

# A Critical Approach to Product Placement in Comedy: Seinfeld Case\*

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**Abstract**— Aristotle had used the word “Eudaimonia” for happiness, and had stated that it was the only thing valuable in isolation. He, together with Plato, had also introduced the “Superiority Theory” in which the reasons behind the fact that people usually laugh at the misfortune of others was analyzed. Sigmund Freud, on the other hand, approached happiness from another angle and argued on his “Relief Theory” that humor can be considered as a way for people to release psychological tensions, overcome their inhibitions, and reveal their suppressed fears and desires. In Adorno and Horkheimer’s famous book “Towards a New Manifesto” (1949-2011:14-15), Adorno had declared that animals could teach us what happiness was, and Horkheimer had added that achieving the condition of an animal at the level of reflection could be considered as freedom. Keeping these definitions in mind, would it be possible to state that the ultimate goal of comedy in media is to help people reach Aristotle’s “Eudaimonia” by mirroring our ‘animal side’ back to us within the social limits of the ‘superiority theory’? Or is there more to these comedy shows than what meets the eye? Can there be an underlying agenda in disguise for marketing and advertising within the friendly face of ‘comedy’? How product placement is used on TV series, and why is comedy regarded as an appropriate ground for such initiations? This study will try to find answers to the above mentioned questions by using a qualitative content analysis method, discourse analysis, and will also take the famous TV series ‘Seinfeld’ as a case study.

**Keywords**—Advertising, Product Placement, Comedy, Humor, TV shows, Seinfeld.

## I. INTRODUCTION

While many mammals show their teeth display akin to laughter, most agree that only humans (as reference to “Homo-ridens”) have the requisite cognitive capability to create humor. This is thought to be linked to an ability and desire to relocate play in the mind; a capability to utilize humans’ creative faculties in order to achieve the pleasure of play in a cerebral context (McDonald,P.2012:8-14).

The standard humor analysis which was written by D. H. Monro (1988:349), classifies humor theories into three: Superiority, incongruity, and relief theories. Monro, explains the attitude of the ‘laugher’ in the superiority theory as follows: “The laugher always looks down on whatever he laughs at, and so judges it inferior by some standard” So, here one may see that laughing at the foolish actions of others is not just permissible, but also normalized in comedy. In Morreall’s book *The Philosophy of Laughter and Humor* (1987:169), Roger Scruton’s version of the ‘Superiority

Theory’ of comic amusement as ‘attentive demolition’ is discussed. Scruton, analyses amusement as an “attentive demolition” of a person or something connected with a person. He states that laughter devalues its object in the subject’s eyes, and Morreall touches on this concept further. At this point one may talk about a mutual understanding among these writers on some core concepts like importance of ‘values’, ‘normalization’ by ‘devaluation’ and their effects on comedy.

According to the incongruity hypothesis, humor is a degree of discrepancy between an expected and an actual state of affairs. According to the relief hypothesis, humor is the result of relief or release from tension (Deckers,L et al. 1977:261). Lintott (2016:347), categorize these three theories as such: The incongruity theory focuses on the cognitive aspects, superiority the emotive, and relief the physical of comic amusement. So, just as heart quickens (physical) and the person is fearful (emotive) when the person judges (cognitive) a car is about to hit me, it is likely that the experience of comic amusement often includes some or all of these aspects.

Perks (2012:119-132) states that the founders of these theories, namely philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian, had mutually put the emphasis on the potential of humor to be a powerful tool of persuasion, and that it should be used with caution. When humor is analyzed with caution in this context, it becomes evident how it can be used as a buffer-zone between unwanted feelings like guilt, blame, shame and highly desired feelings like happiness, and joy by normalizing the causation in a given situation behind a mutually shared defense mechanism created by comedy. When the abnormal becomes the normal, a previously non-existent space for ‘creation’ is formed; whether it is a positive creation or a negative one. At this point one may ask where comedy gets this power to make people feel safe enough to comfortably share their ideas, thoughts, and feelings. The creative aspect of humor is worth mentioning at this stage.

Creation of humor is usually assessed by confronting S’s with incomplete jokes or cartoons without captions and giving the audience the task of producing funny endings (Hehl, F.-J. & Ruch, W. 1985:705). As creation takes place in the shared silence, ‘nothingness’ gives birth; in this case to laughter. This in itself requires concurrent reasoning and creative storytelling on part of the audience. These two attributes make room for the playful nature of the humans to arise, and take the lead for joyful creation. Thus both reasoning and storytelling may be considered as important aspects of creation.

