

THE EFFECT OF NARRATIVE VS. STRUCTURED PRESENTATION FORMATS ON THE
EVALUATION OF PRODUCT REVIEWS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD PRODUCTS

By

Hana Na

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ABSTRACT

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The current study examined the effect of narrative and structured review formats on individuals' evaluation of reviews and attitudes toward products. Study 1 provided participants with both types of reviews and measured their review preference and evaluation of reviews, while Study 2 provided either a narrative or a structured review and measured evaluation of reviews and attitudes toward products as well as their thinking styles. Contrary to the predictions, the findings of Study 1 and 2 indicated that the consumption condition (hedonic/utilitarian) did not moderate the effect of review formats on one's review preference, review evaluation or attitudes toward the product. In line with the author's prediction, Study 2 found that the consumption condition influenced individuals' thinking styles such that hedonic consumption induced more affective thoughts while utilitarian consumption evoked more cognitive thoughts. The findings of both studies were consistent and revealed that the hedonic consumption condition elevated positive review evaluation and attitudes toward products. The author discusses the implications of the results in detail in the paper.

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I dedicate this work to my parents.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

With the growth of electronic commerce, more and more consumers tend to rely on online reviews, a form of electronic word-of-mouth, among various information sources when making online purchasing decisions. Previous research revealed that 98% of shoppers read online reviews before making a purchase (Freedman, 2008). This high dependency of consumers on online reviews is because individuals who provide useful information through online reviews are neither sellers nor marketers but rather peer consumers. Their non-commercial nature leads other consumers to place more trust in consumer-generated content than in marketer-generated content (Nielsen, 2009; Sen, 2008; Willemsen, Neijens, Bronner, & de Ridder, 2011). This trust generates empathy among consumers and reduces resistance to the information (Bickart & Schindler, 2001; Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Smith, Menon, & Sivakumar, 2005).

Research attention has recently been drawn to the finding that online reviews can persuade consumers to form or change their attitudes toward products targeted in online reviews (Hong & Park, 2012). Online reviews have helped consumers reduce uncertainty risks (Park & Lee, 2008; Zhao, Yang, Narayan, & Zhao, 2013) by providing them with an indirect experience of a product during the purchase decision process (Park, Lee, & Han, 2007) as “sales assistants” (Chen & Xie, 2008, p. 477). Specifically, researchers have tried to find possible explanations for the effects of online reviews and underlying processes that drive consumers' receptivity to them, particularly focusing on message factors such as supporting evidence (e.g., Mudambi & Schuff, 2010; Racherla, Mandviwalla, & Connolly, 2012; Schindler & Bickart, 2012; Willemsen et al.,

2011) and review valence (e.g., Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Racherla et al., 2012; Racherla & Friske, 2012; Schlosser, 2011; Willemsen et al., 2011; Yang & Mai, 2010).

Literature examining presentation formats has generally found that the format in which information is presented can significantly affect readers' perception and attitudes (Berning, Chouinard, Manning, McCluskey, & Sprott, 2010; Hong, Thong, & Kar, 2005; Ross & Creyer, 1993; Shen & Hue, 2007; Speier, 2006). Previous studies have explored the effects of different ways of presenting information on persuasion in a variety of communication contexts such as crisis management (e.g., van Laer, & de Ruyter, 2010), health (e.g., Chang, 2008; Murphy, Frank, Chatterjee, & Baezconde-Garbanati, 2013), marketing (e.g., Adaval & Wyer, 1998; Hong & Park, 2012; Polyorat, Alden, & Kim, 2007; Wentzel, Tomczak, & Herrmann, 2010) and nonprofit (e.g., Goering, Connor, Nagelhout, & Steinberg, 2011; Kopfman, Smith, Ah Yun, & Hodges, 1998). For example, in their study about consumer trust repair in 2010, van Laer and de Ruyter found that the combination of apologetic content and narrative format and the combination of denial content and analytical format brought about better results than the combinations of opposing response content and format.

However, to the best of my knowledge, only one study inquired into the effects of different formats on persuasion in the context of *online reviews* (Hong & Park, 2012) and the study compared statistical data versus narrative content. The current work intends to delineate the effects of two types of information presentation formats on consumers' responses to online user-generated reviews: narrative and structured reviews. The reason for choosing these specific formats was that consumers generally search for product characteristics and experience attributes, and narrative and structured formats generally convey such types of information.

Narrative and structured formats are distinct from each other in nature but both have been shown to be effective in persuasion. Specifically, narratives persuade people via narrative transportation (when the reader transports herself into the story and in a way “lives” the story), by which stories elicit stronger affective reactions, getting the reader more emotionally engaged (Adaval & Wyer, 1998; Kopelman et al., 1998; Murphy et al., 2013). Narrative format was also found to reduce critical thinking (or evaluation) of the information, which hinders persuasion (Escalas, 2004; Escalas, 2007; Green & Brock, 2000; Green, 2004; Honey, 1992; van Laer, de Ruyter, Visconti, & Wetzels, 2014). In comparison to narrative format, structured formats do not transport readers into stories. Instead, structured information enhances readability of the text by using various layout features such as bullet points, headings, and subheadings (Claringbould, 2005; Jameson, 2009; Kennedy, 2004; Mahran, Paine, & Ewies, 2007; Peterson, Clancy, Champion, & McLarty, 1992; Violette, 2009). Fluency enhances confidence in one’s judgment; highly readable information induces confidence and consequently individuals tend to attend less carefully to the information and assess it less analytically (Alter & Oppenheimer, 2009; Alter, Oppenheimer, Epley, & Eyre, 2007; Kelley & Lindsay, 1993; Oppenheimer, 2008). This, in turn, may make readers more easily persuaded.

In sum, both narrative and structured formats promote persuasion by making individuals think less analytically. However, it is not yet discovered exactly *when* each of these two formats is more effective to persuade individuals in the marketing context. The current work aims to compare the persuasiveness of the two formats, one eliciting affective responses and the other reducing the effort required to process information. This comparison takes place in two contexts that have been traditionally described as evoking emotional and rational thinking: hedonic and utilitarian consumption contexts, respectively (Arnold & Reynolds, 2012; Babin, Darden, &

Griffin, 1994; Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Botti & McGill, 2011; Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Kronrod & Danziger, 2013). In doing so, the study will inquire whether a fit between review format and consumption condition will increase the persuasiveness of online reviews.

The objective of the current study is thus to compare the effects of narrative and structured formats on the persuasiveness of online reviews and to investigate the moderating effects of consumption situations on the persuasion process. The order of the manuscript will be as follows: First, this manuscript summarizes relevant literature. Next, the paper develops the research hypotheses and describes the research method and data collection procedures. The experiments investigate (a) consumers' preference of review presentation formats, (b) the effects of the two distinct review formats on persuasion in online reviews, and (c) the moderating role of the consumption condition (hedonic and utilitarian). Finally, I report the results of the two experiments and conclude with a general discussion that includes implications, limitations, and future research directions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Prior Studies about Narrative and Structured Information

This study classifies online reviews into two categories based on their information presentation formats, which are traditionally seen in literature as distinct from one another: narrative reviews (reviews with stories) and non-narrative, structured reviews (reviews with layout features such as headings, bullet points, and numbered lists). A narrative format is defined as a story that includes an individual's experiences, feelings and beliefs (Polkinghorne, 1995). The narrative structure of stories contains two vital elements: chronology ("a temporal dimension") and causality ("defined relationships between story elements") (Delgadillo & Escalas, 2003, p. 186; Polkinghorne, 1991). Specifically, narratives are structured in terms of a sequence of events that happen over time and organized in a way that causal relationships among narrative elements can be inferred (Delgadillo & Escalas, 2003).

