS	Inf^a	Transf^b	Transf^a	Inf^b
Mean preference ranks (ranking task)	1.41	3.39	1.63	3.57
Mean changes in brand attitude ratings (rating task)	-0.17 (0.22)	-1.09 (0.22)	0.26 (0.21)	-0.93 (0.21)
Mean changes in attitude toward the ad ratings (rating task)	0.45 (0.17)	-0.67 (0.17)	0.03 (0.16)	-0.78 (0.16)
DEODORANT	Util +	Util +	Hed +	Hed +
BRAND–AD COMBINATIONS	Inf^a	Transf^b	Transf^a	Inf^b
Mean preference ranks (ranking task)	1.68	3.18	1.36	3.77
Mean changes in brand attitude ratings (rating task)	0.23 (0.34)	-0.89 (0.41)	0.46 (0.33)	-1.07 (0.39)
Mean changes in attitude toward the ad ratings (rating task)	0.56 (0.23)	-0.56 (0.28)	0.19 (0.31)	0.06 (0.37)

^aBrand purchase-matching advertising, ^bBrand purchase-mismatching advertising
Standard errors in parentheses

Hypothesis 3 specified that the two mismatching brand–ad combinations would differ in rank as a result of the moderating effect of ad schema. Specifically, we expected that the mismatching brand–ad combination that was congruent with the ad schema would be ranked higher than the mismatching brand-ad combination that was incongruent with the ad schema. The Wilcoxon test for soft drinks showed that the utilitarian–transformational combination was ranked somewhat higher than the utilitarian–informational combination (one-tailed $p < .10$). This was in accordance with the relatively transformational content of the ad schema for soft drinks, thus confirming hypothesis 3. For deodorant, the Wilcoxon test showed that the utilitarian–transformational combination was ranked higher than the hedonic–informational combination (two-tailed $p < .01$), although the ad schema for deodorant was not perceived as predominantly transformational. An explanation is given in the Discussion of experiment 1.

In addition to our hypotheses, we also checked whether the two matching brand–ad combinations differed in rank, but this was the case for neither of the product categories (two-tailed $p > .10$). In conclusion, the rankings showed evidence for the matching hypothesis and, in the case of soft drinks, also for the moderating role of ad schema.

Rating task. The hypotheses for the rating task were examined for both product categories through GLM repeated measures with brand–ad match vs. mismatch as between-subjects factor and brand as within-subjects factor. The dependent measures included in the GLM analyses were attitude change scores, because the manipulation checks showed that there were significant differences in prior attitudes between brands and ads in both product categories. The attitude change scores were calculated for both brands and ads by subtracting the prior attitudes from post-manipulation attitudes. The estimated marginal means for changes in attitudes are shown in table 4.4.

The GLM repeated measures for soft drinks showed a significant main effect of matching for both brand attitude ($F(1,52) = 18.117, p < .001$) and attitude toward the ad change scores ($F(1,51) = 35.063, p < .001$). Both brand attitude and attitude toward the ad change scores were more favorable in the match condition than in the mismatch condition (see table 4.4). This means that the matching hypothesis was confirmed for the soft drink category. In addition, the main effect of brand was marginally significant ($F(1,52) = 2.957, p < .10$) for brand attitude change scores, showing that on average the brand attitude change score was more favorable for the hedonic brand than for the utilitarian brand.

The GLM repeated measures for deodorant showed a significant main effect of matching for both brand attitude ($F(1,20) = 13.504, p < .01$) and attitude toward the ad change scores ($F(1,20) = 5.731, p < .05$). Both brand attitude and attitude toward the ad change scores were more favorable in the match condition than in the mismatch condition (see table 4.4). This means that the matching hypothesis was also confirmed for the deodorant category. Thus, we find strong support for hypothesis 1 and 2 in both categories.

Hypotheses 3 stated that the mismatching brand–ad combination that was congruent with the ad schema would be evaluated more favorably than the mismatching brand–ad combination that was not congruent with the ad schema. Neither for soft drinks nor for deodorant the brand \times matching interaction effect was significant, neither for brand attitude change scores nor for attitude toward the ad change scores. This means there was no evidence for the moderating role of the soft drinks and deodorant ad schemas, so hypothesis 3 was not confirmed. Unlike the ranking task, the subjects did not distinguish between the two mismatching brand–ad

combinations in the rating task. In conclusion, the rating task showed evidence for the matching hypothesis, but not for the moderating role of ad schema.

4.3.3 Discussion of Experiment 1

It appeared that brand-matching advertising was more effective than brand-mismatching advertising when the brand schema was made salient. Consumers preferred ads matching the brand purchase motivation to mismatching ads in two different product categories, with two different tasks. Thus strong support was found for the matching hypothesis from the RP grid.

In the experimental test of the RP grid in Chapter 3, schema salience was not controlled experimentally, and we found that brand-mismatching advertising was more effective than brand-matching advertising. This was explained by suggesting that brand schema salience is required for the matching hypothesis from the RP grid to apply. Salience of the brand schema was accomplished in the current experiment by letting the participants fit ad scenarios to particular brand descriptions. Since deodorant was included in both the current experiment and our previous study, the difference in results already provided evidence that schema salience played a crucial role. If schema salience indeed caused the different patterns of evaluations for deodorant, reducing brand schema salience for soft drinks should also cause a different pattern of evaluations. This proposition is tested in the second experiment of this study.

The evidence for a moderating role of ad schema in this experiment was less pronounced than the evidence for the matching hypothesis. We found that the ad schema moderated evaluations of the two mismatching brand–ad combinations for soft drinks, but only in the ranking task, not in the rating task. For deodorant, the ad schema was both informational and transformational. In this case, the evaluations of mismatching brand–ad combinations indicated preference for the combination including transformational advertising. This result is plausible, given the relatively favorable attitudes toward transformational advertising.

4.4 Experiment 2: Ad Schema Salience

In the second experiment, we tested the proposition that brand schema salience was responsible for the matching hypothesis found in the first experiment. We reduced the importance of the brand purchase motivation by making the ad schema salient in ad processing and evaluation. Consequently, we no longer expected that brand-matching advertising would lead to more favorable brand and ad evaluations than brand-mismatching advertising.

4.4.1 Method

Design. A 2 (brand purchase motivation) \times 2 (type of advertising) experimental design was used. As explained in the discussion of the first experiment, only soft drinks were included in experiment 2. Brand and ad perceptions were manipulated by means of hypothetical brand descriptions and ad scenarios. Exactly the same ads were used as in the first experiment. However, the brand descriptions (see appendix 2) were abbreviated to make brand information less salient to the participants without changing the essential characteristics of the brands. Again, two brand-ad combinations represented brand-matching advertising and two brand-ad combinations represented brand-mismatching advertising. Because the ad schema was made salient, no effect of the interaction between brand purchase motivation and type of advertising on incongruity perceptions was expected. Instead, incongruity was expected with ads mismatching the ad schema perceptions. For reasons of comparability, subjects in this experiment received either two matching or two mismatching brand-ad combinations like they did in the first experiment. Thus brand-matching was a between-subjects factor.

Subjects and procedure. Data were collected in October 2001 in a sample of 51 Dutch undergraduate students. The students were told that they were part of a study on advertising and that we were interested in their opinion about brands and ads. In contrast to experiment 1 we also instructed the participants that they should try to evaluate brands and ads just like they would do if they watched commercials on television. The questionnaire for experiment 2 largely contained the same questions as in experiment 1. However, the order of the questions was changed to make the ad

schema salient and some questions were left out to avoid brand schema salience or because they were redundant.

The questionnaire was constructed as follows. First, subjects answered questions about their ad schema perceptions to make the ad schema salient in ad processing and evaluation for the remainder of the questionnaire. Then subjects read the two ad descriptions, and answered questions about their initial attitudes and the ads' perceived fit with the ad schema. Next, the dependent measures were collected by means of a rating task. Just like in the first experiment brand–ad combinations were introduced as the ad that was selected by the manufacturers for use in their marketing campaigns. However, in this experiment the ad schema was made salient before the participants read the (abbreviated) brand descriptions. Subjects received either the two brand-matching or the two brand-mismatching combinations. Finally, subjects were asked to perform a ranking task in which they had to rank all four brand–ad combinations in order of preference and subsequently answered questions about the ads' relevancy to the brands for the two brand–ad combinations they had evaluated.

In experiment 1, the ranking task was used for testing hypotheses. In experiment 2 the ranking task merely served as a manipulation check to verify that the abbreviation of the brand descriptions did not change consumer brand perceptions. Therefore, the introduction to the ranking task emphasized the importance of fit between the brand and the ad as in the first experiment.

Measures. The independent variables in this study were brand purchase motivation and type of advertising. The dependent variables in this study were brand and ad evaluation measures (see Appendix 2).

4.4.2 Results

Manipulation checks. Overall, the manipulation checks were successful. The abbreviated brand descriptions reflected utilitarian and hedonic purchase motivations. The ads presented matches and mismatches to the ad schema. The manipulation checks for brands, ads, ad schema and incongruity perceptions are described in detail below.

Brand perceptions. The manipulation checks for brand perceptions were examined by means of Wilcoxon signed rank tests. The mean ranks for each of the brand–ad combinations are shown in table 4.5. In the ranking task, the brand schema was salient, so according to the matching hypothesis brand-matching combinations should be ranked higher than brand-mismatching combinations. The Wilcoxon test showed that the utilitarian–informational combination was ranked higher than utilitarian–transformational combination ($p < .001$), and the hedonic–transformational combination was ranked higher than the hedonic–informational combination ($p < .001$). This means that although the brand descriptions were abbreviated for the purpose of this experiment, participants’ rankings were still in accordance with the matching hypothesis when instructions emphasized fit with the brand schema. Therefore, we can conclude that the brands were perceived as intended. Further evidence for this conclusion is discussed in the manipulation checks on incongruity.

**Table 4.5: Manipulation checks of brand and incongruity perceptions
(experiment 2)**

BRAND	Util +	Util +	Hed +	Hed +
PERCEPTIONS	Inf^a	Transf^b	Transf^a	Inf^b
Mean preference ranks	2.00	3.17	1.54	3.29
INCONGRUITY	Util +	Util +	Hed +	Hed +
PERCEPTIONS	Inf^a	Transf^b	Transf^a	Inf^b
Relevancy	5.15	2.61	4.72	3.44
Expectancy (atypicality)	4.04	2.84	2.84	4.04

^aBrand purchase-matching advertising, ^bBrand purchase-mismatching advertising

Ad perceptions. Since the same informational and transformational soft drink ads were used as in experiment 1, ad content perceptions were not measured in experiment 2. Paired-samples t-tests were used to examine the initial attitudes toward the experimental ads. The transformational ad was evaluated more favorably than the informational ad (4.84 vs. 3.04, $t(50) = 7.764$, $p < .001$), which was in line with the first experiment.

Ad schema perceptions. Paired-samples t-tests for ad schema content showed that the ad schema for soft drinks was more likely to feature transformational than informational ad content (5.74 vs. 2.95, $t(49) = 13.876$, $p < .001$). Consequently, the

ad schema for soft drinks can be qualified as predominantly transformational in nature.

Incongruity perceptions. Incongruity associated with the four brand–ad combinations was examined through the relevancy and expectancy dimensions identified by Heckler & Childers (1992). The paired-samples t-tests for ad typicality showed that the transformational ad was perceived as more typical than the informational ad (2.84 vs. 4.04, $t(49) = 5.266$, $p < .001$, larger figures indicating less typical ads). This means that the manipulation of the ad’s incongruity with ad schema perceptions was successful.

Although the relevancy dimension of incongruity was not of primary importance to subjects’ evaluations in the second experiment, we included it in our experiment to examine whether abbreviation of the brand descriptions had changed the meaning of the brands. Since the brand schema was salient directly after the ranking task, we expected that ads in the brand-matching condition were more relevant than ads in the brand-mismatching condition. The GLM repeated measures for ad relevancy with brand as a within-subjects factor and matching as a between-subjects factor showed a significant main effect for matching ($F(1,44) = 60.279$, $p < .001$). This is additional evidence that the abbreviation of the brand description did not alter the characteristics of the brand. In addition to the main effect of matching, a brand \times matching interaction was found for ad relevancy ($F(1,44) = 10.311$, $p < .01$). This interaction effect indicated that the differences in ad relevancy as a result of the ad mismatching the brand purchase motivation, was larger for the utilitarian brand than for the hedonic brand (see Table 4.5).

Hypotheses. Hypothesis 4 was investigated by means of a rating task. Similar to experiment 1, participants evaluated two of the four brand–ad combinations on 7-point scales. GLM repeated measures was used with brand-matching condition as between-subjects factor and brand as within-subjects factor. The dependent measures were attitude change scores for attitude toward the ad and post-manipulation brand attitude. Attitude toward the ad change scores were used because the manipulation checks showed that there were significant differences in prior attitudes between the informational and transformational soft drink ads. Contrary to experiment 1, we could not use brand attitude change scores, because prior brand attitudes were not measured

in this experiment. Measurement of prior brand attitudes was excluded from experiment 2 because it was likely to interfere with ad schema salience. The estimated marginal means for brand attitude and changes in attitude toward the ad are shown in table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Results of rating task (experiment 2)

DEPENDENT MEASURES	Util +	Util +	Hed +	Hed +
	Inf ^a	Transf ^b	Transf ^a	Inf ^b
Post-manipulation brand attitudes	4.10 (0.22)	4.83 (0.22)	5.14 (0.20)	3.83 (0.20)
Mean changes in attitude toward the ad ratings	0.41 (0.14)	0.12 (0.14)	0.05 (0.16)	0.32 (0.16)

^aBrand purchase-matching advertising, ^bBrand purchase-mismatching advertising
Standard errors in parentheses

Hypothesis 4 stated that when the ad schema is salient, brand and ad evaluations would not be affected by the brand-matching or brand-mismatching nature of advertising. The GLM repeated measures showed a significant brand \times matching interaction for both post-manipulation brand attitudes ($F(1,49) = 21.896, p < .001$) and attitude toward the ad change scores ($F(1,49) = 3.041, p < .10$). Contrary to experiment 1, the main effects of matching were not significant in the GLM analyses of experiment 2, supporting hypothesis 4.