The television series Seinfeld, which had been broadcasted in various parts of the world from 1990 through 1999, can be given as one of the best examples of such simple and joint

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'creation'. As a "show about nothing," it allowed viewers to co-create their daily routine as they followed the simple lives of Jerry, George, Elaine, and Kramer. The audience found something from their lives in every episode, and they felt they knew the characters by heart. One of the main reasons that made Seinfeld so successful, and thus so appropriate for advertising and product placements, was this simplicity in creating daily stories that attracted many people like a magnet.

In the mid 90s, Seinfeld was declared to be the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest rated program in America. NBC had announced that advertising for the final episode would sell for 2 million dollars for a 30 second ad slot; the program generated 72 million dollars in advertising revenue for the network that night (McAllister, M.P. 2002:388). After almost 20 years from that day, a 2008 survey of students at three institutions of higher education (a research university, a midsize comprehensive university, and a liberal arts college) showed that almost three-quarters of the students could name the four main characters of the show and that more than 50 percent still watch it occasionally or regularly (Ghent, L.S. et al. 2011:317). This longevity of 'Seinfeldmania' in comedy constitutes one of the main reasons why this comedy show was chosen to be analyzed as a case study in regards to product placement as the core point of this analysis.

## II. COMEDY, HAPPINESS AND ADVERTISING

### A. Emotional appeal of happiness

The humor in comedy makes people laugh, and laughter is synonymous with happiness, and advertising knows the importance of the emotional appeal of happiness in the selling stage. As Coca Cola wants people to find 'happiness' under a woman's body shaped bottle, Hamlet cigars may claim ownership over the very same feeling with a twist in visuals... Many brands don't hesitate to promise a bit of 'happiness' with the hope to get a lot of customers in return. So it is a valid question to ask, what makes the "promise" of happiness this attractive for consumers?

The idea that happiness is central to all human experience goes back to the ancients. The Greek philosopher Aristippus, argued in the fourth century BC that the goal of life is to maximize the totality of one's pleasures (Nettle, D. 2005:1). All humans want to be happy, and there is no 'hedonimeter' to measure someone's level of happiness precisely. Happiness is a feeling, an emotion; concurrent, and cannot be captured with numbers in time. At this point, one may regard laughter as a sign of 'happiness'. Thus laughter becomes the "object of desire" for the humans, and comedy becomes the perfect platform to reach that desire.

As mentioned before, humor is a creative activity, and research shows that people are more receptive to new concepts when they are in a 'humorous mode' (McDonald, P. 2012:8). Speck (1990:1) identifies five humor types: 1. Comic wit - Incongruity resolution humor is used mostly; 2. Sentimental humor-Arousal safety is important; 3. Satire-incongruity resolution and dispositional humor are both present; 4. Sentimental comedy - incongruity resolution and arousal safety humor are present; 5. Full comedy - incongruity resolution, dispositional, and arousal safety humor are all present. One may say that in the comedy series Seinfeld, all of the above mentioned humor types were professionally used; making it a full comedy, with special emphasis on satire.

### B. Humor and persuasion

As Sternthal and Craig (1973:14) stated, humor may increase persuasion, distract the audience and reduce counter-arguments in a message. At this point, one may say that humor in comedy can normalize the extraordinary; in other words it may become a justified way of rebelling to the societal norms. Djambaska et al (2016:1), wrote that the effect of humor is influenced by the type of product being advertised and that in general humor itself has a permanent presence with a specific role in advertising. At this point, it needs to be underlined that humor should be used carefully in advertisements; otherwise it may result in resistance.

Hovland et al. (1953:315) used an information-processing model of persuasion to explicate the relationship of humor to the persuasion process. In this approach, it was stated that the processing of a persuasive communication included sequential cognitive actions of attending to, comprehending, accepting, and retaining acceptance of a persuasive communication. Completion of all stages yielded persuasion.

Proponents of humor argue that it is a universal language which humanizes advertising, allowing the communicator to speak to the members of his audience on their own level. On the other hand, some opponents of this view state that humor wears out quickly with repetition, so it would not be effective in the long run, and that it shows variations from culture to culture. Although some opposing views as mentioned above appear with some regularity, a research, made back in 1970s, by the Schwerin Corporation, concludes that some humor is probably more effective than no humor (Sternthal, B & Craig, C.S. 1973:12).