A number of studies found that narratives have a positive impact on persuasion in many ways. Schank and Abelson (1995) claimed that we keep our knowledge in memory in a story format and each story can be about what we have experienced, have heard, or have composed. The existing story in memory is then used to interpret a new message that we encounter. To put it differently, "mapping" new stories onto old stories helps us to understand and evaluate the new information more easily (p. 17).

However, the most significant way in which narratives persuade people is via narrative transportation. According to transportation theory, people focus their mental systems and capacities on characters and incidents in the narrative while processing narrative information

(Gerrig, 1993) and soon become transported through two main transportation drivers: empathic and mental imaginative appeals (Green & Brock, 2002). Empathizing with the characters and creating vivid images of the plot, audiences that are invited to the world of the story come to think that the story is a real experience and have strong affective reactions (Green, 2004). Green and Brock (2000) defined narrative transportation as "immersion into a text" (p. 702). They claimed that individuals are "lost" in a story when they come across strong narratives and that their absorption in a story creates strong emotional bonds with characters, making audiences produce fewer counter arguments, which in turn persuades them (p. 701). That is, narrative transportation is a persuasion process that combines attention, imagery, and feelings. Their assertion has been supported in many previous studies (e.g., Adaval & Wyer, 1998; Deighton, Romer, & McQueen, 1989; Escalas, 2004; Escalas, 2007; Green & Brock, 2000; Green, 2004; Honey, 1992; Kopfman et al., 1998; van Laer et al., 2014).

However, structured information does not have the power to transport readers into stories because it lacks characters and situations, which are required to elicit emotions (Aaker, Stayman, & Hagerty, 1986). Instead, it influences readers with its well-organized structure. Specifically, layout features such as bullet points, headings, and subheadings "help organize the content hierarchically and signify the type of expository [structured] text" (Graesser, McNamara, & Louwerse, 2003, p. 87). More specifically, one can easily and greatly improve the readability and comprehensibility of text by adding headings before each section and paragraph headings (Jameson, 2009; Kennedy, 2004; Peterson et al., 1992). Other layout features, such as subheadings, bullet points, text boxes, different typefaces, and bold and italicized typescripts can also improve the clarity of one's written work (Claringbould, 2005; Mahran et al., 2007; Vioette, 2009). Fluency is "the subjective experience of ease with which people process information"

(Alter & Oppenheimer, 2009, p. 219). According to previous research, fluency affects individuals' judgments across a broad range of domains (e.g., truth, liking, and confidence) as a metacognitive cue (Alter & Oppenheimer, 2009; Alter et al., 2007; Oppenheimer, 2008). In particular, fluency enhances one's confidence in making judgments and is used as a cue to choose a processing approach. To put it differently, when information is processed fluently, the individual feels confident in his or her ability to make judgments, and this in turn makes the person adopt a more effortless processing approach. The previous research mentioned above has shown that people provided with disfluent information are more likely to make right decisions through a more effortful and analytic processing approach.

Taken together, the literature suggests that both narrative and structured presentation formats have a significant potential to persuade audiences but that the two formats do this in different ways: narratives lead to more persuasion through narrative transportation, in which audiences are emotionally engaged in stories, whereas well-organized structures persuade people by leading them to process information less deliberately.

However, previous studies have shed less light on the question of *when* each of these information presentation formats may be more successful in enhancing the persuasiveness of online reviews. Since both narrative and structured formats induce affective responses and help information processing respectively, one can assume that they perform differently in emotional and rational marketing contexts. Such a distinction between emotional and rational contexts is particularly relevant when considering hedonic and utilitarian consumption.

2.2 Prior Studies about Hedonic and Utilitarian Consumption

Both hedonic and utilitarian outcomes are expected from many consumption activities

(Babin et al., 1994). However previous works have focused on differentiating these two dimensions in shopping experiences (Arnold & Reynolds, 2012; Babin et al., 1994; Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Botti & McGill, 2011; Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Kronrod & Danziger, 2013). Specifically, researchers have characterized hedonic consumption as more emotional in nature than utilitarian consumption, which has been described as functional and rational. Hedonic consumption, which is more “affectively rich” than task-related utilitarian consumption (Botti & McGill, 2011, p. 1067), is driven by multisensory imagery, fantasy, and emotional arousal (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). In contrast, utilitarian consumption is derived from functional and non-sensory aspects of transactions (Batra & Ahtola, 1991). These vast differences have even led researchers to name them opposing names: shopping's "fun side" and "dark side" (Babin et al., 1994, p. 644).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Both narrative and structured formats have the potential to persuade people: narrative leads to persuasion by evoking strong emotional responses and hindering logical thinking (Adaval & Wyer, 1998; Deighton et al., 1989; Escalas, 2004; Escalas, 2007; Green & Brock, 2000; Green, 2004; Honey, 1992; Kopelman et al., 1998; van Laer et al., 2014) whereas structured information with a high readability signals readers to adopt a less systematic approach to reasoning, which makes persuasion more likely. As both narrative and structured information formats have the potential to persuade readers, it is plausible that online reviews written in narrative or structured formats play an important role in persuading consumers.

However, to the best of my knowledge, there have been no studies in which one of the formats is more powerful in terms of persuading readers. It is assumed that the effect of narrative and structured reviews might be different in different consumption contexts. Hedonic consumption is driven by multisensory imagery, fantasy, and emotional arousal, whereas utilitarian consumption is driven by practical and task-related needs (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Mano & Oliver, 1993; Michel, 1998). Therefore, consumers in the hedonic consumption condition tend to focus on what they desire to be real (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982), while consumers in the utilitarian consumption condition tend to look for objective information about products (Sen & Lerman, 2007). In this sense, it is assumed that consumers tend to think affectively; therefore they not only prefer to read a narrative review, but also evaluate the review more positively and have more favorable attitudes toward products in the review. In contrast, in the utilitarian consumption condition, I propose that consumers that

look to process a great deal of objective information to solve their questions tend to prefer to read a structured review, which is more fluent and requires less cognitive effort to process the information. Consequently, they tend to evaluate the structured review more positively and have more favorable attitudes toward the product.

Thus, the current work suggests that:

H1: Consumers prefer to read narrative (structured) review formats when they read about a hedonic (utilitarian) product.

H2a: The consumption condition moderates the effect of review format on review evaluation such that hedonic consumption leads to a more positive evaluation of narrative reviews and utilitarian consumption leads to a more positive evaluation of structured reviews.

H2b: The consumption condition moderates the effect of review format on attitudes toward the product such that hedonic consumption elevates positive attitudes toward products in narrative reviews and utilitarian consumption elevates positive attitudes toward products in structured review.

H3: The effects above may be explained by thinking style: the consumption condition influences consumers' thinking styles such that hedonic consumption elevates affective thinking whereas utilitarian consumption elevates cognitive thinking.

CHAPTER 4

STUDY 1

4.1 Study Goals

Study 1 was designed to test hypotheses 1 and 2a by measuring preference to read narrative or structured presentation formats in different consumption contexts (hedonic and utilitarian) as well as the evaluation of two reviews.

4.2 Method

The current work is based on reviews of a digital camera because a camera is included in search goods, which are evaluated by objective properties, not by subjective experiences (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010; Nelson, 1970). In addition, as for high technology products, user-generated reviews have an advantage over marketer-generated content in helping general consumers (Chen & Xie, 2008). Reviews were adapted from Amazon.com.