The brand \times matching interaction for post-manipulation brand attitudes indicated that the brand-mismatching ad was evaluated more favorably than the brand-matching ad for the utilitarian brand, while the reverse was true for the hedonic brand. Thus, both the utilitarian and hedonic brands were evaluated more favorably when they were paired with the transformational ad than when the brands were presented in combination with the informational ad. The brand \times matching interaction for attitude toward the ad change scores indicated that the brand-matching ad led to greater attitude change scores than the brand-mismatching ad for the utilitarian brand, while the reverse was true for the hedonic brand. Thus, the informational ad led to greater attitude change scores than the transformational ad.

Comparison between experiments 1 and 2. To investigate hypothesis 4 further, we also analyzed the soft drink data with GLM repeated measures for both

experiments together. The dependent measures were attitude toward the ad change scores and post-manipulation brand attitudes. Brand-matching condition and saliency (either brand schema or ad schema salient) were included as between-subjects factors and type of brand was included as within-subjects factor. The GLM repeated measures for attitude toward the ad change showed significant main effects of salience ($F(1,100) = 19.752, p < .001$), and matching ($F(1,100) = 21.517, p < .001$). Furthermore, the brand \times matching ($F(1,100) = 3.652, p < .10$) and salience \times matching ($F(1,100) = 20.575, p < .001$) interaction effects were significant. The salience \times matching interaction indicated that ad evaluations differed between the brand-matching and brand-mismatching conditions in line with the matching hypothesis when the brand schema was salient (estimated marginal means: 0.24 vs. -0.72 for both brands, 0.45 vs. -0.67 for the utilitarian brand and 0.03 vs. -0.78 for the hedonic brand), but not when the ad schema was salient (estimated marginal means: 0.23 vs. 0.22 for both brands, 0.41 vs. 0.12 for the utilitarian brand and 0.05 vs. 0.32 for the hedonic brand). This two-way interaction effect supported hypothesis 4 for ad evaluations (see Figure 4.1).

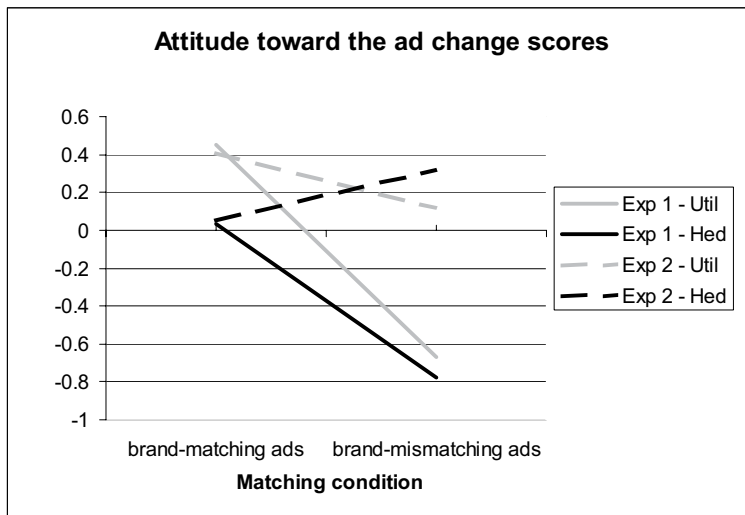


Figure 4.1: Comparison of attitude toward the ad change scores

The GLM repeated measures for post-manipulation brand attitudes showed a significant main effect of matching ($F(1,101) = 15.983, p < .001$). Furthermore, the

brand × matching ($F(1,101) = 18.667, p < .001$), salience × matching ($F(1,101) = 4.658, p < .05$) and salience × brand × matching interaction effects ($F(1,101) = 10.920, p < .01$) were significant. The salience × brand × matching interaction indicated that the brand evaluations showed a brand × matching interaction when the ad schema was salient but not when the brand schema was salient. The estimated marginal means for the ad schema salient condition showed that the utilitarian brand was evaluated more favorably in the brand-mismatching condition than in the brand-matching condition (4.10 vs. 4.83), while the reverse was true for the hedonic brand (5.14 vs. 3.83). This means that when the ad schema was salient both brands were evaluated relatively favorably when they were paired with a transformational ad. When the brand schema was salient, both brands were evaluated more favorably when they were paired with an ad that matched the brand purchase motivation. Thus, both the utilitarian (5.22 vs. 4.37) and hedonic brand (5.04 vs. 3.91) was evaluated more favorably in the brand-matching condition than in the brand-mismatching condition. This three-way interaction effect supported hypothesis 4 for brand evaluations (see Figure 4.2).

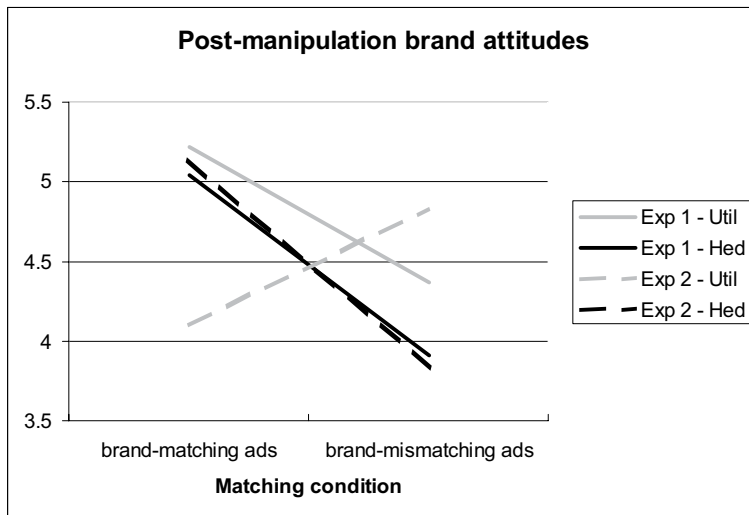


Figure 4.2: Comparison of post-manipulation brand attitudes

4.4.3 Discussion of Experiment 2

Contrary to experiment 1, the results from the second experiment did not indicate that brand-matching advertising was more effective than brand-mismatching advertising. Instead of preferring brand-matching advertising, participants' evaluations of both brands and ads were generally in line with initial ad evaluations. This suggested that brand-matching aspects of advertising were not important to subjects when the ad schema was salient.

4.5 General Discussion

Taken together, both experiments supported the role of schema salience in ad processing and evaluation. In the first experiment, the brand schema was salient and consumer evaluations were in accordance with the matching hypothesis of the RP grid. Brand-matching advertising was more effective than brand-mismatching advertising. This suggested that consumers explicitly related ads to brand knowledge, because the informational ad provided relevant information about the utilitarian brand, while the transformational ad contained relevant information about the hedonic brand. In the second experiment, brands and ads were essentially the same as in the first experiment, but the relative effectiveness of brand-matching advertising was not found. Instead, the brand and ad evaluations were in line with prior attitudes toward the ad. The only difference between the two experiments was ad schema saliency. The results of the second experiment showed that consumers ignored the brand-matching aspects of advertising, which means that consumers did not relate the ads to their brand knowledge. This finding has important implications for both advertising research and practice.

The main theoretical implication, from this study and the study from Chapter 3 is that brand awareness, which is a prerequisite in the RP grid, may not be enough for the matching hypothesis. Instead, brand salience is required for the predictions from the RP grid to hold. Brand salience differs from brand awareness in that consumers not only know the brand and its features but also actively use this knowledge in processing ad information. Possibly, brand salience in ad processing is assumed in the advertising grid, but our study shows the importance of explicitly identifying schema salience as an additional requirement in the RP grid. Furthermore, the ad schema was

identified as an alternative schema that is used by consumers in ad processing and evaluation. Although Goodstein (1993) already suggested the importance of the ad schema in ad processing, the effect of brand schema knowledge is not clear from his research. We explicitly incorporated brand schema knowledge and found that consumers did not pay attention to the fact whether ads matched or mismatched brand perceptions, when the ad schema was salient.

This also has important implications for advertising practice. When different ads are tested for a brand, brand schema salience is required. When consumers do not actively use brand knowledge in judging ads, brand managers may select ads that do not clearly communicate the brand's positioning for their ad campaigns. Furthermore, the finding that congruity with existing brand knowledge is not always important to consumers also indicates that clearly communicating the brand's positioning in advertising will not always be effective. When consumers predominantly use the ad schema to process ads, it may also be a good approach for the manufacturer to use an ad that is moderately incongruent with the ad schema. Schema theory suggests that these ads may attract attention and lead to relatively favorable evaluations.

In Chapter 5, we further investigate the notion of incongruity with advertising expectations by clearly distinguishing between incongruity with the brand schema and incongruity with the ad schema. In the second experiment of this chapter (section 4.4), we were mainly interested whether consumers noted brand-mismatching information of the ads in the case of ad schema salience. Consequently, we did not directly examine the effects of incongruity with the ad schema. Chapter 5 addresses this limitation by comparing incongruity with the ad schema to incongruity with the brand schema, and investigating whether these two types of incongruity have different consequences.

Appendix 1: Brand Descriptions and Ad Scenarios

Utilitarian soft drink brand (experiment 1). Zest is a new brand of soft drink, which is expected to be available very soon. This new drink is especially formulated for sporty people. The carbonated beverage has a slightly sweet taste and tastes best when it is served at a cold temperature. A 1.5L bottle of Zest contains only 1 calorie, so it keeps you slim and in shape. Furthermore, the beverage contains natural ingredients that immediately give you a new boost of energy when you are feeling tired. Zest will be available in supermarkets and sports centers.

Hedonic soft drink brand (experiment 1). Cool’N’Fresh is a new brand of soft drink, which is expected to be available very soon. This new drink is especially formulated for young people. The carbonated beverage has a slightly sweet taste and tastes best when it is served at a cold temperature. A can of Cool’N’Fresh gives you the ultimate refreshing experiences when the weather is hot. Moreover, the beverage is fit for all situations, so it tastes great whether you are at home, at a party with friends or out drinking. Cool’N’Fresh will be available in supermarkets.

Utilitarian soft drink brand (experiment 2). Zest is a new brand of soft drink. This drink contains 1 calorie per bottle and is based on natural ingredients that give new energy.

Hedonic soft drink brand (experiment 2). Cool’N’Fresh is a new brand of soft drink. This drink is refreshing, tasty and can be consumed anywhere.

Informational soft drink ad (experiments 1 and 2) – Fitness Club. A young woman sits in the locker room of a fitness club and looks in the camera. She says that it is important to her to keep in shape and be fit. “That’s why I go to my fitness club once a week. First, I am busy on different types of fitness machines and afterwards it is nice to catch up with my friends. But it is such a pity when you immediately start drinking coke then, just because you are thirsty...” Then she smiles in the camera: “Of course it tastes great, but you immediately gain all the calories you just burned. That’s why I drink <ZEST> or <COOL’N’FRESH >. It only contains 1 calorie and it

immediately gives you a new boost of energy.” The commercial ends with a voice-over saying <ZEST, fresh and energetic> or <COOL’N’FRESH, fresh and cool>.

Transformational soft drink ad (experiments 1 and 2) – Party. The commercial shows various, flashy images of young people partying. Alternately you see pictures of youths from various parts of the world. Footage of a beach party from Brazil. Images of an audience at a big pop concert in a park somewhere in Europe. Dancing people in a London disco. Pictures of teenagers relaxing in the sun in Central Park, New York. Meanwhile, the camera zooms in on various attractive young people drinking <ZEST> or <COOL’N’FRESH> and cans of <ZEST> or <COOL’N’FRESH> cooled on ice cubes. The commercial ends with a voice-over saying <ZEST, fresh and energetic> or <COOL’N’FRESH, fresh and cool>.

Utilitarian deodorant brand (experiment 1). Protect is a new deodorant that lasts all day long. Now you don’t have to worry anymore about the unpleasant effects of perspiration. This deodorant is available in both roller stick and spray variants. The brand will be on sale in supermarkets and drug stores.

Hedonic deodorant brand (experiment 1). Seductive is a new deodorant with a tempting scent. With this deodorant you will feel simply irresistible. This deodorant is available in both roller stick and spray variants. The brand will be on sale in supermarkets and drug stores.

Informational deodorant ad (experiment 1) – Business Woman. A woman in her early thirties, wearing a suit looks in the camera and says that she always has to look good in her job. She says: “I have to trust that I always make a self-assured impression, no matter how busy I am. Thanks to <PROTECT> or <SEDUCTIVE> deodorant I feel fresh and secure all day and can concentrate fully on my work.” The voice-over ends with the claim <PROTECT deodorant protects you all day long> or <SEDUCTIVE deodorant for an unforgettable impression>.

Transformational deodorant ad (experiment 1) – Disco. The camera shows images of a crowded disco with young people dancing on steamy R&B music. Then the camera zooms in on a seductive woman and follows her while she dances to the center of the

floor with sensual movements. She immediately attracts attention and admiring looks from all the men she passes. The voice-over ends with the claim <PROTECT deodorant protects you all day long> or <SEDUCTIVE deodorant for an unforgettable impression>.