## III. PRODUCT PLACEMENT IN COMEDY

### A. Cutting through commercial clutter

In Seinfeld TV show, it was not unusual to come across an episode that would evolve around a product. The cleverly repeated slogans became catchphrases in no time. Some of these catchphrases even made it to the Seinfeld memorabilia product cycle. It is still possible to come across a Seinfeld mug with such slogans as "These pretzels are making me thirsty" or "If they are not Dockers, they are just pants" on amazon or e-bay. These slogans became almost like catchphrases after the show, and exceeded the brand, or the product they were representing. They became a part of 'Seinfeldmania'... Well known, common brands and/or products like the Junior mints, Arby's, Ovaltine, Bosco, the board game Risk, Kenny Roger's Roasters, Pez, Snapple, Drake's coffee cake, or 'Oh Henry!' candy bars, together with more luxury goods like Saab, Golf and Cadillac cars, were all cleverly, and quite openly, embedded within the stories about 'nothing'. When George Costanza was hanging around a vending machine to get some Twix bars all through one episode, his explanation 'Twix is the only candy bar with a cookie crunch' made the 'infomercial' something rather sympathetic. Throughout the show, the audience was exposed to cereal boxes and different products that were placed very cleverly throughout the scenes. At this point, it is important to remind that these products were not appearing within the show by accident. In a quest to cut through commercial clutter, and declining television ratings, marketers had tried their hand at subtle or intrusive ways of displaying their products through what is known as 'product placement'. Product placement practices also exist in music videos, radio programs, songs,

video games, plays, novels, and movies (Gupta, P.B & Lord, K.R.1998:47).

### B. History of Product Placement

History of product placement goes way back to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Jay Newell et al's (2006:575-580) research had led them to conclude that certain films made by Auguste and Louis Lumière in 1896 represented the first cases of product placement on record. The scene of two women hand-washing tubs of laundry with two cases of Lever Brothers soaps, namely "Sunlight Savon," and "Sunlight Seife." in the movie titled "Washing Day in Switzerland" was considered as the first product placement trial in film. Many others followed. In 1963, in Stanley Kubrick's film *Dr.Strangelove*, Peter Sellers was using coins from a Coca Cola machine to try to make a phone call in an attempt to halt the possibility of nuclear war. In 1981, the legendary Coca Cola bottle contour arrived once again to spice up the lives of the bushmen in Jamie Uys' film *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (Lehu,J.M.,2007:145).

Although all these previously mentioned films can be given as examples for the first trials of product placement, it was not until Steven Spielberg's film 'ET' that product placement came into the public awareness. Interest in product placement grew tremendously in 1982 after the celebrated successful placement of Reese's Pieces candy in the film "E.T.", in which an alien was shown to follow a line of Reese's Pieces. Sales of Reese's Pieces increased by 65% in the three months after "E.T." was released (Gupta, P.B & Lord K.R.1998:47). Product placement was initially defined as the inclusion of trademarked merchandise, brand-name products, or signage in a motion picture (Steertz, 1987). In time this definition expanded to many other areas, and in today's digital world, social media and all other interactive platforms can also be regarded as mediums suitable for product placement.

The first test for deciding if product placement is used or not used is the in-program visual appearance or audio mention of the branded item or service. The second and perhaps more difficult test to qualify the appearance of a brand as a product placement item is the intent to influence consumer behavior (Newell, J. et al. 2006:577-578). Primary brand placements can be defined as seeing the brand, product, or company name displayed on an actual product. Secondary brand placements occur when the brand, product, or company name or logo could be seen on a different item other than the actual product (La Ferle, C. & Edwards, S. M.2006:67).

Whether it is primary or secondary placement, to determine how much a marketer should pay a movie producer for a product placement, Mr. Ed Mintz had developed a system called Cinemascore, which was similar to the Nielsen ratings in television advertising. The Cinemascore works on a commission basis and positions itself as a "product placement, media-buying service, and is still functioning today (Gupta, P.B & Lord, K.R.1998:48).

This new way of increasing sales was adopted by the profiteers of mass media very quickly. However, for television, the product placement was seen as a threat to advertising revenue, and an under-ground trade developed in which program staff worked with manufacturers' publicity agents to promote products on air. The rewards of product placement available to motion picture producers were less relevant to the television industry (Newell, J. et al.2006:576).