Study 1 employed a web-based (online) survey for data collection (see Appendix A and B). Two hundred forty subjects were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk for payment and the survey was visible only to U.S. residents with an acceptance rate greater than 95%. Two hundred thirty-five participants (mean age = 28.66, SD = 7.97; 65% males; 40% completed a bachelor's degree) completed the study. The survey used a 2 (consumption condition: hedonic vs. utilitarian) x 2 (format order: narrative review first vs. structured review first) x 2 (question order: review preference question first vs. review evaluation question first) fully between-subjects design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the eight conditions. Each participant was

provided with a picture of a camera¹ that did not contain a brand name and two reviews for a camera, one in narrative and the other in structured format, side by side. The order was counterbalanced between subjects. Participants read the pair of reviews and indicated which review they would prefer to read if they were considering purchasing the camera for a vacation (hedonic condition) or for their work (utilitarian condition). For the preference question, a 7-point scale was used with the two reviews (named Review 1 and Review 2, counterbalanced between conditions) as anchors. After that, participants typed the reason why they chose the review in an open-ended question, and then rated the two reviews on a 16-item, 7-point Likert scale adapted from Slater and Rouner (1996) and Beltramini (1988). The scale used to measure participants' evaluation of review quality in the current work originally had 17 items that were retained on three factors. The first six items (effective, persuasive, excellent evidence, well-substantiated, informative, and interesting) were supposed to measure participants' evaluation of review persuasiveness. The next five items (well-written, well-organized, logical, clear, and well-argued) were supposed to concern the writing quality of reviews. Finally, the last six items (believable, trustworthy, convincing, credible, unquestionable, and likely) were supposed to measure the reviews' message believability. However, I excluded one item, likely, which was retained on the third factor, believability, because the item was not applied to the current study. The two reviews served as the anchors of the scale. For manipulation check purposes (i.e. to see if participants are alert to the hedonic/utilitarian consumption purpose they were given), participants were asked to indicate the product targeted in the reviews and the purpose of its use (vacation or business). At the end of the study, survey demographic information was collected.

¹ The image is not included in Appendix A because of copyright restrictions.

4.3 Results

4.3.1 Review preference. The data were analyzed by a three-way ANOVA with three independent variables (IVs: consumption condition, format order, and question order) and one dependent variable (DV: preference toward review). The analysis showed that there was no significant three-way interaction, $F(1, 227) = 1.64, p = .20, \eta^2 = .007$. It also showed no significant two-way interactions between consumption condition and format order ($F(1, 231) = .08, p = .78, \eta^2 = .00$), between consumption condition and question order ($F(1, 231) = .68, p = .41, \eta^2 = .003$), and between format order and question order ($F(1, 231) = .68, p = .41, \eta^2 = .003$).

Results revealed that the main effect of the consumption condition on consumers' preference for the review was not significant, $F(1, 233) = 1.66, p = .20, \eta^2 = .007$. However, the direction of the result countered what was expected in H1: participants who were instructed to think of a hedonic use for the camera indicated a higher preference toward reading a structured review ($M = 5.92, SD = 1.74$) than participants who were directed to think of a utilitarian use for the camera ($M = 5.61, SD = 1.96$). Beyond the consumption condition, participants generally preferred to read a structured review, as evidenced by their responses being higher than 4 on our scale. A one-sample t-test indicated that this preference was significant, $t(234) = 14.53, p = .000$.

4.3.2 Reason for the preference. To examine reasons for participants' preference for the structured review, each of the free text entries for reason for preference was rated using the following coding system.

Direct. The person may state that he or she prefers one of the reviews because it hits the key points without any background story. They did not mention the structure of the review.

Well-structured. The person may explicitly state that he or she prefers one of the reviews

because of layout features (e.g., pros & cons or list) or format (e.g., paragraph) of the review.

Logical. The person may reason that s/he likes the review because it is objective and logical.

Professional. The person may state that s/he chooses either a narrative or structured review because the review is considered more professional, not amateurish.

Detailed. The person may express that he or she likes the review because it contains more detailed information.

Authentic. The person may state that he or she likes one of the two reviews because it does not seem to be written by marketers, but claims the review looks authentic.

Transporting. The person may state that he or she choose one of the reviews because either s/he feels the emotions of the writer or because the review helps the reader imagine the benefits of having the item.

Same. The person may state that s/he choose neither of the reviews because they are the same or similar.

Not included. The person may state that he or she prefers the review because of the features of the product reviewed.

After coding all 235 entries based on the coding system, the frequencies of recurrence of the various reasons in the sample were compared. Overall, participants who preferred the narrative format (N = 34, who scored below 4 on the scale) mentioned the following reasons: *detailed* (47%) and *transporting* (24%). However, participants who preferred the structured format (N = 197, who scored above 4 on the scale) mentioned different reasons for their preference: *well-structured* (68%) and *direct* (23%). A sample quote for each code index is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 A Sample Quote for Each Code Index

Code Index	Sample Quote
Direct	"It's concise, and has no excess information about the user's life that doesn't relate to the function of the camera."
Well-structured	"I prefer the bulleted list. It makes it more organized."
Logical	"The first review, while well written is obviously biased and exerts an appeal to the pathos of the reader; whereas the second review exerts a more credible appeal to logos, or logic."
Professional	"I feel like this review is more professional and gives the potential buyer a greater idea of that the product will be like for business purposes."
Detailed	"The person described in detail how well the camera worked for them."
Authentic	"I find Review #2 more realistic and honestly written. It seems like it was written by a real person who actually used the camera."
Transporting	"The review is even more expressive of how happy the person who bought the camera is with his product, he makes me excited to consider it."
Same	"They're the same."
Not included	"I like the option with Wi-Fi to upload pictures. Very convenient if client request immediate pictures sent."

4.3.3 Review evaluation. The exploratory factor analysis and associated scree plot were conducted on the dimensions of evaluation of the quality of the reviews. Bartlett's test of sphericity $\chi^2 = 2002.083$, $df = 78$, $p = .00$, the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) statistic of .93, and high communalities suggested that the correlation matrix was appropriate for factor analysis. A Principal Axis Extraction with a Promax rotation was applied to conduct the exploratory factor analysis. A three-factor solution was supported by theory and scree plot. The scale explained 72% of the total variance and had alpha levels of .85, .85, and .90. Three items (effective,

informative, and well-written) were deleted because they were retained onto more than one factor. The final scale included three subscales (persuasiveness, writing quality, and believability) and 13 items were retained on the subscales (*persuasiveness*: persuasive, convincing, interesting, well-argued; *writing quality*: well-organized, clear, logical; *believability*: excellent evidence, believable, credible, trustworthy, well-substantiated, unquestionable).

The items within each subscale demonstrated high internal reliability, so their means were computed and used for further analysis. A three-way MANOVA was run with consumption condition, format order, and question order as independent variables and perceived persuasiveness, writing quality, and believability of reviews as dependent variables.

4.3.3.1 Persuasiveness. No significant three-way interactions were observed, $F(1, 227) = .79$, $p = .38$, $\eta^2 = .003$. No significant two-way interactions were found between consumption condition and format order ($F(1, 231) = .02$, $p = .90$, $\eta^2 = .00$), between consumption condition and question order ($F(1, 231) = .92$, $p = .34$, $\eta^2 = .004$), or between format order and question order ($F(1, 231) = 1.18$, $p = .28$, $\eta^2 = .005$). The main effect of consumption condition on perceived review persuasiveness was not significant, $F(1, 233) = 2.29$, $p = .13$, $\eta^2 = .010$. However, the direction of the result showed that participants perceived the structured review as more persuasive when they were in the hedonic consumption condition ($M = 4.56$, $SD = 1.44$) than when they were in the utilitarian consumption condition ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 1.55$). Moreover, it was found that participants generally perceived the structured review as more persuasive beyond the consumption condition, as evidenced by their responses higher than 4 on the scale, $t(234) = 4.10$, $p = .000$.