Appendix 2: Overview of Independent and Dependent Measures

All constructs were measured with seven-point scales. Both Likert-type scales and semantic differentials were used. The reliabilities of the constructs used in both experiments are displayed in table 4.1.

Brand perceptions. Product belief ratings indicated the extent to which the brands were associated with utilitarian and hedonic purchase motives. Two product beliefs represented utilitarian benefits, and two product beliefs were hedonic benefits. For soft drinks subjects indicated whether the brand was a drink that 1. gives new energy when feeling tired, 2. you use when you care about your health, (utilitarian product beliefs), 3. is highly enjoyable, 4. gets you a refreshing taste experience (hedonic product beliefs). For deodorant subjects indicated whether the brand was a deodorant that 1. gives long-lasting protection, 2. is highly effective against perspiration (utilitarian product beliefs), 3. has a pleasant, seductive scent, 4. makes you feel attractive (hedonic product beliefs). Factor analyses of the four product beliefs were performed for each experimental brand separately and per type of brand (the two utilitarian brands and the two hedonic brands together). All factor analyses showed that the four product beliefs loaded on two factors, with the utilitarian product beliefs loading on one factor and the hedonic product beliefs on the other. Therefore the product attribute beliefs were grouped together to represent utilitarian and hedonic purchase motivation.

Ad perceptions. Informational ad content was measured with the following Likert-type scales: “the commercial is factual and informative”, “the advertisement suggests the solution to a problem”, “the ad focuses on usage benefits associated with the brand”, and “the ad makes a rational appeal” (adapted from Holbrook & Batra 1987, Olney et al. 1991). Transformational ad content scales were “the commercial tries to create a mood”, “the advertisement presents a slice of life”, “an enjoyment appeal is used in the ad”, and “the ad contains many images showing positive emotions”. Factor analyses of the eight ad content items were performed for each experimental ad separately and per type of ad (the two informational ads and the two transformational ads together). All factor analyses showed a two-factor solution. Generally, the items intended to measure informational ad content loaded on one factor, and the items

intended to measure transformational ad content loaded on the other. Thus the ad content items were combined in an informational and a transformational ad construct.

Ad schema perceptions. General ad schema characteristics were measured by Goodstein's (1993) thirteen-item questionnaire about expectations for product category ads. Factor analyses of the thirteen ad schema statements were performed for each product separately and for both products together. All factor analyses showed a two-factor solution, one factor containing five statements related to ad schema strength and another factor containing eight statements reflecting ad schema affect. Consequently, the items were grouped in a schema strength and a schema affect construct. Furthermore, ad schema content perceptions were measured with the same eight items that measured ad content perceptions. Again factor analyses of the eight ad schema content items were performed for each product separately and for both products together. All factor analyses showed a two-factor solution, one containing most informational ad content items, and the other containing the four transformational ad content items. Thus, the ad content items were grouped in an informational and a transformational ad construct.

Incongruity perceptions. Relevancy and expectancy represent two dimensions of incongruity. Four statements about the fit between the brand and its accompanying ad (adapted from Heckler & Childers 1992) measured the relevancy dimension of incongruity with the brand schema: "The <AD SCENARIO TITLE> ad fits <BRAND> very well", "The commercial clearly presents <BRAND>'s defining characteristics", "This type of advertising is very appropriate for <BRAND>", "The ad for <BRAND> contains relevant information about the brand". Four adjectives (adapted from Goodstein 1993 and Heckler & Childers 1992) measured ad typicality or the expectancy dimension of incongruity with the ad schema. Consumers indicated to what extent the ad was "different", "atypical", "unique" and "unexpected", compared to product category ads in general.

Evaluation

Brand and ad evaluations were measured for overall attitude.

Brand evaluation. Prior and post-campaign brand attitudes were measured by three items “good-bad” “positive-negative” “favorable-unfavorable” (Batra & Ahtola 1990).

Ad evaluation. Prior and post-campaign attitudes toward the ad were measured by four items “good-bad”, “like-dislike”, “irritating-not irritating”, “interesting-uninteresting” (Mitchell & Olson 1981).

Chapter 5: Cognitive and Affective Consequences of Two Types of Incongruent Advertising

5.1 Introduction

In a cluttered media environment, one of the major challenges for advertising is to attract and retain the attention of consumers. One of the most commonly used ways to create attention-getting ads is to develop ads that are incongruent with consumers' expectations. Such ads are thought to be more extensively processed, and more positively evaluated. Goodstein (1993) and Olney et al. (1991) show that consumers watch ads with a unique execution longer than standard ads, and Heckler & Childers (1992) show that some types of incongruent ads are better recalled than congruent ads. Lee & Mason (1999) show that incongruity leads to more positive ad and brand evaluations. Several studies have shown that incongruent ads are perceived to be humorous, and produce positive affective responses (Lee & Mason 1999, Alden, Mukherjee & Hoyer 2000).

But not all evidence rules in favor of incongruity. Wansink & Ray (1996) find that ads propagating incongruent new uses of a brand are evaluated less favorably than ads featuring congruent new uses. Similarly, Goodstein (1993) finds that, although ads with a unique execution are watched longer and processed in more detail, they are not liked better than typical ads. The earlier cited study by Lee & Mason (1999) finds that unexpectedly executed ads are evaluated more favorably than expected ads, but only when the ads feature information that is relevant to the brand.

More insight into the effects of incongruity in advertising can be gained by looking at how consumers determine incongruity. We propose that the effects of incongruity differ between different types of incongruity. We look at two different types of incongruity, namely incongruity of the ad's execution, and incongruity in the message conveyed by the ad. We examine the effects of these two types of incongruity on consumer processing and evaluation of the ad, and the evaluation and categorization of the advertised brand.

5.2 Theory

Incongruity is often approached from the perspective of schema theory (Fiske & Taylor 1984). Schemas are cognitive structures that represent knowledge about a concept, and can be viewed as abstract expectations that guide cognitive processes. In line with this, marketing researchers have used the term schema incongruity to refer to any information that is not consistent with prior expectations (Desai & Gencturk 1995).

Consumers have been shown to use two different schemas in processing ad information, the brand schema and the ad schema. The brand schema contains knowledge about the brand's defining characteristics and its position in the category (Krishnan 1996), whereas the ad schema reflects knowledge about advertising in a product category (Goodstein 1993). This implies that consumer expectations about advertising can be based on brand-related or advertising-related knowledge, depending on the schema that is used in ad processing. Brand knowledge is involved if consumers relate advertising to expectations based on brand purchase motivation (Rossiter & Percy 1997), or current uses of the brand (Wansink & Ray 1996). Advertising knowledge is involved if consumers relate advertising to expectations concerning executional style (Goodstein 1993) or typical ad content (Olney et al. 1991). Thus, contrary to incongruity with the brand schema incongruity with the ad schema is often cosmetic rather than substantive in nature (Goodstein 1993).

Based on this distinction, we argue that incongruity may occur because an ad deviates from consumer expectations of such ads, but also because the ad deviates from consumers' expectations of the advertised brand. In other words, an ad may be incongruent with two different types of schemas. The knowledge that is stored in these schemas may be retrieved when consumers process an advertisement.

Furthermore, we propose that the schema that is used to determine an ad's incongruity will also affect *how* incongruity is determined. Heckler & Childers (1992) developed a two-dimensional framework for studying the processing of incongruent information in ads. In their framework, incongruity is conceptualized along two dimensions, i.e., expectancy and relevancy. This distinction has been further examined by Lee & Mason (1999), and Ang & Low (2000). Within the framework, *expectancy* refers to the degree to which an ad conforms to consumer expectations about such advertising. *Relevancy* refers to the degree to which incongruent elements

in an ad provide meaningful information about the brand, or contribute to consumer identification of the ad's primary message.

5.2.1 Two-Dimensional Conceptualization of Incongruity

This two-dimensional approach to incongruity points out that consumer reactions to incongruity do not only reflect expectancy perceptions, but can also involve determining relevancy. Most studies on the effects of incongruity on evaluation, processing, categorization and recall in marketing examine the effects of unexpected information. In studies of incongruity in the context of new product evaluation (e.g., Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989), for example, incongruity reflects differences in expectancy, because the discrepant attribute information is not expected but relevant for product understanding and categorization. We propose that determining relevancy is more important for understanding the effects of ads that are incongruent with the brand schema than for ads that are incongruent with the ad schema. This is in line with the notion that, contrary to incongruity with the brand schema, incongruity with the ad schema is cosmetic rather than substantive in nature (Goodstein 1993). In the remainder of this section, we discuss how expectancy can have both cognitive and affective consequences in the context of incongruity, whereas relevancy has predominantly cognitive consequences.

The two-dimensional approach to incongruity proposed by Heckler & Childers (1992) shows that judgments of relevancy are important, because consumers react differently to incongruent information that is unexpected but relevant than to incongruent information that is unexpected and irrelevant. Although Heckler & Childers (1992) refrain from classifying unexpected-irrelevant (and expected-irrelevant) information as either congruent or incongruent, their manipulation check shows that unexpectedness, irrelevancy, and their interaction all diminish consumer understanding of the ad. If we interpret ease of understanding as overall degree of incongruity, both unexpected-irrelevant (and expected-irrelevant) information reflect cases of incongruent advertising. Lee & Mason (1999) show the importance of relevancy for consumer evaluation. Incongruent ads are evaluated favorably provided that the ad presents relevant information to the brand. On the contrary, incongruent ads that are unexpected to consumers but irrelevant to the brand are evaluated unfavorably.

Previous studies on this two-dimensional conceptualization have manipulated incongruity within the ad by including pictures that deviate from brand-related expectations cued by the ad claim. Thus, these studies pertain to incongruity with the brand schema. However, Goodstein's (1993) research shows that if consumers have advertising-related expectations, processing incongruent information does not lead to more brand-related thoughts than congruent information does. This suggests that for incongruity with the ad schema, consumers simply focus on the expectancy dimension of incongruity in ad processing. The difference in consumer responses to incongruities with brand and ad schemas is explicable, because incongruity with the ad schema is derived from how information is communicated rather than from what is communicated in advertising. Thus, including relevancy in the conceptualization of incongruity is only likely to contribute to our understanding of incongruity in advertising as far as it concerns brand schema-based expectations.

5.2.2 Incongruity with the Brand Schema

In case of incongruity with the brand schema, consumers do not only respond to the expectancy of the ad, but also consider relevancy to the brand. Lee & Mason (1999) find that relevant advertising is evaluated more favorably than irrelevant advertising and the evaluation of unexpected information depends on its relevancy to the brand. Consumer preference for relevant advertising is in line with Rossiter & Percy's (1991,1997) recommendation that ads should match consumers' brand purchase motivation to be effective i.e., these ads lead to more favorable brand attitudes, than ads that do not match the brand purchase motivation. If the ad matches the brand purchase motivation, the ad is congruent with the brand schema and presents relevant information about the brand to consumers.

H1: Compared to ads conveying a message that is congruent with the brand schema, ads conveying a message that is incongruent with consumers' brand schema lead to (a) less favorable ad attitudes, and (b) less favorable brand evaluations.

Stimuli that are incongruent with the expectations stored in schemas draw consumer attention (Fiske & Taylor 1984). Consumers attend to incongruent information in the ad and seek to incorporate it with the information in their current brand schema. Processing of incongruent information has been studied extensively in

the context of product categorization. Incongruent information in these studies is unexpected product information that is relevant to the categorization task. Moderately unexpected product information is assimilated in an existing product category schema (Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989, Stayman et al. 1992). In case of strongly unexpected product information, consumers have to restructure their category schema to “make it fit”, through a process of accommodation, which results in subtyping (Sujan & Bettman 1989). Thus, unexpected product information leads to more elaborate information processing than expected product information (Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989, Sujan 1985). Similarly, ads with unexpected brand information will lead to more extensive information processing than ads with expected brand information.

H2: If ads are incongruent with the brand schema, consumers will have (a) more thoughts in total and (b) more incongruity-related thoughts than if ads are congruent with the brand schema.

Consumer perceptions of brand positioning can change as a result of advertising information that is incongruent with the brand schema, but only if consumers perceive unexpected information as relevant to the brand. This is in line with recent research on the role of advertising in influencing consumer categorization. Moreau, Markman & Lehmann (2001) find that consumer categorization of a new product can be determined by advertising, i.e. consumers rely on the cues for categorization provided in the ad. For ads that are incongruent with the brand schema, this suggests that brand categorization will be shifted toward the categorization suggested by the ad, and consumers will rely less on the categorization that is proposed by the brand schema.

H3: If ads are incongruent with the brand schema, consumer brand categorization will be less in line with the categorization suggested by the brand schema than if ads are congruent with the brand schema.

5.2.3 Incongruity with the Ad Schema

If incongruity with the ad schema is concerned, relevancy to the brand is not considered, because consumers will primarily respond to the fact that the execution is unexpected. The use of ad-related knowledge has been supported by Goodstein (1993)

and Olney et al. (1991). They show that when ads are compared with other product category ads in ad processing, incongruity can be captured with adjectives such as unique, typical and different that reflect the expectancy dimension of Heckler & Childers' (1992) framework. Both studies suggest that the relation between incongruity and favorability of evaluations is likely to be described by an inverted U-shaped curve. Olney et al. (1991) suggest that a moderate amount of unexpectedness is perceived as interesting and therefore evaluated more favorably than lower or higher levels of unexpectedness. Goodstein (1993) finds that typical or expected ads lead to more favorable brand and ad evaluations than atypical or unexpected ads. However, he also suggests that the relationship between unexpectedness and the favorability of evaluations might be described by an inverted U-shape in line with Mandler's (1982) hypothesis. Mandler (1982) states that incongruity leads to arousal and therefore consumers will attempt to resolve incongruity through schema-based processing. Moderate incongruity can be resolved through assimilation, and consequently arousal results in favorable evaluations. Strong incongruity cannot be resolved without restructuring schema knowledge, which is accompanied by negative affect leading to unfavorable evaluations. Meyers-Levy & Malaviya (1999) call this processing affect. Evidence for Mandler's (1982) hypothesis has been found by several studies (Meyers-Levy & Tybout 1989, Stayman et al. 1992). Thus, incongruity with the ad schema leads to arousal and this is interpreted by consumers as a favorable advertising experience, as long as the unexpected ad does not lead to extremely high levels of arousal. Since arousal potential of incongruity with the ad schema is limited (cf. Steenkamp, Baumgartner & Van der Wulp 1996), favorable consumer evaluations are likely to result.