Today's product placement agents and entertainment marketing directors must collaborate with both television and movie writers and producers to get their brands a starring role in their shows. Such agreements range from subtle appearances of the brand on the screen, such as "Snapples" in

a Seinfeld episode, to tightly integrated cross-promotional campaigns, such as the well known James Bond-BMW Z3 tie-in which was analyzed deeply in Fournier and Dolan's article (1997:1-25)

### C. Stimulus condition in product placements

Placements presented in any of the forms mentioned above may be stimulated in 2 ways: "Prominent" or "Subtle". Prominent placements are those in which the product (or other brand identifier) is made highly visible by virtue of size and/or position on the screen or its centrality to the action in the scene (Gupta,P.B & Lord,K.R.1998:49). There are many scenes throughout the series in which a prominent-placement is made; some of the examples can be given as follows: Episode:159/ January 8,1998/ Title: The Dealership/ A vending machine is located in the auto gallery where Jerry is negotiating on a car deal, and George tries to get a Twix bar. The vending machine becomes part of the action as George throws a dollar in it and the item doesn't fall down. At this point, the camera zooms in and the clinging Twix bar virtually fills the screen for about a second.

Brand is not shown prominently in subtle placements; there is a lower time of exposure, and are usually less obvious. Subtle product-placements as such appear many times in Seinfeld too. Example: Episode: 50 / November 25, 1992/ Title: The Airport/ A model that Jerry meets in his first class airplane ride shows him the Calvin Klein jeans commercial that she modeled in a magazine. The interesting part of this scene is the realization of an avowal which revolves around the advertising world since the times of Edward Bernays, and the beginnings of using the "emotional appeals" in advertising, when the products were starting to be advertised with the intent of fulfilling the consumers' primitive desires, and not their actual needs, for selling more.

### D. Prominence of Brands

Ferraro and Avery (2000:1-15) coded prominence of brands by determining whether the products were shown in the foreground and close up. In addition, the present study determined: (1) whether the brand name could be clearly seen, (2) whether the brand was shown at the center of the screen, (3) whether the brand was shown with other branded products in the same camera shot, and (4) the number of same-branded products that were visible.

Prominence of brands was also observed by whether they were relevant to the scene in some way, whether they were at the center of the on-screen action or not, and by the amount of character interaction with the product and the type of character engaged in such interaction. Similar to visual interaction, the present study detailed the type of character verbally interacting with the product to describe the importance of the character who mentioned the brand. Also, the number of other branded products mentioned in the scene and the manner in which the product or brand was referenced was found to be important. Some verbal placement categories included mentioning the brand name itself (e.g., Episode 48/ November 11 1992/ Title: The Virgin/ Elaine offering Jerry's girlfriend a bottle of soda and mentioning the brand name: "Snapples?"); stating the product category (Showing a bottle of Snapples when asking: "May I have a soda?"); or using a pronoun ("Give it to me!").

An experiment was made by Gupta,P.B. and Lord,K.R. (1998:47) to compare the recall effectiveness of common

product-placement strategies with each other and with advertising. Prominent placements elicited higher recall than did advertisements, which, in turn, outperformed subtle placements. The explicit mention of a product in the audio script (without a visual depiction) led to better recall than a subtle visual placement (without audio reinforcement). However, the addition of a complementary audio message did not significantly enhance the recall of a product that already enjoyed prominent visual display.

In Cristel Antonia Russell's (2002:306) experiment, results showed that the modality of presentation (visual and auditory) of the placements and the degree of connection between a brand and the plot of the show interact to influence memory and attitude change. Memory improves when modality and plot connection are incongruent but persuasion is enhanced by congruency. While congruous placements appear natural, incongruent placements adversely affect brand attitudes because they seem out of place and are discounted.

#### E. Modes of Product Placements

Product-placement strategies can be categorized into three modes (Gupta,P.B & Lord,K.R.1998:48): (1) Visual only (VIS), which is sometimes referred to as Screen Placement; (2) Audio only (AUD), also referred as Script Placement; and (3) Combined Audio-Visual (AV), also can be referred as Plot Placement.

1. *VIS Mode of Placement (Screen Placement)*: This mode, as stated in Russell's (1998:357) article, involves visuals only; a logo, product or some other visual brand identifier without any relevant message is included in the scene. VIS mode of placement is done either through creative placement like showing outdoor advertisements in street scenes; or through on-set placements (E.g: Jerry's famous cereals which stand in the kitchen shelves on the background through out many scenes.)