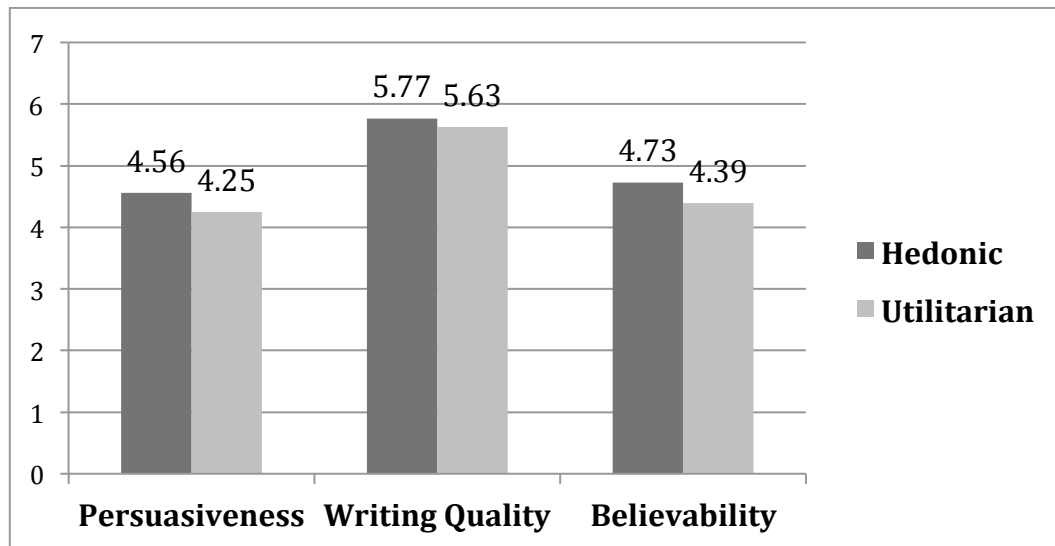
4.3.3.2 Writing quality. There were no significant three-way interactions, $F(1, 227) = .75$, $p = .39$, $\eta^2 = .003$. No significant two-way interactions were found between consumption condition and format order ($F(1, 231) = .01$, $p = .93$, $\eta^2 = .00$), between consumption condition and question order ($F(1, 231) = .06$, $p = .81$, $\eta^2 = .000$), or between format order and question order ($F(1, 231) = 1.22$, $p = .27$, $\eta^2 = .005$). The main effect of consumption condition on the perceived writing quality of reviews was not significant, $F(1, 233) = .61$, $p = .43$, $\eta^2 = .003$. It was observed that participants generally perceived the structured review as better written beyond the consumption condition ($M = 5.70$, $SD = 1.34$), as evidenced by their responses higher than 4 on the scale, $t(234) = 19.36$, $p = .000$.

4.3.3.3 Believability. No significant three-way interactions were found, $F(1, 227) = .74$, $p = .39$, $\eta^2 = .003$. No significant two-way interactions were found between consumption condition and format order ($F(1, 231) = .22$, $p = .64$, $\eta^2 = .001$), between consumption condition and question order ($F(1, 231) = .26$, $p = .61$, $\eta^2 = .001$), or between format order and question order ($F(1, 231) = .24$, $p = .62$, $\eta^2 = .001$). However, the main effect of consumption condition on consumers' perceived review believability was marginally significant, $F(1, 233) = 3.59$, $p = .06$, $\eta^2 = .016$. Participants perceived the structured review as more believable when they were in the hedonic consumption condition ($M = 4.73$, $SD = 1.31$) than when they were in the utilitarian consumption condition ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 1.33$). Also, it was observed that the structured review was perceived as more believable regardless of consumption condition, as evidenced by their responses higher than 4 on the scale, $t(234) = 6.37$, $p = .000$.

Overall, it was found that the evaluation of the quality of the structured review was more positive than that of the narrative review beyond the consumption condition. This result

contradicted what was expected in H2a, which predicted that the hedonic consumption would lead to a more positive evaluation of narrative reviews and the utilitarian consumption would lead to a more positive evaluation of structured reviews.

Figure 1 Evaluation of the Quality of Reviews



4.4 Discussion

All of these findings point to consumers' general preference for and positive evaluation of a structured review beyond the consumption condition. This result countered what was expected in H1 and H2a. The follow-up analysis showed reasons for these preferences. It suggested that consumers tended to prefer a structured review to a narrative review because it not only helped them to spend less time to process information by skipping unnecessary personal stories, but also helped them to digest information more efficiently with the help of layout features. The effectiveness of structure in reducing extra cognitive effort may have led participants to evaluate the structured review more positively beyond the consumption condition.

The current work revealed an interesting result, namely, participants' preference for the

structured review and favorable evaluation on the review were even stronger in the hedonic consumption condition. This might be because a hedonic consumption context leads consumers to have a more positive mood than they would have in a utilitarian consumption context. This result will be further elaborated in the general discussion section.

All in all, it was observed that individuals generally preferred to read the structured review and evaluated it more positively regardless of the consumption condition. However, each participant read both types of reviews in this study, and this may have affected their responses. Therefore, Study 2 was designed to measure consumers' evaluation of the quality of reviews in a different setting in which each participant read only one review. Also, Study 2 addressed consumers' attitudes toward a product, perceived review processing effort, and thinking style in narrative and structured reviews.

CHAPTER 5

STUDY 2

5.1 Study Goals

Study 2 was designed to test hypotheses 2a-b and 3 by measuring consumers' review evaluations, attitudes toward a product, perceived review processing effort, and thinking styles in either the hedonic or utilitarian consumption condition.

5.2 Method

Study 2 employed a web-based (online) survey for data collection (see Appendix C and D). The study was a 2 (consumption: hedonic vs. utilitarian) x 2 (format: narrative vs. structured review) between subjects design. One hundred twenty subjects were recruited through Mechanical Turk for payment and the survey was visible only to U.S. residents with an acceptance rate greater than 95%. One hundred seventeen participants (mean age = 31.10, SD = 8.90; 70% males; 42% completed a bachelor's degree) completed the study. Each participant was randomly assigned to one of the four conditions and provided with a picture of a camera², which was the same as in Study 1. Then, they read either a narrative or a structured review for either a hedonic or a utilitarian use of the camera. Thinking style (cognitive/affective) was measured by asking participants to enter the first five thoughts that came to their minds when they thought about the product described in the review. The measure was adapted from Mayer and Tormala (2010). Then, participants rated the review on several scales. First, the study measured consumers' evaluation of the quality of the reviews on the same 7-point Likert scale employed in

² The image is not included in Appendix C because of copyright restrictions.

Study 1. Then, participants scored the perceived effort required to process the review on a 7-point scale. The scale was adapted from Alter et al. (2007): “How much effort did you have to put to understand the review?” Next, the scale of Holbrook and Batra (1987) was used to measure participants’ attitudes toward the camera described in the review. It featured a four 7-point scale with semantic differential items (like-dislike, positive-negative, good-bad, and favorable-unfavorable). Then, participants answered a manipulation check question to test the consumption condition and the format type manipulations. At the end of the study, survey demographic information was collected.

5.3 Results

Cronbach’s coefficient α was calculated for each of the three subscales (perceived review persuasiveness, writing quality, and believability) that measured consumers’ review evaluations. The coefficient α was .91, .87, and .89, respectively. Because these α values suggested that the three subscales of review evaluation items had high internal consistency, their means were computed and used for further analysis.

A two-way MANOVA was run with consumption condition and review format as independent variables and review evaluation (subscales: persuasiveness, writing quality, and believability), attitudes toward the product, and perceived processing effort of the review as dependent variables (see Table 2).