H4: Compared to ads which are executed in a manner that is congruent with the ad schema, ads of which the execution is incongruent with consumers' ad schema lead to (a) more arousal, and consequently (b) more favorable ad evaluations, and (c) more favorable brand attitudes.

Incongruity with the ad schema will also lead to more extensive information processing. However, the focus of information processing is on the discrepant executional characteristics (Goodstein 1993). This may result in an adjustment of consumers' ad schema, but consumer brand perceptions are not affected.

H5: If ads are incongruent with the ad schema, consumers will have (a) more thoughts in total and (b) more incongruity-related thoughts than if ads are congruent with the ad schema.

5.3 Method

Design. Ad execution (congruity with ad schema) and ad appeal (congruity with brand schema) were manipulated in a 2×2 between-subjects experimental design. Originally, focus of processing was included as an additional experimental manipulation by processing instructions that emphasized either brand schema or ad schema. We expected stronger results for ad schema-related hypotheses in the ad processing group than in the brand processing group, and vice versa for brand schema-related hypotheses. However, the focus of processing manipulation was not successful and the experimental design was collapsed to the above-described two factors.

Congruity with the brand schema was manipulated by using ads with appeals that were either congruent or incongruent with the brand's positioning in the product category. The brand that was used in the experiment was positioned on a hedonic purchase motivation. We constructed a transformational ad that was congruent with this positioning, as well as an informational ad that was incongruent with the positioning (cf. Rossiter et al. 1991). To avoid bias, we used a fictitious brand, for which we wrote a brief description that depicted a clearly hedonic positioning.

Congruity with the ad schema was manipulated by the exclusion or inclusion of an unexpected element in the ad execution. The incongruent versions of the informational and transformational ad scenarios featured Martians rather than humans as central characters in the ad. See Appendix 1 for the brand description and ad scenarios that were employed in this study.

Pretests. Two pretests were conducted. The first pretest was used to select a product category that could be purchased for both utilitarian and hedonic reasons, so both utilitarian and hedonic positioning in the product category were credible to consumers. Fifteen student subjects judged the extent to which they purchased

products for hedonic or utilitarian reasons on a 7-point bipolar scale that ran from completely utilitarian (1) to completely hedonic (7). Two of sixteen products, viz., yogurt and fruit juice, were purchased equally for utilitarian and hedonic reasons ($X_{\text{Yogurt}} = 4.40$ and $X_{\text{Fruit Juices}} = 4.33$).

The second pretest examined whether both informational and transformational ads occurred in the yogurt and fruit juice categories. This prevents a confound between incongruity with the brand schema and incongruity with the ad schema. Furthermore, this pretest was used to derive the attributes for the experimental brand description and ad scenarios. Fifteen new subjects indicated their ad-related expectations for yogurt and fruit juices. Yogurt was selected for use in the experiment, because subjects indicated that both informational and transformational appeals were common in Dutch yogurt ads. Transformational ads typically show people enjoying yogurt in a family setting. Informational ads emphasize the healthy aspects of yogurt and keeping slim. Similar scenarios were used in our experiment.

Subjects and procedure. Data were collected in November and December 2001. Subjects were 153 Dutch undergraduate students in psychology, who received credit for their participation. Subjects were told that they participated in an advertising study.

The questionnaire was structured as follows. Subjects read the brand description and ad scenario from the front page of the questionnaire and then answered questions about the brand and its accompanying ad. First, overall brand attitude and attitude toward the ad measures were collected. Then, subjects answered questions about thoughts and emotions that were elicited in response to the ad. Subsequently, questions concerning brand beliefs, perceived ad appeal and brand categorization were presented. Finally, subject perceptions of expectancy of the ad and relevancy to the brand were measured.

Measures. The dependent variables were consumer evaluation, processing and categorization (see Appendix 2). Consumer evaluation was measured by brand attitude and attitude toward the ad. Processing consisted of cognitive and affective processing, as reflected by information processing and arousal respectively. Similarity to other brands, categorization of the experimental brand, and brand beliefs measured

categorization. Table 5.1 gives an overview of the hypotheses classified by the dependent measures.

Table 5.1: Overview of hypotheses

	Evaluation	
	<i>Incongruity with brand schema</i>	<i>Incongruity with ad schema</i>
Attitude toward the ad	Hypothesis 1a: I less favorable than C	Hypothesis 4b: I more favorable than C
Brand attitude	Hypothesis 1b: I less favorable than C	Hypothesis 4c: I more favorable than C
	Processing	
	<i>Incongruity with brand schema</i>	<i>Incongruity with ad schema</i>
Cognitive processing	Hypothesis 2a,b: I more extensive than C	Hypothesis 5a,b: I more extensive than C
Affective processing	- (See Discussion)	Hypothesis 4a: I more arousal than C
	Categorization	
	<i>Incongruity with brand schema</i>	<i>Incongruity with ad schema</i>
Brand categorization	Hypothesis 3: I less in accordance with brand schema than C	- (See Theory)

I = ads that are incongruent, C = ads that are congruent with the schema concerned

5.4 Results

Manipulation checks. The manipulations of congruity with brand schema and ad schema were successful. Ads with an informational appeal were incongruent with the hedonic brand schema, and less relevant to the brand than ads with a transformational appeal. Furthermore, ads with Martians as central characters were incongruent with the ad schema and less expected than the ads with humans as central characters. The manipulation checks are discussed in detail below.

Incongruity with the brand schema. First, the appeals made by the informational and transformational ads were examined. The transformational ad was designed to make a sensory gratification appeal, whereas the informational ad was intended to make a problem avoidance appeal. Consumer ratings of these appeals

showed that the manipulations were successful. Compared to the informational ads, the transformational ads were rated higher on sensory gratification (6.17 vs. 5.34, $F(1,149) = 18.971, p < .001$), but lower on problem avoidance (2.37 vs. 3.91, $F(1,148) = 37.361, p < .001$). Then, relevancy of the ads to the brand was investigated. The transformational ads were more relevant to the hedonic brand than the informational ads (5.81 vs. 5.32). This was confirmed by a GLM for relevancy to the brand with ad appeal and execution as factors that showed a marginally significant main effect for ad appeal ($F(1,149) = 3.427, p < .10$), and no effect for execution. Thus, manipulation of incongruity with the brand schema was successful, although it could have been stronger. Incongruity with the brand schema was not strong enough to cause significant differences in expectancy of the ad. The GLM for expectancy of the ad with ad appeal and execution as factors showed no effect of ad appeal. Informational and transformational ads were rated equally on the expectancy dimension of incongruity ($F(1,149) = 0.438$, means were 5.61 vs. 5.80).

Incongruity with the ad schema. The GLM for expectancy of the ad with ad appeal and execution as factors showed a significant main effect of execution ($F(1,149) = 47.072, p < .001$). The execution main effect indicated that the ad execution with Martians was less expected than the ad execution with humans (4.72 vs. 6.68). Furthermore, relevancy of the ad was not affected by ad execution. Thus, the manipulation of incongruity with the ad schema was successful.

Hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested by GLM analysis with ad appeal (incongruity with the brand schema) and execution (incongruity with the ad schema) as factors. Generally, the results were in line with our hypotheses (see Table 5.2). The results are discussed in detail below. In the remainder of this section we focus on how each of the dependent measures is affected by incongruity with the brand schema and incongruity with the ad schema.

Table 5.2: Overview of results from GLM analyses

	Evaluation			
	<i>Inform.</i>	<i>Transform.</i>	<i>Martians</i>	<i>Humans</i>
	<i>Appeal^a (I)</i>	<i>Appeal^a (C)</i>	<i>Execution^b (I)</i>	<i>Execution^b (C)</i>
Attitude toward the ad	3.75 (0.13)	3.89 (0.13)	4.01 (0.13)	3.57 (0.13)
Brand attitude	5.04 (0.10)	5.11 (0.10)	4.94 (0.10)	5.21 (0.10)
	Processing			
	<i>Inform.</i>	<i>Transform.</i>	<i>Martians</i>	<i>Humans</i>
	<i>Appeal^a (I)</i>	<i>Appeal^a (C)</i>	<i>Execution^b (I)</i>	<i>Execution^b (C)</i>
Information processing:				
(a) total thoughts	3.70 (0.14)	3.25 (0.13)	3.38 (0.13)	3.57 (0.14)
(b) incongruity-related	0.62 (0.07)	0.33 (0.07)	0.81 (0.07)	0.15 (0.07)
(c) congruity-related	0.43 (0.07)	0.47 (0.07)	0.30 (0.07)	0.61 (0.07)
Valuation of thoughts:				
(a) positive thoughts	1.50 (0.12)	1.39 (0.12)	1.60 (0.12)	1.29 (0.12)
(b) negative thoughts	1.66 (0.12)	1.26 (0.12)	1.19 (0.12)	1.74 (0.12)
(c) neutral thoughts	0.54 (0.09)	0.60 (0.09)	0.60 (0.09)	0.54 (0.09)
Arousal	3.58 (0.10)	3.38 (0.10)	3.77 (0.10)	3.19 (0.10)
Pleasure	4.42 (0.11)	4.76 (0.11)	4.62 (0.11)	4.56 (0.11)
	Categorization			
	<i>Inform.</i>	<i>Transform.</i>	<i>Martians</i>	<i>Humans</i>
	<i>Appeal^a (I)</i>	<i>Appeal^a (C)</i>	<i>Execution^b (I)</i>	<i>Execution^b (C)</i>
Brand similarity:				
(a) utilitarian brand	5.32 (0.24)	4.37 (0.24)	4.95 (0.24)	4.74 (0.24)
(b) hedonic brand	4.16 (0.26)	5.46 (0.26)	4.86 (0.26)	4.76 (0.26)
Brand beliefs:				
(a) utilitarian beliefs	4.43 (0.15)	3.40 (0.15)	3.91 (0.15)	3.92 (0.15)
(b) hedonic beliefs	5.42 (0.11)	5.80 (0.11)	5.67 (0.11)	5.56 (0.11)
I = ads that are incongruent, C = ads that are congruent with the schema concerned				
^a Incongruity with the brand schema, ^b Incongruity with the ad schema				
Figures represent estimated marginal means (standard errors in parentheses)				

Attitude toward the ad and brand attitude. The main effects for ad appeal were not significant in the GLM analyses for attitude toward the ad and brand attitude, so that hypotheses 1a and 1b were not supported. The informational ad appeal may not have been strong enough to cause differences in consumer evaluations as a result of incongruity with the brand schema. Possible explanations will be given in the Discussion in section 5.5.

The GLM for attitude toward the ad with ad appeal and execution as independent factors did show a significant main effect of execution ($F(1,149) = 7.013$, $p < .01$). Ads with Martians as central characters were evaluated more favorably than ads with humans as central characters (4.01 vs. 3.57). This supported hypothesis 4b, which stated that incongruity with the ad schema would lead to more favorable attitudes toward the ad. In the GLM for brand attitude the main effect of execution was also significant ($F(1,149) = 3.752$, $p < .10$), but the direction of this effect ran counter to our expectations. Ads that were congruent with the ad schema led to more favorable brand attitudes than ads that were incongruent with the ad schema (5.21 vs. 4.94), which contradicts hypothesis 4c.

Arousal. The GLM for arousal with ad appeal and execution as independent factors showed a significant main effect of execution ($F(1,147) = 17.403$, $p < .001$). Ads with Martians were unexpected and led to higher arousal than the expected ads with humans (3.77 vs. 3.19), confirming hypothesis 4a. We also tested if arousal caused processing affect that resulted in more favorable ad evaluations. Regressions of attitude toward the ad on brand attitude, arousal on brand attitude, and arousal on attitude toward the ad were all significant. If arousal and attitude toward the ad were *both* regressed on brand attitude, arousal was not significant, supporting that attitude toward the ad was determined by arousal (Baron & Kenny 1986, see Table 5.3).

Table 5.3: Regression analyses

1. Brand attitude	β (standard error)	p-value
Constant	4.154 (0.244)	< .001
Attitude toward the ad	0.241 (0.056)	< .001
R ² (adj.)	0.104	
F-Value (p-value)	18.582	(< .001)
2. Brand attitude	β (standard error)	p-value
Constant	4.488 (0.271)	< .001
Arousal	0.172 (0.075)	< .05
R ² (adj.)	0.034	
F-Value (p-value)	5.181	(< .05)
3. Attitude toward the ad	β (standard error)	p-value
Constant	0.860 (0.294)	< .01
Arousal	0.851 (0.084)	< .001
R ² (adj.)	0.416	
F-Value (p-value)	108.032	(< .001)
4. Brand attitude	β (standard error)	p-value
Constant	4.257 (0.268)	< .001
Arousal	-0.057 (0.095)	.547
Attitude toward the ad	0.269 (0.072)	< .001
R ² (adj.)	0.104	
F-Value (p-value)	9.717	(< .001)

Pleasure. We further investigated affective processing by performing a GLM for pleasure with ad appeal and execution as factors. The GLM showed a significant main effect of ad appeal ($F(1,147) = 4.903, p < .05$) and a marginally significant ad appeal \times execution interaction ($F(1,147) = 3.312, p < .10$). The ad appeal main effect indicated that transformational ads were more pleasant than informational ads (4.76 vs. 4.42), which is in line with their intended function (e.g., Puto & Wells 1984). This effect was qualified by an ad appeal \times execution interaction, which showed that the Martian execution was more pleasurable than the humans execution for the informational ad (4.59 vs. 4.26), but that both executions were equally pleasant for the transformational ad (4.65 vs. 4.86). These findings suggest that incongruity with the ad schema may also contribute to pleasure if ads are not very entertaining as such.