2. *AUD Mode of Placement (Script Placement)*: The product is not shown on the screen; there is just an audio stimuli which may come across as the mentioning of a brand name or a character conveying brand-related messages in audio form (Gupta,P.B & Lord,K.R.1998:48).. There are varying degrees of audio placement, depending on the context in which the product is mentioned, the frequency with which it is mentioned, and the emphasis placed on the product name (Russell, C.A. 1998:357). E.g: Episode 32/ January 29,1992/ Title: The Suicide/ Jerry bribes his long time enemy Newman with a Drake's Coffee Cake, and we just hear about the product at the beginning, when Jerry is trying to make his best friend George throw his garbage bag for him in return of 50 cents. No visuals of the cake is seen.

**George:** *There's no way I touch that bag for less than two dollars.*

**Jerry:** *Come on. Fifty cents... A piece of Drake's coffee cake.*

**George:** *You're not getting no Drake's Coffee Cake for fifty cents!*

3. *AV Mode of Placement (Plot Placement)*: This mode involves showing a brand and at the same time mentioning the brand name or conveying a brand-relevant message in audio form. E.g: Episode 29/ December 11, 1991/ Title: The Red Dot / Kramer drinking Hennigan's scotch whiskey, and

singing a jingle like song, presenting the slogan 'No Smell, No Tell' with the label being clearly exposed to the audience.

**Jerry:** *"I got a bottle of Scotch my uncle gave me, Hennigan's. It's been there two years. I've been using it as a paint thinner.*

**Kramer:** *"That is damn good Scotch. I could do a commercial for this stuff... Boy that Hennigan's goes down smooth and afterwards you don't even smell... That's right folks. I just had three shots of Hennigan's, and I don't smell. Imagine, you can walk around drunk all day. That's Hennigan's; the no-smell, no -tell Scotch!"*

In some cases, the product becomes part of the plot by having an influence in the story line or becomes associated with a character. This type of placement is called a "plot placement", and it consists of any combination of visual and verbal components necessary for enabling the connection between the product and the plot. E.g: Episode 134/November 14,1996/ Title: The Chicken Roaster / Kenny Rogers' Roasted Chicken is placed everywhere and also is situated in the main plot of the show. Such cases constitute high intensity plot placement. At this point it would be appropriate to say that one of the reasons why Seinfeld had become such a successful TV show was the creative content team responsible for such plot placements.

#### IV. SHAPING CONTENT IN COMEDY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON PRODUCT PLACEMENT

Even some very serious and/or contradictory topics for society may look unthreatening and normal when presented in a humorous way. The messages in Seinfeld focused on some serious issues in a humorous way as well. Some examples may be given as:

- **Issues on gender:** Discussions on coming out and being gay between Jerry and George; "Not that there is anything wrong with it" as the catchphrase (Episode:55 / February 11,1993/ Title: The Outing); Elaine being the 'best-man' at a lesbian wedding (Episode:30/ January 8,1992/ Title: The Subway) ; George, questioning his sexuality after a massage therapy (Episode: 18/ September 18, 1991/ Title: The Note); Elaine trying to convert a gay man (Episode: 96/ February 9, 1995 / Title: The Beard)
- **Murder:** Kramer's girlfriend being killed by a serial killer who turns out to be a 'generous tipper' (Episode:40/ August 12,1992/Title: The Trip-Part 1)
- **Alcoholism, and substance use:** Elaine's alcoholic boyfriend Dick, jumping off the wagon as he mixes his glass full of cranberry juice with another filled with an alcoholic beverage (Episode 29/ December 11, 1991/ Title: The Red Dot); Jerry's accountant using cocaine ( Episode 65/ October 7, 1993/ Title: The Sniffing Accountant)
- **Law:** Jackie Chiles, Kramer's lawyer, who sues the Java World café after Kramer sneaks a café latte into the movies and burs himself while trying to be seated (Episode 107/ October 5, 1995/ Title. The Maestro). This was an obvious satire of the 1994 lawsuit Liebeck vs.McDonald's restaurants. This was a product liability lawsuit, also known as the McDonald's Coffee Case. Plaintiff Stella Liebeck

accidentally spilled coffee in her lap after purchasing it from a McDonald's restaurant. She suffered from third-degree burns, and a New Mexico jury awarded 2.86 million dollars, out of which 2.7 million dollars was punitive damages (Lim,C.S.H.2015:.87)