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of the Two-Way MANOVA

Scale		Consumption Condition	Presentation Format	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Review Evaluation	Persuasiveness	Hedonic	Narrative	5.50	1.11	30
			Structured	5.57	.78	33

Table 2 (cont'd)

Review Evaluation	Persuasiveness	Hedonic	Total	5.54	.95	63
		Utilitarian	Narrative	5.09	1.06	26
			Structured	5.10	1.22	28
			Total	5.09	1.14	54
		Total	Narrative	5.31	1.10	56
			Structured	5.35	1.03	61
			Total	5.33	1.06	117
	Writing Quality	Hedonic	Narrative	5.69	.88	30
			Structured	5.77	.79	33
			Total	5.73	.83	63
		Utilitarian	Narrative	5.13	1.16	26
			Structured	5.71	1.13	28
			Total	5.43	1.17	54
		Total	Narrative	5.43	1.05	56
			Structured	5.74	.95	61
			Total	5.59	1.01	117
	Believability	Hedonic	Narrative	5.37	.96	30
			Structured	5.36	.95	33
			Total	5.37	.95	63
		Utilitarian	Narrative	4.93	.89	26
			Structured	4.92	1.01	28
			Total	4.93	.95	54
		Total	Narrative	5.16	.94	56
			Structured	5.16	1.00	61
			Total	5.16	.97	117
Attitudes Toward the Product		Hedonic	Narrative	6.02	.70	30
			Structured	5.65	1.15	33
			Total	5.83	.98	63
		Utilitarian	Narrative	5.54	1.00	26
			Structured	5.54	.99	28
			Total	5.54	.98	54
		Total	Narrative	5.79	.88	56
			Structured	5.60	1.07	61
			Total	5.69	.99	117
Perceived Processing Effort		Hedonic	Narrative	4.30	2.28	30
			Structured	3.42	2.21	33
			Total	3.84	2.27	63
		Utilitarian	Narrative	4.42	2.23	26
			Structured	3.75	2.35	28
			Total	4.07	2.30	54
		Total	Narrative	4.36	2.24	56
			Structured	3.57	2.26	61
			Total	3.95	2.27	117

5.3.1 Review evaluation.

5.3.1.1 Persuasiveness. There were no significant interactions of consumption condition and review format, $F(1, 113) = .02$, $p = .89$, $\eta^2 = .00$. As in Study 1, the analysis demonstrated a non-significant main effect of format on perceived review persuasiveness, $F(1, 115) = .04$, $p = .84$, $\eta^2 = .00$. However, a significant main effect of consumption condition on participants' perception of review persuasiveness was observed, $F(1, 115) = 5.17$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .044$: their perception of review persuasiveness was more positive in the hedonic consumption condition ($M = 5.54$, $SD = .95$) than in the utilitarian consumption ($M = 5.09$, $SD = 1.14$) regardless of presentation format.

5.3.1.2 Writing quality. There were no significant interactions of consumption condition and review format, $F(1, 113) = 1.91$, $p = .17$, $\eta^2 = .017$. However, the direction of the result showed that participants perceived the writing quality of the narrative review more positively when they were in the hedonic consumption condition ($M = 5.69$, $SD = .88$) than when they were in the utilitarian consumption condition ($M = 5.13$, $SD = 1.16$); however there was no big difference in participants' perception of the writing quality of the structured review between consumption conditions ($M_{\text{hedonic}} = 5.77$, $SD = .79$; $M_{\text{utilitarian}} = 5.71$, $SD = 1.13$). A marginally significant main effect of review format on participants' perceived of review writing quality was also observed, $F(1, 115) = 3.29$, $p = .07$, $\eta^2 = .028$. Participants perceived the structured review as better written ($M = 5.74$, $SD = .95$) than the narrative review ($M = 5.43$, $SD = 1.05$) beyond the consumption condition. It was found that the consumption condition had a non-significant main effect on participants' perception of review writing quality, $F(1, 115) = 2.80$, $p = .10$, $\eta^2 = .024$. However, the direction of the result showed that their perception of review writing

quality was overall more positive in the hedonic consumption condition ($M = 5.73$, $SD = .83$) than in the utilitarian consumption ($M = 5.43$, $SD = 1.17$) regardless of presentation format.

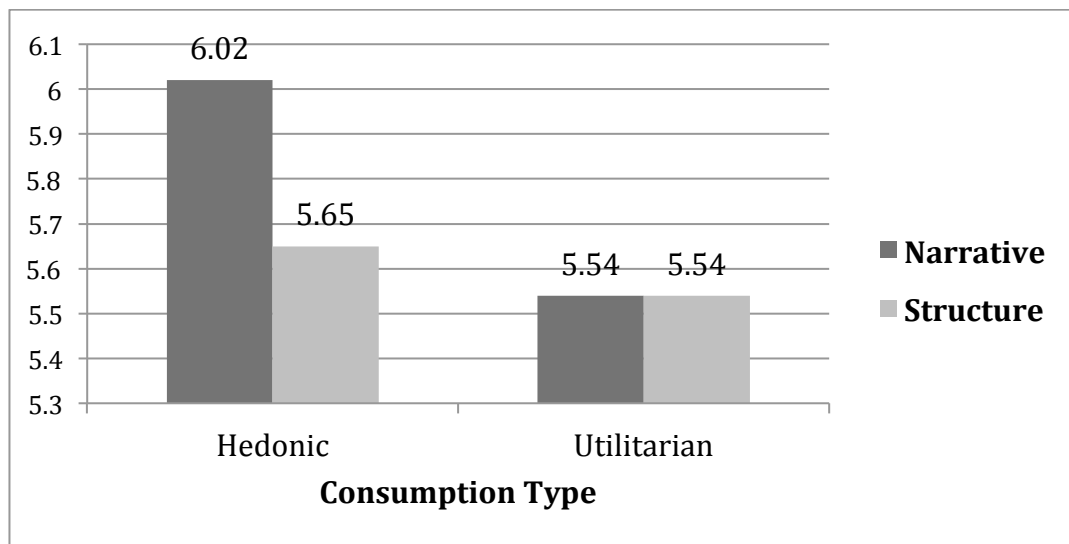
5.3.1.3 Believability. No significant interactions of consumption condition and review format, $F(1, 113) = .00$, $p = .99$, $\eta^2 = .000$, and no significant main effect of review format on participants' perception of review believability, $F(1, 115) = .00$, $p = .98$, $\eta^2 = .000$, were observed. However, it was found that the consumption condition had a significant main effect on participants' perception of review believability, $F(1, 115) = 6.15$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .052$: their perception of review believability was overall more positive in the hedonic consumption condition ($M = 5.37$, $SD = .95$) than in the utilitarian consumption ($M = 4.93$, $SD = .95$) regardless of presentation format.

Overall, the results revealed there no significant interaction between consumption condition and review format on the evaluation of the quality of reviews. Therefore, H2a was rejected.

5.3.2 Attitudes toward the product. The interaction between the consumption condition and the review format on attitudes toward the product was not significant, $F(1, 113) = 1.05$, $p = .31$, $\eta^2 = .009$. However, the direction of the result showed that participants in the hedonic consumption condition showed more favorable attitudes toward the product following reading a narrative review than after reading a structured review in line with H2b ($M_{\text{narrative}} = 6.02$, $SD = .70$; $M_{\text{structured}} = 5.65$, $SD = 1.15$), while in a utilitarian consumption condition, review formats did not differ in terms of affecting attitudes toward the product ($M_{\text{narrative}} = 5.54$, $SD = 1.00$; $M_{\text{structured}} = 5.54$, $SD = .99$) (see Figure 2). The main effect of review format on participants'

attitudes toward product was not significant, $F(1, 115) = .98, p = .33, \eta^2 = .009$. Also, a non-significant main effect of consumption condition on subjects' attitudes toward the product was found, $F(1, 115) = 2.60, p = .11, \eta^2 = .022$. However, the direction of the result showed no matter what format of review they read, participants' overall attitudes toward the product were more positive in the hedonic consumption condition ($M = 5.83, SD = .98$) than in the utilitarian consumption condition ($M = 5.54, SD = .98$).