Information processing. The GLM for total number of thoughts, incongruity-related thoughts and congruity-related thoughts with ad appeal and execution as

factors showed significant ad appeal (Wilks' Lambda $F(3,147) = 3.622, p < .05$) and execution (Wilks' Lambda $F(3,147) = 17.431, p < .001$) main effects. The ad appeal main effect showed that the informational ads lead to more thoughts in total (3.70 vs. 3.25, $F(1,149) = 5.554, p < .05$) and more incongruity-related thoughts (0.62 vs. 0.33, $F(1,149) = 8.232, p < .01$) than the transformational ads. Thus, incongruity with the brand schema leads to more extensive processing, which supports hypotheses 2a and 2b.

The execution main effect indicated that ads with Martians lead to more incongruity-related (0.81 vs. 0.15, $F(1,149) = 44.729, p < .001$) and less congruity-related thoughts (0.30 vs. 0.61, $F(1,149) = 9.559, p < .01$) than ads with humans. This confirms hypothesis 5b. Incongruity with the ad schema did not lead to more thoughts in total as was stated in hypothesis 5a, but it did change the focus of processing.

Valuation of thoughts. To gain more insight into cognitive processing, we also analyzed subjects' own valuation of their thoughts. The GLM for positive, negative and neutral thoughts with ad appeal and execution as factors showed significant main effects for ad appeal (Wilks' Lambda, $F(3,147) = 2.698, p < .05$) and execution (Wilks' Lambda, $F(3,147) = 3.520, p < .05$). The ad appeal main effect showed that the informational ads that were incongruent with the brand schema, lead to more negative thoughts than the congruent transformational ads (1.66 vs. 1.26, $F(1,149) = 5.209, p < .05$). This finding shows that incongruity with the brand schema is evaluated negatively, which is in line with hypothesis 1.

The execution main effect showed that ads that are incongruent with the ad schema lead to less negative thoughts (1.19 vs. 1.74, $F(1,149) = 11.637, p < .01$) and more positive thoughts (1.60 vs. 1.29, $F(1,149) = 3.239, p < .10$) than ads that are congruent with the ad schema, which is in line with hypothesis 4.

Brand categorization. Brand categorization was investigated by similarity to other brands, categorization of the experimental brand as either a utilitarian or a hedonic brand, and subjects' brand beliefs. The GLM for similarity to two existing Dutch yogurt brands with ad appeal and execution as factors showed a significant main effect of ad appeal (Wilks' Lambda, $F(2,146) = 7.583, p < .01$). The two brands were good examples of utilitarian (U) and hedonic (H) positioning in the yogurt category ($X_U = 2.69$ and $X_H = 7.89$, 1 = completely utilitarian and 9 = completely hedonic). If the experimental brand was paired with an informational ad similarity to the utilitarian yogurt was greater than if the brand was paired with a transformational

ad (5.32 vs. 4.37, $F(1,147) = 7.976$, $p < .01$). The reverse pattern occurred for similarity to the hedonic yogurt (4.16 vs. 5.46, $F(1,147) = 12.504$, $p < .01$). To sum up, similarity to a utilitarian yogurt brand increased and similarity to a hedonic yogurt brand decreased as a result of incongruity with the hedonic brand schema.

Categorization of the experimental brand as a utilitarian or hedonic yogurt was tested by binary logistic regression. Ad appeal was significant ($p < .001$) in this regression, indicating that the use of a congruent transformational ad resulted in categorization as a hedonic yogurt as suggested by the brand schema.

The GLM for utilitarian and hedonic brand beliefs with ad appeal and execution as factors, showed an ad appeal main effect (Wilks' Lambda, $F(2,148) = 12.692$, $p < .001$). Compared to transformational ads, informational ads lead to higher ratings of utilitarian attribute beliefs (4.43 vs. 3.40, $F(1,149) = 22.511$, $p < .001$), and lower ratings of hedonic attribute beliefs (5.42 vs. 5.80, $F(1,149) = 6.242$, $p < .05$) for the experimental brand. Thus, incongruity with the brand schema shifts categorization toward the category communicated in the ad and away from category positioning suggested by the brand schema, which supports hypothesis 5.

5.5 Discussion

This study investigated the effects of incongruity of advertising with brand schema and ad schema perceptions on consumer evaluation, processing and categorization. We hypothesized that consumer reactions to incongruity with the ad schema reflect expectancy of the ad, whereas the effects of incongruity with the brand schema are determined by both expectancy of the ad and relevancy to the brand. Furthermore, we argued that expectancy can have both cognitive and affective consequences in the context of incongruity, whereas relevancy has predominantly cognitive consequences. In line with this reasoning, our findings show that incongruity with the brand schema is relatively cognitive, whereas incongruity with the ad schema is relatively affective.

In case of incongruity with the brand schema, consumers compare the ad to brand knowledge. Ads that were incongruent with the brand schema presented irrelevant information to consumers. The incongruent ad appeals did not affect expectancy of the ad. Consequently, there was no effect of incongruity with the brand schema on arousal. In line with the hypotheses, incongruity with the brand schema

affected consumer processing and categorization. Information processing was more elaborate as a result of incongruity with the brand. Furthermore, categorization was less in accordance with the brand schema as a result of incongruent ad appeals. Thus, incongruity with the brand schema had predominantly cognitive consequences.

Contrary to expectations, consumer evaluation of congruent or relevant advertising was not relatively favorable. Consumers forming only a relatively weak brand schema for a fictitious brand might explain this. Consumers attended to incongruent advertising and recognized that it was not in accordance with the brand attributes. However, they were unlikely to dismiss the information in the ad as completely irrelevant. Research from psychology shows that if consumers have a strong brand schema, they are unwilling to change their brand perceptions (cf., Drolet & Aaker 2002), and thus more likely to dismiss unexpected information as irrelevant. However, if consumers have a relatively weak brand schema it is difficult for them to determine ad relevancy, and consequently unexpected advertising information is fit more easily into the brand schema. This suggests that ad relevancy judgments depend on the strength of consumers' brand schema. Thus, the informational ad might have increased the perceived importance of utilitarian brand beliefs and decreased the importance of hedonic brand beliefs, resulting in equally favorable brand and ad evaluations for informational and transformational ad appeals.

In case of incongruity with the ad schema, consumers compare the ad to other product category ads. Ads that were incongruent with the ad schema presented unexpected information to consumers. In line with the hypotheses, incongruity with the ad schema affected consumer evaluation and processing. Incongruity with the ad schema changed the focus of information processing as indicated by the number of incongruity-related thoughts. Furthermore, this type of incongruity caused arousal, which resulted in relatively favorable ad evaluations. Thus, incongruity with the ad schema predominantly had affective consequences. Contrary to expectations, incongruity with the ad schema did not result in more favorable brand evaluations. This finding implies that likable ads do not necessarily imply more likable brands. In our study, the favorable ad evaluations did not transfer to the brand, suggesting that consumers evaluated ads in an experiential way, and brands in a functional way.

5.6 Study Limitations and Issues for Future Research

This study was conducted in Western Europe, and it is possible that the generalizability of its findings is limited to this setting, although most results are in line with earlier findings from studies in the US. Future research should examine how our study and other studies on advertising incongruity are affected by cultural factors. A first hint at the existence of cross-cultural differences in this area is provided by Aaker & Sengupta (2000), who found cross-cultural differences in the ways in which consumers process incongruent information.

In this study incongruity with the brand schema and incongruity with the ad schema were manipulated independently to examine the effects of these types of incongruity. In reality, incongruity with the brand and incongruity with the ad schema can be confounded (in many product categories the ad schema is either informational or transformational) so that it is difficult to determine which processes dominates ad processing in a natural environment. One way in which future research could explore this issue further is by manipulating consumers' use of ad or brand schemas in processing ads by priming or training procedures

Appendix 1: Brand Description and Ad Scenarios

Hedonic brand. Fruit & Creamy is creamy yogurt with a rich taste. The yogurt contains pieces of fresh fruit that make Fruity & Cream a real treat.

Informational ad appeal – expected (unexpected) execution. The camera shows a man and a woman (two Martians) exercising in a fitness club. Meanwhile, the voice-over emphasizes the importance of paying attention to your health. After their exercises, the two are catching their breath and eating a cup of yogurt. While they are consuming the yogurt, they talk about sport and healthy food (in a subtitled alien language), and the camera regularly zooms in on their spoons with yogurt. Finally, the camera focuses on the cups of yogurt and the voice-over ends with the claim “Fruit & Creamy the soundest yogurt (... on earth)”

Transformational ad appeal – expected (unexpected) execution. The camera shows a man and a woman (two Martians) sitting in the kitchen. It is weekend, and they are relaxing at the kitchen table with a cup of yogurt. They are enjoying the yogurt, while talking about their fun adventures the night before (in a subtitled alien language). During their conversation the two smile regularly and the camera zooms in on their spoons with yogurt. You can see from their delighted looks that the yogurt tastes really good. Finally, the camera focuses on the yogurt packaging on the table and the voice-over ends with the claim “Fruit & Creamy the most appetizing yogurt (... on earth)”

Appendix 2: Overview of Independent and Dependent Measures

Brand perceptions. The attributes “rich taste” and “a real treat” from the experimental brand description reflect an enjoyment appeal. They were elicited in a pretest and classified as hedonic in nature. In the experiment, brand perceptions for four existing brands were measured as part of the categorization measure. Subjects indicated the degree to which they perceived each of those brands as utilitarian or hedonic yogurts on a 9-point scale (1 = very good example of a utilitarian yogurt, 9 = very good example of a hedonic yogurt).

Ad perceptions. Subjects rated the degree to which they perceived the ad to communicate each of the following messages on 7-point Likert-type scales: “This is a yogurt you can really enjoy” (sensory gratification), and “If you eat this yogurt, you don’t have to worry about staying slim” (problem avoidance)

Relevancy perceptions. Two items measured relevancy of the ad to the brand. Subjects indicated on 9-point scales the degree to which the ad succeeded in communicating the brand characteristics from the description (1 = very bad, 9 = very good), and the degree to which the ad presented relevant information to the experimental brand (1 = very irrelevant, 9 = very relevant).

Expectancy perceptions. Two items measured expectancy of the ad. Subjects rated the degree to which the ad was typical compared to other yogurt ads on a 9-point scale (1 = very atypical, 9 = very typical), and the degree to which the ad corresponded with their expectations for this type of product (1 = very unexpected, 9 = very expected).

Evaluation

Brand and ad evaluations were measured for overall attitude.

Brand evaluation. Brand attitude was measured by three items “good-bad”, “positive-negative”, and “favorable-unfavorable” (Batra & Ahtola 1990), rated on a 7-point semantic differential.

Ad evaluation. Attitude toward the ad was measured by four items “good-bad”, “like-dislike”, “irritating-not irritating”, and “interesting-uninteresting” (Mitchell & Olson 1981), rated on a 7-point semantic differential.

Processing

The cognitive aspects of processing were measured with free elicitation of thoughts, whereas the affective aspects of processing were measured with rating of feelings.

Cognitive processing. Sujana (1985) developed a coding scheme to characterize cognitive processing, with the total number of thoughts and classification in types of thought as relevant indicators. In this study, total thoughts, incongruity-related and congruity-related thoughts were employed to measure cognitive processing. Furthermore, subjects coded their own thoughts as positive, negative or neutral.

Affective processing. The emotional dimensions of arousal and pleasure were used to distinguish feelings elicited in response to the ad. Arousal was measured with the items “stimulated-relaxed”, “excited-calm”, “frenzied-sluggish”, “jittery-dull”, and “wide awake-sleepy” (Olney et al. 1991). The items “happy-unhappy”, “pleased-annoyed”, “satisfied-unsatisfied” (Olney et al. 1991), “in good mood-in bad mood”, “surprised-bored”, “enthusiastic-reserved” (Mano & Oliver 1993), and “gloomy-cheerful” (Russell 1980) measured pleasure. The items from Mano & Oliver (1993) and Russell (1980) were adapted to obtain meaningful translations into Dutch. Both arousal and pleasure were measured with 7-point scales.

Categorization

Categorization was measured directly by a choice between two competing categorizations and indirectly through brand beliefs and similarity ratings.

Similarity to existing brands. In categorization literature it is assumed that categorization is determined by similarity (Mervis & Rosch 1981, Komatsu 1992). Subjects rated the experimental brand’s similarity to four existing yogurt brands (see Brand perceptions) on 9-point scales (1 = very dissimilar, 9 = very similar).

Categorization. Subjects were asked to categorize the experimental brand as either a hedonic yogurt (i.e. the type yogurt that you eat if you want to indulge yourself) or a utilitarian yogurt (i.e. the type of yogurt that you eat if you want to keep healthy and slim).

