

Assessing Multisensory Congruence Involving Instrumental Timbre

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Abstract

We report two studies designed to investigate the semantic differential associations that people hold with instrumental timbre. The first study examined semantic associations with instrumental timbre amongst participants from the UK, Japan, and Africa. A second study investigated the effects of matching the semantic differential congruency of auditory timbre with different material properties shown in promotional videos. The results revealed that matching semantic differential congruency enhanced both the experience of 'feeling right' and the participants' emotions, leading to the video being liked more, and the product itself receiving more positive responses. We believe that the matching of unrelated auditory and visual stimuli (instrumental timbre and visually-presented materials) on the basis of their semantic differential congruency offers a novel approach to sensory marketing. This study also provides a theoretical contribution to the literature on multisensory experience design by highlighting the mediating role of the subjective experience of 'feeling right.'

Keywords: *sensory marketing; timbre semantics; musical instrument*

Track: Consumer Behaviour