Figure 2 Attitudes Toward the Product



5.3.3 Perceived processing effort. Original values were re-coded and the re-coded values fall between 1 and 7 (1 = not at all, 7 = very much). This was for an easier reading of data: a large number means that more effort was required. A two-way MANOVA showed a non-significant interaction between consumption condition and review format on perceived processing effort, $F(1, 113) = .06, p = .81, \eta^2 = .001$. However, there was a marginally significant main effect of review format on participants' perceived level of effort required to process the review, $F(1, 115) = 3.40, p = .07, \eta^2 = .029$. Specifically, regardless of the consumption

condition, subjects indicated that they put more effort in processing the narrative review ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 2.24$) than subjects who read the structured one ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 2.26$). The consumption condition had no significant main effect, $F(1, 115) = .29$, $p = .60$, $\eta^2 = .003$ on participants' perceived processing effort.

5.3.4 Thinking style analysis. To augment analyses and test H3 by analyzing the thought lists that participants completed after reading the review, Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) was used. LIWC analyzes the percent of words out of the whole text that fall into particular domains (e.g., positive emotion, negative emotion, and causation) (Pennebaker, Chung, Ireland, Gonzales, & Booth, 2007). The linguistic text analysis program has been widely used and validated in diverse studies (e.g., Abe, 2011; Abe, 2012; Bantum & Owen, 2009; Kahn, Tobin, Massey, & Anderson, 2007). After analyzing all the entries with LIWC, the indicators of affective and cognitive thinking were computed using the formulas adapted from previous research (Abe, 2011; Abe, 2012; Cohn, Mehl, & Pennebaker, 2004)³.

Data from the two consumption conditions (hedonic vs. utilitarian) were separately processed. Figure 3 and Table 3 present the results, which represent the percent of cognitive or affective words out of the texts written by participants in each of the conditions.

The analysis indicated that participants in the hedonic consumption condition had slightly

³ Affective Thinking = $z_{\text{posemo}} + z_{\text{negamo}}$

Cognitive Thinking = $(z_{\text{cause}} + z_{\text{insight}}) + (z_{\text{excl}} + z_{\text{negate}} + z_{\text{tentat}} + z_{\text{conj}})$

The affective thinking index was calculated by combining the LIWC scores for positive emotion words (e.g., like, love, and nice) and negative emotion words (e.g., ugly and nasty). The cognitive thinking index was calculated by combining two formulas used in previous studies (Abe, 2011; Abe, 2012; Cohn et al., 2004). Specifically, the index was computed by combining the LIWC scores for causation words (e.g., because, effect, and hence), insight words (e.g., think, understand, and consider), exclusive words (e.g., but, without, and except), negations (e.g., no, not, and never), tentative words (e.g., might, perhaps, and guess), and conjunctions (e.g., and, but, and if).

more affective thoughts (8.12%) than those in the utilitarian consumption (7.78%). Also, the result showed that participants in the utilitarian consumption condition had more cognitive thoughts (13.15%) than those who in the hedonic consumption condition (11.27%). This was in line with what was expected in H3, namely, the hedonic consumption condition elevated affective thinking while utilitarian consumption elevated cognitive thinking.

Figure 3 Thinking Styles in Different Consumption Conditions

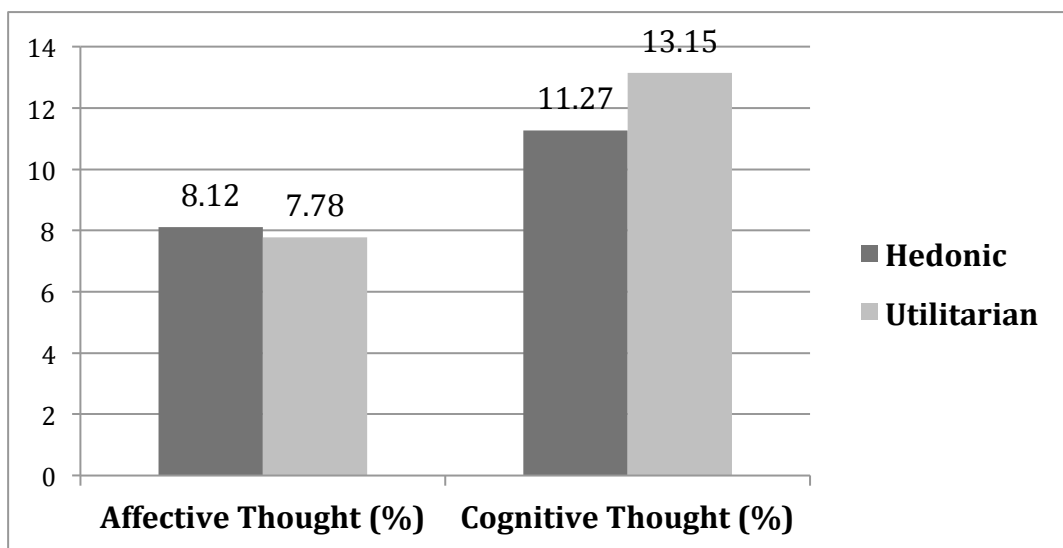


Table 3 Thinking Styles in Different Consumption Conditions

Consumption Condition	Review format	Affective Thought (%)	Cognitive Thought (%)
Hedonic	Narrative	7.43	9.43
	Structured	8.81	13.11
	Total	8.12	11.27
Utilitarian	Narrative	8.12	10.94
	Structured	7.43	15.36
	Total	7.78	13.15

5.4 Discussion

Study 2 showed the way the consumption condition and review presentation format affected various dependent variables—consumers' evaluation of the review, attitudes toward the product, their perceived effort required to process the review, and their thinking style.

First, Study 2 revealed that the consumption condition and review format did not have a significant interaction on the review evaluation and this result countered what was expected in H2a.

Also, it was found that the consumption condition and review format did not have a significant interaction on attitudes toward a product, so what was expected in H2b was also rejected.

However, the direction of the results was partially in line with H2b. Specifically, consumers in the hedonic consumption context had more positive attitudes toward a product in narrative reviews even though there was no difference between participants in utilitarian consumption in terms of their attitudes toward the product. This result is elaborated in the general discussion section.

Moreover, it was found that the result of thinking style analysis was in line with H3; namely, participants in the hedonic consumption group had more affective thoughts, while those in the utilitarian consumption group had more cognitive thoughts.

It is interesting that there was a significant effect of consumption condition on participants' review evaluation: in the hedonic consumption condition participants evaluated reviews more positively than those who were in the utilitarian consumption condition. Moreover, the direction of the results showed some interaction on consumers' attitudes toward reviews as well such that participants in the hedonic consumption condition had more favorable attitudes

toward the product. This might be because participants found more fun, pleasure, and excitement in hedonic consumption and their evaluation and attitudes might have reflected the positive mood induced by the consumption context.

Finally, results revealed a significant effect of review format on perceived processing effort: in both consumption conditions, participants who read structured reviews perceived they having put less effort in processing reviews. This is presumably because structured reviews are more direct and better written with layout features than narrative reviews, which may help one's cognitive processing.

CHAPTER 6

GENERAL DISCUSSION

A great deal of recent research has explored diverse ways of presenting information because the format in which information is presented has significant effects on readers' perception and attitudes (Berning et al., 2010; Hong et al., 2005; Ross & Creyer, 1993; Shen & Hue, 2007; Speier, 2006). Considering the fact that a growing number of consumers consider online reviews as a major information source and actually refer to them before their online purchases, there have been a surprisingly limited number of studies researching the persuasion effects of different formats persuasion in *online reviews*, especially compared to the number of studies in other communication contexts. Therefore, the main goal of this study was to shed more light on the topic, focusing on two different formats, narrative and structured, which are generally used to convey information in the context of electronic commerce.