Brand beliefs. Brand beliefs were measured with 7-point Likert-type scales. The three hedonic product beliefs included “rich taste”, “a real treat”, and “creamy”, whereas the three utilitarian product beliefs were “few calories”, “healthy snack”, and “lean”.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and General Discussion

6.1 Summary and Conclusions

This thesis aims at providing a better understanding of the effects of ads that are incongruent with consumer expectations of advertising. This section contains a summary of the findings of this thesis that recapitulates the main findings from the empirical studies. Furthermore, we discuss how these findings relate to the literature on schemas, brand positioning, and advertising discussed in Chapter 2. Finally, we identify the similarities and differences of our study of advertising effectiveness based on consumer expectations of advertising with the approach of the Rossiter-Percy grid (RP grid: Rossiter et al. 1991, Rossiter & Percy 1997).

6.1.1 Summary

In Chapter 2 we argued that consumer expectations of advertising are based on brand or ad schema knowledge. Consumer expectations of advertising guide the processing of ads by matching them with the ads. Theories in marketing that relate brands to advertising such as means-end chain theory (e.g., Gutman 1982) and advertising grids (e.g., Vaughn 1986, Rossiter et al. 1991) recommend advertising that matches the consumer brand schema, thus neglecting the ad schema. In formulating advertising tactics, these theories assume that consumer expectations of advertising are primarily determined by brand knowledge and consequently effective advertising, i.e., ads that result in favorable brand attitudes, should reflect consumers' cognitive structure of brands.

In Chapter 3, we tested this prediction, which is referred to as the matching hypothesis, by an experimental test of the RP advertising grid. The RP grid provides a framework for advertising that distinguishes between brands based on the type of purchase motivation and the level of involvement. We tested the advertising tactics of the RP grid for low involvement brands. The RP grid advises informational advertising for brands that are purchased for utilitarian reasons, and transformational advertising for hedonic brands. The conditions in the experiment are in line with conditions in which both schema theory and psychological research on attitude persuasion predict the matching hypothesis to hold.

Contrary to RP grid recommendations we found that transformational ads were evaluated more favorably than informational ads for utilitarian brands, whereas the reverse was found for hedonic brands. The type of advertising did not affect brand evaluations in this experiment. Our findings suggest that ads were not related to the brand schema as assumed in the RP grid but they might be related to the ad schema. In our experiment, consumers did not consider brand purchase motivation in evaluating the ads but related the ads to their knowledge about advertising in the product category. Thus, the match with ad schema expectations determined advertising effectiveness rather than the match with brand schema expectations. In line with Mandler's (1982) schema theory approach, a moderate degree of incongruity with the ad schema resulted in relatively favorable ad evaluations.

The results of the experiment in Chapter 3 indicated that the requirement of brand awareness in the RP grid was not sufficient for consumers to relate ads to the purchase motivations from their brand schemas. Although consumers were aware of the brands and their benefits, they employed ad schema knowledge in ad processing. This suggested that brand schema salience is necessary for the matching hypothesis of the RP grid to hold. We tested this hypothesis in Chapter 4 with two experiments that employed the same brands and ads but differed in terms of which schema was salient. In the first experiment, the brand schema was salient in ad processing, whereas the ad schema was salient in the second experiment.

In the first experiment of Chapter 4, we found that informational advertising was more effective than transformational advertising for utilitarian brands, whereas transformational advertising was more effective than informational advertising for hedonic brands. Both brand and ad evaluations were in line with the matching hypothesis from the RP grid, because consumers related ads to expectations from their brand schemas. In the second experiment, we found that transformational advertising was more effective than informational advertising for both hedonic and utilitarian brands. Both brand and ad evaluations were in line with initial evaluations of the ads. The match with brand schema expectations did not affect consumer evaluations, because the ad schema was salient in this experiment. The findings from Chapter 4 indicated that brand schema salience is necessary for the matching hypothesis of the RP grid to hold.

Consumers use both brand and ad schemas in ad processing, which implies that there are two types of incongruity with advertising expectations. In the first place,

ads can be incongruent with the brand schema, which is the focus of means-end chain theory (e.g., Gutman 1982) and advertising grids (e.g., Vaughn 1986, Rossiter et al. 1991). In the second place, ads can be incongruent with the ad schema. Incongruity with the brand schema is substantive in nature and concerns the message that is conveyed by the ads, whereas incongruity with the ad schema is cosmetic in nature and is related to the execution of the ads. The schema that is used to determine incongruity also affects how incongruity with advertising expectations is determined. Ads that are incongruent with both brand and ad schemas are unexpected to consumers. However, in the case of ads that are incongruent with the brand schema consumers also consider the ads' relevancy to the brand (e.g., Lee & Mason 1999). In the context of incongruity with schema expectations, expectancy has both cognitive and affective consequences, whereas relevancy has predominantly cognitive consequences. Thus, incongruity with the brand schema is mainly cognitive and incongruity with the ad schema is mainly affective.

The effects of these two types of incongruity were investigated in Chapter 5. Our findings showed that relevancy of the ad to the brand was important in determining incongruity with the brand schema, and expectancy of the ad was important in determining incongruity with the ad schema. In line with predictions from schema theory, we found that incongruity with the brand schema had predominantly cognitive consequences, and incongruity with the ad schema had predominantly affective consequences. Ads that were incongruent with the brand schema were processed more extensively than ads that were congruent with the brand schema. Furthermore, incongruity with the brand schema changed the categorization of brands in the direction of the categorization that was proposed in the ads. Ads that were incongruent with the ad schema led to more arousal, which resulted in more favorable evaluations of ads that were incongruent with the ad schema. An overview of the main results of the experiments from Chapters 3 through 5 is presented in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Overview of results of experiments

Ch.	Product categories	Product trial	Schema saliency	Effects of incongruity on evaluation	Effects of incongruity on processing
3	Deodorant, chewing gum	Yes	Not manipulated	<i>Brand attitude:</i> not affected by advertising <i>Attitude toward the ad:</i> incongruity with the ad schema is evaluated favorably	<i>Arousal (affective):</i> incongruity with the ad schema leads to more arousal <i>Thoughts (cognitive):</i> incongruity with the ad schema leads to more thoughts related to incongruity
4	Deodorant, soft drinks (experiment 1)	No	Brand schema	<i>Brand attitude:</i> incongruity with the brand schema is evaluated unfavorably <i>Attitude toward the ad:</i> incongruity with the brand schema is evaluated unfavorably	Not measured
	Soft drinks (experiment 2)	No	Ad schema	<i>Brand attitude:</i> not affected by incongruity with the brand schema <i>Attitude toward the ad:</i> not affected by incongruity with the brand schema	Not measured
5	Yogurt	No	Not manipulated	<i>Brand attitude:</i> not affected by incongruity with the brand schema, incongruity with the ad schema is evaluated unfavorably <i>Attitude toward the ad:</i> not affected by incongruity with the brand schema, incongruity with the ad schema is evaluated favorably	<i>Arousal (affective):</i> not affected by incongruity with the brand schema, incongruity with the ad schema leads to more arousal <i>Thoughts (cognitive):</i> incongruity with the brand schema leads to more thoughts in total and more thoughts related to incongruity, incongruity with the ad schema leads to more thoughts related to incongruity

6.1.2 Conclusions

If we relate the findings of this thesis to the existing literature on consumer schemas, brand positioning, and advertising we can draw a number of conclusions. With respect to consumer schemas we note that the distinction between brand schemas, product schemas, and ad schemas may be difficult to make in practice. One of the implications that brand schema salience is required for the matching hypothesis of advertising to

apply is that consumers do not necessarily clearly distinguish between brand, product, and ad schemas in judging ads. This suggests that consumers are reasonably flexible in forming expectations of advertising drawing from several different schemas (brand, product and ad schemas). The fact that expectations of advertising are not rigidly based on one type of schema enables brands to reposition with advertising (as is suggested by the brand categorizations in Chapter 5 of this thesis), but also makes it difficult to exactly predict and control consumer reactions to advertising (which is illustrated by Chapter 3). In this respect our research is related to the studies of Viswanathan & Childers (1999) on product categorization and Park et al. (1991) and Broniarczyk & Alba (1994) on brand extensions. Viswanathan & Childers (1999) argue that consumers base their product expectations on various product category schemas, whereas Park et al. (1991) and Broniarczyk & Alba (1994) state that consumer expectations of brand extensions are derived from both brand and product schemas. Thus, consumers' cognitive structures as represented in schemas contain many links between different schemas and the boundaries between these schemas are not clear-cut providing flexibility in consumers' schema-based expectations.

In general, the findings of our study are in line with the effects of the schema theory approaches that were discussed in section 2.2. Incongruity with schema knowledge resulted in more elaborate information processing and a focus on the discrepant information as shown in Table 6.1. Both in this thesis and in other marketing studies on incongruent stimuli (see Table 2.3), incongruity leads to more thoughts in total (e.g., Ozanne et al. 1992, Goodstein 1993), but not consistently so in all studies (e.g., Sujana & Tybout 1989, Peracchio & Tybout 1996). Thus, even though incongruity changes the focus of information processing, the degree of incongruity may not necessarily be as strong as leading to more thoughts in total. The results for evaluation (see Table 6.1) show that incongruity with the brand schema is evaluated unfavorably, whereas incongruity with the ad schema is evaluated favorably. Furthermore, the positive evaluations that result from ads that are incongruent with the ad schema do not result in positive brand evaluations in this research. Thus, the distinction between consumer expectations based on brand and ad schemas is relevant to our understanding of the effects of incongruity on evaluation. In line with both the RP grid and with the (brand) schema theory application of Wansink & Ray (1996), brand-matching ads are evaluated more favorably than brand-mismatching ads. The fact that ad schema-mismatching ads are evaluated more favorably than ad schema-

matching ads is in line with Olney et al. (1991) but is not in line with the (ad) schema theory application of Goodstein (1993). The different results of Goodstein's (1993) study might be explained by the degree of incongruity between ads and ad schemas, which may have been strong in his research, and possible confounds with incongruity with the brand schema that may have occurred in his study. Finally, our findings indicate that it is valuable to incorporate consumers' affective reactions to incongruity, which are often omitted in schema theory applications in marketing (see Peracchio & Tybout 1996 for an exception). In line with Mandler's (1982) theory incongruity with advertising expectations leads to heightened feelings of arousal, and also leads to more favorable ad evaluations.

In line with positioning theory (e.g., Park et al. 1986, Ries & Trout 1986) we find that consumers distinguish between brands from the same product category, and that they use this brand-specific information in ad processing if the brand schema is salient. The brand schemas used in this research are comparable to those of Sujan & Bettman (1989) who also utilize consumers' existing product knowledge to investigate brand positioning (see section 2.3). In line with their finding that advertising determines both brand and product category perceptions in brand categorization, we find that ads can change consumers' initial brand perceptions and alter category positioning and brand similarities within the product category (see Chapter 5). Furthermore, section 2.3 discussed the relations between advertising effectiveness and brand positioning. Our research indicates that one should be cautious with using attitude toward the ad as a measure of advertising effectiveness. In Chapter 4 we find that if consumers use their brand schema in ad processing, the informational ad is more effective, i.e., leads to higher brand attitudes than the transformational ad, even though the attitude toward the informational ad is lower than the attitude toward the transformational ad. If consumers use the ad schema in processing ads, Chapter 4 shows that brand attitudes are in line with initial attitudes toward the ad. However, Chapter 5 shows that the relatively favorable attitudes toward the ad that result from incongruity with the ad schema do not transfer to the brand. Thus, attitudes toward the ad are more easily affected by advertising than brand attitudes, and favorable attitudes toward the ad do not correspond with favorable brand attitudes in all cases.

Finally, we contrast our approach of advertising effectiveness based on consumer expectations of advertising with other theories of advertising effectiveness,

in particular the RP grid. Section 2.4 showed that means-end chain theory (e.g., Gutman 1982) and advertising grids (e.g., Vaughn 1986, Rossiter et al. 1991) assume that consumers relate ads to their brand schema. Thus, the brand schema is the main source of advertising expectations in these theories. For theoretical considerations we have focused on the RP grid (see section 2.4) but this discussion is also relevant to the other theories of advertising effectiveness. In our approach, consumer expectations of advertising are based on both the brand schema and the ad schema. The ad schema is an alternative source of advertising expectations as has been shown in the studies of Goodstein (1993) and Olney et al. (1991). However, these studies do not consider consumer brand perceptions in ad processing. Our findings suggest that the ad schema rather than the brand schema may constitute the “natural” schema for consumers in ad processing. It is noteworthy that without saliency manipulation of the schema that was used for processing ads, the findings with respect to brand evaluations were not in line with the matching hypothesis of advertising (see Table 6.1). Only in the experiment with brand schema salience from Chapter 4, incongruity of ads with the brand schema affected both brand and ad evaluations in accordance with the matching hypothesis. This leads to the conclusion that ads that match consumer brand expectations are more effective than mismatching ads as specified in the RP grid but only if consumers are encouraged to actively use their brand knowledge in ad processing. Brand schema salience is a more strict requirement than the brand awareness condition that is part of the RP grid, and which was met in all empirical studies of this thesis. A qualification of this conclusion is that the ad appeals used in this thesis may not have been strong enough to cause complete matches and mismatches to brand schema knowledge (see also Discussion in section 3.5). The remark that ad appeals could have been stronger is supported by the fact that both informational and transformational brand-matching ads in Chapter 4 did not result in the strong increases of brand attitudes that brand managers would demand of advertising agencies. However, the observation that the same ads in Chapters 3 and 4 were capable of causing remarkably different patterns of brand attitudes (and attitudes toward the ad) shows that the ad appeals were reasonable. Thus, the ad schema is an important consideration in theories of advertising effectiveness. This thesis shows that if consumers employ the ad schema in ad processing, the ad’s match with brand purchase motivation does not affect brand and ad evaluations. In addition to the RP grid, we used schema theory (e.g., Mandler 1982, Fiske & Pavelchak 1986) and marketing literature on incongruity (e.g., Meyers-

Levy & Tybout 1989) in our approach based on consumer expectations of advertising to gain more insight into ad processing. Chapters 4 and 5 show that consumers react differently to ads that are incongruent with the ad schema than to ads that are incongruent with the brand schema. In line with the RP grid, consumers attend to the ad's relevancy to the brand in case of incongruity with the brand schema, but not in the case of incongruity with the ad schema. This shows that consumers use both the relevancy and expectancy dimensions of incongruity that were identified by Heckler & Childers (1992) in case of incongruity with the brand schema, whereas incongruity with the ad schema reflects the expectancy dimension of incongruity. In line with this reasoning, Chapter 5 shows that incongruity with the brand schema has predominantly cognitive consequences (information processing and brand categorization), whereas incongruity with the ad schema has predominantly affective consequences (arousal and ad evaluation).