- **Politics:** Elaine being banned from the soup restaurant by the famous soup-maker in town notoriously known for his dictator like attitude towards his customers; shouting out the catchphrase: "No Soup For you!" (Episode:110/ November 2,1995/ Title: The Soup Nazi)
- **Assassinations, and Terrorism:** A second spitter theory in a match fighting incident is told by Kramer and Newman; a clear resemblance to the mysterious second shooter theory in the Kennedy assassination (Episode: 34/ February 12, 1992/ Title: The Boyfriend)
- **Psychotic disorders:** Elaine spraying pepper spray on her date's face when she finds herself trapped in his apartment which shows clear signs of his psychotic personality (Episode: 47/ November 4, 1992/ Title: The Opera).
- **Genetic Engineering:** Kramer thinks he has discovered a genetic engineering experiment, and talks about the hidden experiments made by the government and 'pig man'. (Episode: 66/ October 14, 1993/ Title: The Bris)
- **Mind control:** Elaine says that her psychologist has a control over her like a svengali (hypnotist), and she tries to escape from him with Kramer's help (Episode 44/ September 30, 1992/ Title: The Watch).
- **Religion:** George trying to become a Latvian Orthodox for a woman (Episode 72/ December 16, 1993/ Title: The Conversion)

As one may see from the above examples, many tragedies, or things that may be labeled as 'pathetic' or 'abnormal' in real life, can suddenly become humorous when presented in a humorous way on television. For example, George buying a second hand car just because he thought its previous owner was Jon Voight, the famous Hollywood actor (Episode: 90/ November 17, 1994/ Title: The Mom & Pop Store) was something that many of the audience might have considered doing if he was their choice of celebrity, and this childish similarity feature in it made this humorous. Elaine getting into a bidding war at an auction with Sue Ellen Mischke, the so called 'Oh Henry!' candy heiress, over a set of golf clubs owned by John F. Kennedy could also be given as the impact of celebrities in the buying behavior of the consumer (Episode: 124/ May 2, 1996/ Title: The Bottle Deposit). Kramer eating junior mints in an operation room (Episode: 58/ March 18, 1993/ Title: The Junior Mint) was so out of context, and that was what made it a comedy. So here again one may say that tragedy when out of context may indeed become a comedy. Tim Whatley, re-gifting Elaine's present (a label maker) becomes funny again because people watching the show can relate to the concept of re-gifting (Episode: 94/ January 19, 1995/ Title: The Label Maker). Repetition, like 'these pretzels are making me thirsty' and 'Not that there's anything wrong with it' makes the catch-phrases funny. Gestures and body language are also important in building the humor. Especially Kramer is effective with the gestures and body moves. Element of truth is important in comedy, as the controversial British comedian Ricky Gervais said at his Golden Globe's speech 2016: "It is funny because it is true".

## CONCLUSION

An experiment was conducted by Yong Zhang (1996:531) to investigate the effect of individual differences in need for cognition on humor's influence on persuasion in advertising. Results indicated that the effect of humor in advertising was moderated by levels of audience members' need for cognition. Advertising humor was found to be more effective in influencing audience members' responses to an advertisement when audience members' need for cognition was low rather than high. This may be one of the reasons why humor is indeed a good platform for advertisements. Advertising agencies' bias is evident in that 42 percent of television commercials use some humor (Markiewicz,D.1974:422).

The Coding Redundancy Hypothesis of Paivio (1971: 80) tested different coding processes and identified imagery as a "parallel-processing system" whereas verbal processes were labeled as "serial processing". According to this hypothesis, memory increases directly with the number of alternative memory codes available for an item. Since visual and audio dimensions activate different processing codes, varying combinations of screen and script placements differ in effectiveness and brand recall. Paivio's 'Coding Redundancy Hypothesis' provides logical support for the proposition that 'plot placements' which rely on both visual and audio information, and state that they would produce higher levels of brand recall than pure screen or script placements.

Childers et al (1985:130) also support this view by their 'Style of Processing (SOP) Scale', where it is found that individuals higher in visual processing would attend more to 'screen placement', whereas individuals that are higher in audio processing would pay more attention to 'script placement'. Brand recall recognition (Babin& Carder,1996: 23), and Meaning Transfer (McCracken, G. 1989: 310) were found to be the two important influences of product placement. As technological advances allow for mass penetration of Interactive TV, and as the gaming world expands use of the technique, product placements will inevitably grow because of their "win win" nature across relevant industries (La Ferle, C. & Edwards,S.M.2006:84)

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