As was expected, the current work revealed that consumers in the hedonic and utilitarian consumption conditions had more affective and cognitive thoughts, respectively. Interestingly, however, there was no significant interaction between consumption conditions and review format on preference for and evaluation of reviews or on attitudes toward products. Therefore H1, H2a, and H2b were not confirmed. It is presumed that even though both consumption types elevate affective and cognitive thinking, thinking style does not necessary affect individuals when they choose and evaluate reviews and develop attitudes toward the product.

However, the direction of the results revealed that individuals in the hedonic consumption condition had more favorable attitudes toward the product in the narrative review, in line with hypothesis H2b. This might be because narrative reviews are not just detailed but

also have personal stories providing indirect experiences, and, therefore, provide more of a chance for consumers to be transported into stories. Review writers get readers immersed in stories and viewing things from their perspective. This narrative transportation process might lead to more positive attitudes toward products in narrative reviews.

This research provides evidence that when consumers are provided with both narrative and structured reviews they tend to generally prefer to read a structured review and evaluate the review more positively than a narrative review. However, when consumers are provided with one type of review their evaluation of the quality of a narrative and that of a structured review do not differ. This is possibly because consumers are likely to compare narrative and structured reviews if they have both and easily determine that structured reviews are more to the point and better organized with layout features than narrative reviews. Since consumers usually refer to more than one review to make their purchasing decisions, it makes sense that they prefer to read structured reviews, which help them easily and quickly hit “the meat and bones” of the item instead of sitting down and reading a “wall of story,” which may not be relevant to their purchase.

Finally, this work revealed that consumers in the hedonic condition evaluated reviews more positively and had more favorable attitudes toward products regardless of review presentation format. Hedonic consumption generally induces a positive mood (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Kronrod, Grinstein, & Wathieu, 2012). This might be because of the fun nature of hedonic consumption. Specifically, hedonic consumption is found to provide multisensory, experiential, fun, pleasure, and excitement unlike utilitarian consumption, which is conceptualized as functional, practical, and task-related (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Mano & Oliver, 1993; Michel, 1998). The current study supposes that the

inherently pleasurable nature of hedonic consumption, inducing a positive mood in consumers, may be the reason for the more obviously positive attitudes and preference that were observed in the hedonic consumption condition, because consumers tend to interpret their affective reactions and use them as a basis to evaluate stimuli and make judgments (Gorn, Basu, & Goldberg, 1993; Michel, 1998; Rebecca, Raghunathan, & Ramanathan, 2006; Schwarz & Clore, 1983).

Applied marketing research has focused on finding ways to encourage consumers to make more purchasing transactions to maximize sales. Although more and more consumers have come to rely more on user-generated online reviews than marketer-generated information before making their buying decisions, no study inquired has inquired into the effect of information presentation formats, which are known to have significant effects, on readers' perceptions and attitudes (Berning et al., 2010; Hong et al., 2005; Ross & Creyer, 1993; Shen & Hue, 2007; Speier, 2006). The current study may shed more light on how narrative and structured reviews, which are formats generally used to deliver information in online reviews, affect consumers' attitudes toward products as well as their preference for and evaluation of reviews. Specifically, the findings reveal that in any consumption condition consumers tend to prefer to read and more positively evaluate structured reviews in situations in which they have both types of reviews on hand. This is presumably because consumers generally perceive that structured reviews require less processing effort, so they are likely to process more information in a limited time. Considering the fact that consumers generally see both narrative and structured reviews on websites and choose a few reviews to read instead of reading all of them, the findings are noteworthy. Although the results were not significant, it is notable that consumers to some extent come to have more positive attitudes toward products after reading narrative reviews in hedonic consumption. Further research could examine the effect of review formats on consumers'

attitudes toward products in different consumption conditions in more realistic designs and apply findings to practice. For example, marketers could encourage consumers to write narrative reviews for hedonic consumption and structured reviews for utilitarian consumption.

The findings of the current study are also important contributions to academic research. This is because to the extent of my knowledge, this is the first attempt to compare the effect of narrative and structured formats on persuasion although much of the academic research has inquired into the effect of various information presentation formats. Further research could be done in different contexts such as online health forums and fundraising in an effort to change targets' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors toward desired visions and outcomes.

CHAPTER 7

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

In the current work, several measures were adapted from previous studies and used. Although these scales have been verified from other studies, they could suffer reduction in their validity because they originally measured different products in different contexts. Future experiments may run a series of studies to find and adjust scales that better fit the current subject.

Another limitation lies in coding open-ended answers. In Study 1, each of the entries for reason for preference was rated using a coding system. Future studies would have two coders who are blind to the hypotheses of the study and have a third coder in order to provide inter-coder reliability.

Results showed that consumers in the hedonic-narrative and utilitarian-structured combinations had slightly less affective thoughts than consumers in combinations of opposing consumption condition and review format. This countered what was expected: both hedonic consumption condition and narrative format would increase affective thoughts. Future studies could test the significance of interactions between consumption condition and review formats for affective thoughts to discover if the result was due to the interaction. Future studies could also try to see if affective thoughts are related to consumers' perceived authenticity of reviews. This study may be a key to explaining why individuals in the hedonic consumption condition have more positive attitudes toward products targeted in narrative reviews.

Another issue that should be addressed is that the fact the current work used only one product: a camera. This may have affected the results and it may be possible to find different trends in studies with other products. Specifically, future studies may not find the significant

moderating effect of consumption type on preference and attitudes when using a lower involvement product than a camera.

In addition to using diverse products, future studies could test the hypotheses in a wider variety of information-seeking conditions so that other moderating factors may be found. For example, there may be a significant format effect or other unexpected result if future studies compare groups in which some participants use a computer to participate in the study while other participants use a mobile phone or a tablet.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Study 1 Survey (Hedonic x Narrative 1st x Preference 1st Condition)

Dear participant, please imagine that you are looking for a digital camera you are going to use during your summer vacation. Please read the two reviews below and choose the one that you would prefer to rely on when buying the digital camera. Then, answer the following questions.

Table A.1 Narrative and Structured Reviews (Hedonic Consumption)

Review #1	Review #2
<p>I purchased this digital camera for my vacation trip last week but I've already taken 853 shots. I think the camera worked well so far.</p> <p>I put the camera in my pocket and took the camera everywhere I went because it was super compact and lightweight. My friends really liked picture that I took at a concert on the last night of my trip. I didn't bring a tripod with me but I could take great pictures in low-light environment with the help of the great pop-up flash and sensor. Oh yes, they also liked my nice outdoor daylight photos too!</p> <p>But what my friends and family liked the most were my selfies. Although I was traveling alone it was convenient to check the screen while I was taking selfies. The nice Tilting LCD screen saved my life! Every night before I went to bed, I transferred my selfies to my smartphone and then upload them to my wall on Facebook using the Wi-Fi function in the camera to share my pictures with them. It was surprisingly useful and easy.</p> <p>After coming back from the trip yesterday, I ordered an inexpensive charger with extra batteries because the camera didn't didn't come with an external battery charger and I couldn't take as many pictures as I wanted.</p> <p>Overall, this digital camera rocks. It is really good to carry and use for everyday fun.</p>	<p>I purchased this digital camera last week for my vacation trip. After taking 853 shots, I think the digital camera worked well so far.</p> <p>Here are some pros:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Super compact and lightweight: Put the camera in a pocket and take it everywhere.2. Pop-up flash and sensor: Great. Possible to take nice outdoor daylight photos, but also take great, satisfying pictures in low-light environments (e.g., concerts) without using a tripod.3. Tilting LCD screen: Nice. Convenient to check the screen while taking lots of selfies when traveling alone.4. Wi-Fi function: Surprisingly useful and easy. Possible to transfer selfies to smartphone and then upload them to Facebook walls. <p>Cons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. No external battery charger: The problem can be fixed by buying an inexpensive charger with extra batteries. <p>Overall: This digital camera rocks. Really good to carry and use for everyday fun.</p>