6.2 Implications for Marketing Management and Advertising

In Chapter 2 we discussed means-end chain theory and advertising grids from which managerial recommendations for advertising were made, based on positioning of the brands. Generally, both theories recommend advertising that matches consumers' brand schema knowledge. In these theories brand positioning is used as a normative framework to arrive at tactics for effective advertising. This implies that the brand schema is considered the most important source of advertising expectations, which is in line with the brand concept management approach of Park et al. (1986).

In our experiments on the effects of incongruity with consumer expectations of advertising, we mainly employed insights from the RP grid. From a managerial viewpoint, the RP grid is an instrument that brand managers can use to predict the effectiveness of particular brand-ad combinations (see Chapter 2). In this dissertation we have found evidence for the predictions from the RP grid, but only in specific circumstances. Ads matching brand purchase motivations were more effective than ads not matching brand purchase motivations if consumers were encouraged to actively use brand schema knowledge in ad processing. However, our findings also showed that it might be more natural for consumers to use ad schema knowledge in ad processing. Brand managers generally are inclined to think of their brands in terms of

brand concept management (Park et al. 1986), and therefore should be aware that consumers process ads in a different way than they do themselves. One way to overcome the brand manager's bias is conducting ad pretests. Ad pretesting should reflect an understanding of consumer ad processing and ensure that consumers consider the ads' relevancy to the brand. This should prevent the selection of ads that are evaluated favorably but do not contribute to consumer brand meaning.

We suggested that the brand awareness requirement in the RP grid needs to be replaced with a brand schema salience requirement, at least for the low involvement product categories in our experiments. Thus, consumers need to be encouraged to relate ads to their brand schemas in advertising. This recommendation is especially relevant for utilitarian brands for which informational advertising is advised in the RP grid. Our findings showed that on average informational ads were less enjoyable, and evaluated less favorably than transformational ads. If consumers do not realize that these informational ads are relevant to the brand, the unfavorable ad evaluations may transfer to the brand. This implies that advertising should try to focus on the brand schema, such that consumers are not only aware of the brand's characteristics but also use this knowledge to evaluate ads. The brand schema can be primed by showing the brand at the beginning of the ads. If the brand is shown only at the end of the ads, it may be too late for consumers to make the connection with the brand schema. However, showing the brand at the beginning of the ads is a reasonably common practice in advertising (Stewart & Furse 1986), which implies that this aspect of the ad execution may have become part of the ad schema. Thus, simple product shots may not be sufficient to prime the brand schema. Instead, ads should attempt to cue consumer brand schemas by including aspects of the brand schema in the ad scenarios in more effective ways. Briefly mentioning the brands' defining benefits or using strong cues that are exclusively related to the brand schema might accomplish this. The creative executions of these recommendations are in the domain of advertising professionals. However, concrete examples may include the following ideas:

- Use of a voice-over that emphasizes the traditional meaning of the brand
- Impressions of the brand use situation
- Portrayal of brand users
- Restating category need in a creative way and relating it to the featured brand
- Employ metaphors that define the brand's meaning to consumers

- Emphasize that the information in the ad may not be entertaining but is very relevant to brand use

The recommendation of including aspects of the brand schema at the beginning of the ad scenario also holds for hedonic brands for which transformational advertising is advised in the RP grid. However, important differences in emphasis exist between hedonic and utilitarian brands. Generally, transformational ads are more enjoyable, and evaluated more favorably than informational ads. Thus, even if consumers do not relate these ads to their brand schema, the positive ad evaluations may transfer to the brand. More importantly, transformational advertising works through associative processes due to inherent characteristics of the consumer purchase motivation (Rossiter et al. 1991, Rossiter & Percy 1997, Puto & Wells 1984). Therefore, inclusion of aspects of the brand schema should occur in a more subtle ways for hedonic brands than for utilitarian brands. Thus, the concrete examples of explicitly emphasizing that the information in the ad is relevant to the brand, and portrayal of real (rather than aspired) brand users are not appropriate for hedonic brands. However, employing metaphors or impressions of the brand use situation remain appropriate examples of priming the brand schema in advertising hedonic brands. Priming the brand schema in advertising is also advised for hedonic brands, because this increases the probability that consumers associate the ads to the brand.

Another possibility for brand managers is to use the fact that consumers use the ad schema in ad processing to their advantage. This implies that, in order to attract attention, ads may be designed such that they deviate from consumer ad schema expectations. Our findings showed that ads that were moderately incongruent with the ad schema were evaluated more favorably than ads that were congruent with the ad schema. However, we did not find evidence that these favorable ad evaluations transferred to the brand. Thus, incongruity with ad schema expectations may be interesting to consumers and entertaining, because it initially puts them on the wrong track, but it does not necessarily contribute to managing consumer brand perceptions. Therefore, ads that creatively use consumer expectations of product category ads should also include a strong link to the brand schema to prevent that consumers remember and like the ads themselves but do not understand how the ad relates to the brand. Consequently, the most effective way to use such “creative” ads is accomplished if incongruity with the ad schema directly pertains to the brand’s benefits. A concrete example comes from a Dutch brand of natural products. The ad

primes the consumers' ad schema by showing happy families enjoying products in a slice-of-life type of commercial, but in a slightly exaggerated and thus incongruent way. The ad claim at the end of the commercial states "only our ads contain artificial ingredients", which (indirectly) relates the ad to the main brand benefits of healthy and natural.

The above example shows that brand managers can also use the consumer's ad schema as a starting point for developing ads. From a managerial viewpoint it is important that such ads include a strong link with the consumers' brand schema, which means that this strategy is not advisable for all brands. An exception to this conclusion is the case where the objective of advertising is not to create favorable brand attitudes but to increase brand awareness. Ads that are incongruent with the ad schema attract consumer attention and thus consumers are more likely to recall the brand. This assumes that the brand name is prominent in the ad; otherwise consumers may recall the ad but not the brand.

To sum up, the RP grid is useful to judge the effectiveness of advertising, but brand managers should be aware that ads should also be successful in priming the brand schema. Furthermore, brand managers need to consider other product category ads to understand how consumers will react to advertising for their own brands.

6.3 Research Limitations and Issues for Future Research

In this section, the most important limitations of the research presented in this dissertation are discussed. We also identify possibilities for future research on the effects of incongruity with advertising expectations. The discussion in this section applies to the thesis as a whole. For a discussion of the specific limitations and research issues of the separate experiments we refer to the relevant sections in Chapters 3 through 5.

The first limitation is that the experiments were carried out among a student population using fictitious brands and ads, and sometimes artificial procedures. The main advantage of this experimental approach is internal validity, because the studies were performed in a controlled environment in which our hypotheses could be tested with as few intrusions and alternative explanations as possible. Students form a reasonably homogeneous group in terms of age, education, and lifestyle.

Consequently, differences in advertising effectiveness in this thesis result from manipulations of brands, ads and incongruity with brand and ad schemas rather than differences between consumers. Furthermore, our experiments required acquisition of brand schemas based on short brand descriptions, imagining hypothetical ads presented by ad scenarios, and included detailed questions about advertising. Thus, the experimental tasks demanded subjects that were used to think at a relatively high level of abstraction.

Fictitious brands were employed to ensure that consumers had the same brand schema in mind. Furthermore, consumers were unlikely to form extremely negative or positive attitudes based on hypothetical brand descriptions. With real brands consumers are likely to differ in their perceptions of these brands and will differ more extremely in their prior brand evaluations, which makes it difficult to attribute differences in advertising effectiveness exclusively to incongruity with advertising expectations (see also Chapter 3). The same reasoning applies to using ad scenarios instead of real television commercials. Consumers may differ with respect to familiarity and evaluation of television commercials. Furthermore, real ads differ in many aspects that cannot be controlled completely, in addition to the differences that relate to incongruity with advertising expectations.

The disadvantages logically arise from the choices in our experimental approach. Consumers who are not as highly educated as students may have difficulty in expressing their opinions of ads in the type of questionnaires that we used in this research. Although the effects of incongruity with advertising expectations can be tested by paper and pencil methods in a student sample, this is not appropriate for testing ads in actual practice. Direct and simple questioning or choice tasks with finished preproduction ads are still recommended for ad testing with “real” consumers.

Because fictitious brands were used, the findings from our studies primarily apply to real brands that are relatively new to consumers. However, we already identified the situation in which consumers have strong attitudes toward familiar brands as one of the conditions in which the matching hypothesis of advertising from the RP grid does not apply (see Chapter 3). Furthermore, compared to other preproduction versions of a television ad, the use of ad scenarios may lead to underestimation of affective responses elicited by ads (Goodstein, Chapman & Moore 1990). This implies that the effects of incongruity with advertising expectations may

be stronger with real ads. On the contrary, if consumers view real ads in a natural environment, incongruity with advertising expectations may not even be noticed because of potential distractions (e.g., Petty & Cacioppo 1986). Thus, our findings provide a conservative test of what ads that are incongruent with advertising expectations can do rather than show what these ads really do in practice (cf. Olney et al. 1991). Future research may determine the effects of incongruity with advertising expectations in more realistic ad viewing settings with real brands and ads.

Secondly, the choice of products limits the generality of our findings. We applied insights from the RP grid in testing the effectiveness of ads matching consumers' brand schemas. However, this dissertation does not offer a complete test of the RP grid. The focus of our experiments was on the motivational dimension of the grid that was manipulated by brand descriptions, while the product categories that were employed belonged to the low involvement part of the grid. Thus, our findings on the effects of incongruity with advertising expectations may only apply to low involvement brands.

Future research may investigate the effects of incongruity with advertising expectations for high involvement brands. The requirements associated with the RP grid and the role of ad schemas may be different for high involvement brands than for low involvement brands. High involvement increases the importance of choosing the right brand for consumers, which makes it more likely that consumers actively use brand schema knowledge in ad processing and evaluate brand-matching ads more favorably than brand-mismatching ads. Thus, the addition of the brand schema salience requirement to the RP grid that was proposed in this thesis may not be necessary for high involvement brands. Furthermore, the tactics that are recommended for high involvement brands in the RP grid are more demanding than the tactics for low involvement brands, because consumer involvement should also be reflected in advertising (see Chapter 3). Personal identification with the brand is required in advertising for high involvement transformational brands, whereas convincing benefit claims are needed for high involvement informational brands. This also suggests that matching ads with brand schema expectations is more important to consumers for high involvement brands than for low involvement brands.

Furthermore, in relation to the conditions in which the matching hypothesis of the RP grid is likely to hold, it may be interesting to investigate the role of prior attitudes for high involvement brands. In their discussion of advertising grid tactics,

Rossiter et al. (1991) state that prior brand attitudes are more important for high involvement brands than for low involvement brands. For both high and low involvement brands, advertising that matches the brand schema expectations is recommended. However, in Chapter 3 we identified the presence of strongly held negative brand attitudes as one of the conditions in which the matching hypothesis of advertising may not hold. Consumers' resistance to counterattitudinal information explained this. On the one hand, high involvement with brands may exaggerate this resistance to counterattitudinal information. On the other hand, high involvement with brands may also increase consumers' willingness to re-evaluate their prior attitudes.

Ad schemas do not only exist for the low involvement product categories studied in this dissertation, but are also available for high involvement product categories. Cars are a good example of a product category from the high involvement-transformational quadrant of the RP grid for which consumers have a strong ad schema. Car ads typically show a car driving on a curvy mountain road with the camera zooming in on the car from different angles, while a voice-over talks about the distinguishing features of the car brand concerned. Insurances are a good example of a high involvement-informational category for which strong ad schema expectations exist. Insurance ads either use a presenter who lists all the benefits of the particular insurance or shows situations in which insurance is needed in an often humorous way. Thus, consumers may also use the ad schema in processing ads for high involvement brands, although its role in ad processing is probably less important than for low involvement brands. Furthermore, the evaluation of incongruity with the ad schema may be different for high involvement brands. In the context of low involvement brands, incongruity with the ad schema is perceived as interesting and results in positive evaluations. However, in the context of high involvement brands, incongruity with the ad schema may be evaluated negatively and lead to irritation. Consumers that are highly involved with brands are likely to be concerned with the relevancy of incongruent information even if it concerns incongruity with the ad schema. Thus, if incongruity with the ad schema does not pertain directly to the brand, consumers may evaluate incongruity with the ad schema negatively for high involvement brands.

A third limitation is that we did not investigate heterogeneity in consumer responses to incongruity with advertising expectations. In this dissertation, the focus was on the ads themselves. Specifically we were interested in ad characteristics that determine incongruity with brand and ad schema expectations. There may exist

important differences in consumer expectations of advertising and therefore fictitious brands and ad scenarios were used in our experiments. Furthermore, a homogeneous sample of subjects was employed to prevent differences in the effects of incongruity with advertising expectations as a result of differences between consumers. By no means does this imply that an average consumer exists or that there are no relevant differences between consumers. On the contrary, heterogeneity among consumers provides an interesting issue for further research on the effects of incongruity with advertising expectations.

Consumers may differ in their optimal arousal level (Steenkamp et al. 1996). This implies that they differ in their tolerance for arousal-generating stimuli, which extends to ads that are incongruent with consumer expectations of advertising. Consequently, consumers may differ in both their perception and evaluation of incongruity with advertising expectations. Specific ads that are incongruent with advertising expectations are less likely to cause high levels of arousal for consumers with a high tolerance for arousal than for consumers with a low tolerance for arousal. Furthermore, consumers with high tolerance for arousal may be inclined to evaluate incongruity with advertising expectations more favorably than consumers with low tolerance for arousal. Future research is needed to test the mediating role of tolerance for arousal in the effects of incongruity with advertising expectations.

Furthermore, there are important differences between the consumers' cognitive structures of brands, products and ads. A distinction that has received a lot of attention in the marketing literature is that between experts and novices. Experts have more elaborate schemas than novices and their knowledge structure is relatively complex (Alba & Hutchinson 1987). Thus, differences in consumer expertise are reflected in the elaborateness and complexity of the brand and ad schemas that determine consumer expectations of advertising. Several studies in marketing have investigated the role of product expertise in processing and evaluation of incongruent information (e.g., Sujana 1985, Peracchio & Tybout 1996). These studies show that experts and novices react differently to incongruent product information. Similarly consumer reactions to ads that are incongruent with advertising expectations may differ between experts and novices.

More research is needed to determine the relation between consumer expertise and incongruity with advertising expectations. The studies on product expertise and incongruity provide conflicting results. Sujana (1985) finds that expert consumers

notice incongruity of a new product, which leads to extensive processing of attribute information. Novices in their study do not notice the product's incongruity and rely on schema-based processing. On the contrary, Peracchio & Tybout (1996) find that experts are capable of integrating the incongruent information in their existing product schema without extensive processing when they notice incongruity. Novice consumers in their study also notice incongruity but for these consumers incongruity leads to arousal, because they cannot fit the incongruent information into their existing product schema without more elaborate information processing. Thus, the relation between product expertise and incongruity is ambiguous. Future research may identify characteristics of the situations that determine whether incongruity is noticed or not and when incongruity with schema-based expectations leads to more extensive processing for experts and novices.

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Nederlandse Samenvatting (Summary in Dutch)

In dit proefschrift worden reclames die afwijken van consumentenverwachtingen ten aanzien van reclame bestudeerd. De verwachtingen van consumenten ten aanzien van reclame spelen een belangrijke rol bij de perceptie en informatieverwerking van reclames waar consumenten mee in aanraking komen. Kennis gerelateerd aan merken en reclames en de daarop gebaseerde verwachtingen vormen voor consumenten een referentiekader dat onder meer bepaalt of consumenten veel of weinig aandacht aan reclames zullen besteden en hoe reclames gewaardeerd worden.

Door de toename van het aantal reclames en andere commerciële merkuitingen wordt het voor merkartikelfabrikanten steeds belangrijker om de aandacht van consumenten voor hun merk te trekken en vast te houden. Een van de middelen om dit te doen is om enigszins af te wijken van het verwachtingspatroon dat bij consumenten bestaat. Hierbij is het voor de manager van een merk echter van beslissend belang dat de reclame uiteindelijk zorgt voor een duidelijke positionering van het merk ten opzichte van andere merken en zo bijdraagt aan de omzet en merkwaarde.

In het tweede hoofdstuk van dit proefschrift worden twee bronnen van consumentenverwachtingen ten aanzien van reclame onderscheiden. In overeenstemming met schematheorie uit de psychologie gebruiken wij het begrip schema om te verwijzen naar de kennis en daarmee samenhangende verwachtingen die consumenten hebben ten aanzien van reclame. Ten eerste kunnen consumenten hun verwachtingen ten aanzien van reclame baseren op kennis en verwachtingen van het betreffende merk waarvoor reclame gemaakt wordt (merkschema). Ten tweede kunnen consumentenverwachtingen ten aanzien van reclame gebaseerd zijn op kennis van reclames die voor de betreffende productcategorie gebruikelijk zijn (reclameschema).

De discrepantie tussen reclameverwachtingen en feitelijke reclame wordt met het begrip incongruentie aangeduid. Uit marketingonderzoek naar de effecten van incongruentie blijkt dat afwijken van verwachtingen leidt tot een uitgebreidere informatieverwerking en het beter onthouden van afwijkende informatie. De resultaten met betrekking tot waardering van afwijkende informatie zijn niet eenduidig. In dit proefschrift staan de gevolgen van afwijkingen van

reclameverwachtingen voor informatieverwerking en merk- en reclamewaardering centraal.

Vanuit de marketing zijn een aantal theorieën over reclame-effectiviteit ontwikkeld, waarbij reclameverwachtingen op basis van het merkschema centraal staan. Hierin wordt benadrukt dat reclames overeen dienen te komen met de merkgerelateerde reclameverwachtingen van consumenten om een positieve waardering voor het merk te bewerkstelligen, de zgn. match hypothese. In dit proefschrift worden de inzichten van één van deze theorieën over reclame-effectiviteit, de Rossiter-Percy grid (RP grid: Rossiter et al. 1991, Rossiter & Percy 1997), gebruikt.

De RP grid stelt dat reclames moeten appelleren aan de onderliggende koopmotivatie voor het merk, een belangrijk onderdeel van het merkschema, om effectief te zijn. De RP grid plaatst koopmotieven voor merken in twee brede categorieën, informationele en transformationele motieven, waarvan wij utilitaire en hedonistische koopmotieven onderzoeken. Tevens formuleert de RP grid reclametactieken die voorbeeldduitvoeringen van reclames beschrijven die kenmerkend en passend zijn voor deze twee koopmotieven. Informationele reclame wordt aanbevolen voor utilitaire merken en transformationele reclame wordt aanbevolen voor hedonistische merken.

In hoofdstuk 3 worden de theorie en aanbevelingen van de RP grid getest aan de hand van een experiment. Door het aanbieden van merkomschrijvingen en reclamescenario's in een producttest worden matches en mismatches tussen koopmotivatie (utilitair en hedonistisch) en type reclame (informationeel en transformationeel) gecreëerd. De informationele reclame wordt als incongruent voor het hedonistische merk gezien en de transformationele reclame wordt als incongruent voor het utilitaire merk beoordeeld. In tegenstelling tot de match hypothese in de RP grid leiden matchende reclames niet tot een hogere merk- en reclamewaardering dan mismatchende reclames. Juist de met het merk mismatchende reclames worden hoger gewaardeerd dan de met het merk matchende reclames, terwijl er geen effect is van incongruentie op merkwaardering.

De verklaring hiervoor kan zijn dat consumenten zich wel bewust zijn van de positionering van het merk in de productcategorie, maar van deze merkkennis geen gebruik hebben gemaakt bij beoordeling van de reclames. In plaats van het merkschema is het reclameschema gebruikt om de waardering voor de reclames te

bepalen. In overeenstemming met Mandler's (1982) theorie blijken kleine afwijkingen van het reclameschema te leiden tot een gevoel van opwinding en hierdoor tot een hogere waardering van de mismatchende reclames. Dit lijkt te impliceren dat de in de RP grid vermelde voorwaarde dat consumenten zich bewust zijn van het merk niet voldoende is voor het opgaan van de match hypothese.

In hoofdstuk 4 wordt getest of deze suggestie correct is door middel van twee experimenten. Hierbij wordt net zoals in hoofdstuk 3 gebruik gemaakt van merkomschrijvingen (utilitair en hedonistisch) en reclamescenario's (informatieel en transformationeel). Wij veronderstellen dat activering van het merkschema nodig is voor het opgaan van de match hypothese en niet slechts het bewust zijn van het merk. In het eerste experiment wordt het merkschema geactiveerd en verwachten we dat merk- en reclamewaardering in overeenstemming zijn met de voorspellingen van de RP grid. In het tweede experiment wordt het reclameschema geactiveerd en veronderstellen we dat merk- en reclamewaardering niet worden beïnvloed door incongruentie met het merkschema.

In het eerste experiment wordt sterk bewijs gevonden voor de match hypothese. De reclames die matchen met het merkschema worden hoger gewaardeerd en leiden tot een positievere merkattitude dan reclames die niet matchen met het merkschema. Bij activering van het merkschema relateren consumenten de reclames wel aan hun kennis van het merk en reageren in overeenstemming met de RP grid. In het tweede experiment wordt bij activering van het reclameschema zoals verwacht geen bewijs gevonden voor de match hypothese. De waardering van merken en reclames is gebaseerd op de initiële waardering van de reclames zonder dat de inhoud van de reclames door consumenten gerelateerd wordt aan hun merkkennis.

In hoofdstuk 5 worden de effecten van incongruentie met reclameverwachtingen nader onderzocht. Reclames kunnen afwijken van het merkschema of van het reclameschema. Afwijkingen van het merkschema zijn substantieel van aard en afwijkingen van het reclameschema zijn cosmetisch van aard (cf. Goodstein 1993). Incongruentie met het merkschema wordt bepaald door zowel de onverwachtheid van de reclame als de relevantie voor het merk, terwijl incongruentie met het reclameschema alleen op de onverwachtheid van de reclame betrekking heeft. Hierbij zijn relevantie en verwachting de twee dimensies van incongruentie die door Heckler & Childers (1992) worden onderscheiden. De reacties op deze twee typen van incongruentie zullen dan ook naar verwachting verschillen,

waarbij de gevolgen van incongruentie met het merkschema meer cognitief zullen zijn in vergelijking met de gevolgen van incongruentie met het reclameschema.

Deze hypothese wordt getoetst met een experiment waarin gebruik wordt gemaakt van reclamescenario's die afwijken van consumentenverwachtingen in termen van executie (uitvoering) en de reclameboodschap. De reclames die in executie afwijken van het reclameschema worden als onverwacht beoordeeld, terwijl de reclames die inhoudelijk afwijken van het merkschema als minder relevant voor het merk worden gepercipieerd. De gevolgen van afwijkingen van het reclameschema zijn vooral affectief. Incongruente executie van reclames leidt tot een gevoel van opwinding en dat heeft een hogere reclamewaardering tot gevolg. Deze hogere reclamewaardering leidt echter niet tot een hogere waardering van het merk. De consequenties van afwijkingen van het merkschema zijn vooral cognitief. Incongruentie in de reclameboodschap leidt tot een uitgebreidere informatieverwerking, een veranderde perceptie van het merk en een wijziging in de categorisatie van het merk.

In hoofdstuk 6 wordt een overzicht gegeven van de resultaten van de drie empirische hoofdstukken en de beperkingen van het onderzoek. Tevens worden aanbevelingen voor vervolgonderzoek en implicaties voor management behandeld. Voor merkmanagers en reclamemakers is het van belang om bij het testen van reclames zich er van te verzekeren dat het merkschema wordt gebruikt bij de beoordeling van de reclames. Anders kunnen reclames geselecteerd worden die wel leuk gevonden worden, maar niet bijdragen aan de merkbeleving van de consument of daar mogelijk zelfs afbreuk aan doen. Tevens dient in reclame voor merken, producten en situaties waarbij de consument laag betrokken is, het merkschema geactiveerd te worden in de reclame zelf. Een andere mogelijkheid is om beoordeling van reclames door consumenten vanuit het reclameschema als uitgangspunt voor het vervaardigen van reclames te nemen. Om de effectiviteit van dergelijke reclames te waarborgen moet echter een duidelijke relatie met het merk gelegd kunnen worden. Deze reclamestrategie dient dan ook zorgvuldig toegepast te worden.

Curriculum Vitae

Joost Loef (1973) studied Business Economics at Erasmus University Rotterdam and graduated in 1997. In September 1997 he continued his stay at the Erasmus University to carry out his doctoral research. His research interests are in the fields of consumer behavior and marketing.

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Incongruity between Ads and Consumer Expectations of Advertising

The effectiveness of advertising is a topic of interest to both marketing research and advertising practice. Many advertising theories specify that effective ads, i.e., ads that result in favorable brand attitudes, should match consumer brand expectations. Implicit in these theories is the assumption that consumers use their brand schemas in ad processing. Alternatively, however, consumers may use their ad schemas in ad processing. Especially in a cluttered media environment consumers have formed expectations of advertising in particular product categories. In this thesis, we consider both the origins of consumer expectations of advertising and study the effects of ads that are incongruent with such advertising expectations. We find that ads that match consumer brand expectations are only more effective than brand-mismatching ads if the brand schema is salient in ad processing. The requirement of schema salience is more strict than the brand awareness requirement that is part of the aforementioned advertising theories. If consumers use their ad schemas in processing advertising, brand-matching does not affect consumer evaluations of brands and ads. Contrary to incongruity with the brand schema, incongruity with the ad schema is evaluated favorably. This is explained by the way in which consumers determine incongruity with the brand schema and incongruity with the ad schema. Consumers only consider ad relevancy to the brand in case of incongruity with the brand schema. In line with this reasoning, we find that incongruity with the brand schema mainly has cognitive consequences, whereas incongruity with the ad schema predominantly has affective consequences.

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