1. Which review would you prefer to rely on when choosing the digital camera to take on your vacation?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Review #1						Review #2

2. Please write briefly the reason you prefer the review to the other one.

3. Please indicate which review is more...

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Definitely Review #1						Definitely Review #2
Effective							
Persuasive							
Excellent- evidence							
Well- substantiated							
Informative							
Interesting							
Well-written							
Well-organized							
Logical							
Clear							
Well-argued							
Believable							
Trustworthy							
Convincing							
Credible							
Unquestionable							

4. What was the product described in the review?

5. For what purpose did the person use the product?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

For
Vacation

For
Business

6. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

7. What is your age?

8. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ☐ Completed some high school
- ☐ High school graduate
- ☐ Completed some college
- ☐ Associate degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ Doctoral or professional degree (e.g., MD, JD, etc.)
- ☐ Other: (____)

9. What is your current household income in U.S. dollars?

- ☐ Under \$10,000
- ☐ \$10,000 - \$19,999
- ☐ \$20,000 - \$29,999
- ☐ \$30,000 - \$39,999
- ☐ \$40,000 - \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 - \$74,999
- ☐ \$75,000 - \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000 - \$150,000
- ☐ Over \$150,000
- ☐ Would rather not say

10. How many items did you purchase online within the past 3 months?

11. How many reviews do you usually refer to for an item you purchase online?

12. Thank you for your participation. This is the end of the survey. To receive your participation verification and payment in MTurk, please enter your response to the question below. Please put the same response in MTurk response space: What month are we in?

Appendix B: Study 1 Reviews

Table A.2 Narrative and Structured Reviews (Utilitarian Consumption)

Review #1	Review #2
<p>I am a real estate agent and I purchased this digital camera last week for business. I've already taken 853 shots and I think the camera worked well so far.</p> <p>I put the camera in my pocket and took the camera everywhere I went because it was super compact and lightweight. My clients really like pictures of house interior designs that I took in a basement yesterday. I didn't bring a tripod with me but I could take great pictures in low-light environment with the help of the great pop-up flash and sensor. Oh yes, they also liked my nice outdoor daylight photos too! But what my clients liked the most were pictures of fixtures in apartments below eye level. It was convenient to check the screen while I am taking pictures of fixtures in apartments below my eye level. The nice Tilting LCD screen saved my life! Every time after I took pictures, I transferred pictures to my smartphone and then either uploaded them to my company website or sent them to my clients using the Wi-Fi function in the camera. It was surprisingly useful and easy.</p> <p>After coming back from work yesterday, I ordered an inexpensive charger with extra batteries because the camera didn't come with an external battery charger and I couldn't take as many pictures as I wanted. This digital camera, overall, rocks. It is really good to carry and use for everyday business use.</p>	<p>I am a real estate agent and I purchased this digital camera last week for my business. After taking 853 shots, I think the digital camera worked well so far.</p> <p>Here are some pros:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Super compact and lightweight: put the camera in a pocket and take it everywhere. 2. Pop-up flash and sensor: Great. Possible to take nice outdoor daylight photos, but also take great, satisfying pictures in various low-light environments (e.g., basement interior designs) without using a tripod. 3. Tilting LCD screen: Nice. Convenient to check the screen while taking pictures of objects below eye level (e.g., fixtures in apartments). 4. Wi-Fi function: Surprisingly useful and easy. Possible to transfer pictures to smartphones and then either upload them to company websites or send them to clients. <p>Cons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No external battery charger: The problem can be fixed by buying an inexpensive charger with extra batteries. <p>Overall: This digital camera rocks. Really good to carry and use for everyday business use.</p>

Appendix C: Study 2 Survey (Hedonic x Narrative Condition)

Dear participant, please imagine that you are looking for a digital camera you are going to use during your summer vacation. Please read the two reviews below and answer the following questions.

Figure A.1 A Narrative Review (Hedonic Consumption)

I purchased this camera for my trip to New York and it went way past my expectations.

This slim camera could fit nicely into my jeans pocket, so I found no difficulty doing some activities such as skating at the Rockefeller Center Ice Rink with the camera in my pocket. I think it was fascinating that I could even keep my iPhone in the same pocket. I carried it everywhere I went and took many pictures. But what I liked the most were the crisp pictures of small animals that I took from about 3 feet away utilizing the zoom function when I visited the Central Park Zoo. Yeah, this thing has amazing zoom! However, the most interesting feature is the Eco mode. Because the mode provided faster warm-up times and saved the standard battery, I didn't carry an extra battery.

I bought another camera today as a gift for my mother's birthday. I have faith that she will like it because I researched to find a camera for my travel and I found it was impossible to get any better camera in the price range of this one. It is a reasonably priced camera. I will be printing out the instruction manual obtain it on-line through the website for her because the instruction booklet that came with the camera was terrible.

Overall, even with the cons considered, this modern compact camera is really good value for the money. It made my days on my vacation!

1. Please write down the first five thoughts that come to your mind when you think about the product described in the review.

Thought 1: _____
Thought 2: _____
Thought 3: _____
Thought 4: _____
Thought 5: _____

2. How would you rate the review?

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7)

	Definitely Not					Definitely Yes
Effective						
Persuasive						
Excellent- evidence						
Well- substantiated						
Informative						
Interesting						
Well-written						
Well-organized						
Logical						
Clear						
Well-argued						
Believable						
Trustworthy						
Convincing						
Credible						

3. How much effort did you have to put to understand the review?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Very Much						Not At All

4. What is your general attitude toward the product described in the review?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Dislike						Like
Negative						Positive
Bad						Good
Unfavorable						Favorable

5. What was the product described in the review?

6. For what purpose did the person use the product?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

For
Vacation

For
Business

7. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

8. What is your age?

9. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ☐ Completed some high school
- ☐ High school graduate
- ☐ Completed some college
- ☐ Associate degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ Doctoral or professional degree (e.g., MD, JD, etc.)
- ☐ Other: ()

10. What is your current household income in U.S. dollars?

- ☐ Under \$10,000
- ☐ \$10,000 - \$19,999
- ☐ \$20,000 - \$29,999
- ☐ \$30,000 - \$39,999
- ☐ \$40,000 - \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 - \$74,999
- ☐ \$75,000 - \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000 - \$150,000
- ☐ Over \$150,000
- ☐ Would rather not say

11. How many items did you purchase online within the past 3 months?

12. How many reviews do you usually refer to for an item you purchase online?

13. Thank you for your participation. This is the end of the survey. To receive your participation verification and payment in MTurk, please enter your response to the question below. Please put the same response in MTurk response space: What month are we in?

Appendix D: Study 2 Reviews

Figure A.2 A Structured Review (Hedonic Consumption)

I purchased this camera for my trip to New York and it went way past my expectations.

Pros:

1. Slim: Fit nicely into a jeans pocket. No difficulty doing activities (e.g., ice skating) with the camera in a pocket. Fascinating that it is even possible to keep a cell phone in the same pocket.
2. Amazing zoom: Possible to take crisp pictures of small animals from about 3 feet away utilizing the zoom function.
3. Eco mode: Most interesting feature, providing faster warm-up times and saving the standard battery. No needs to carry an extra battery.
4. Reasonably priced: Impossible to get any better camera in the price range of this one, based on my research for a camera for travel. A good gift for someone close to you.

Cons:

1. Terrible instruction booklet: Had to obtain the instruction manual online through the website.

Overall: this modern compact camera is really good value for the money even with the cons considered. It made my days on my vacation!

Figure A.3 A Narrative Review (Utilitarian Consumption)

I am a student journalist and I purchased this camera for my work. It went way past my expectations.

This slim camera could fit nicely into my jeans pocket. I covered a homecoming event a few days ago and I found no difficulty with the camera in my pocket although I had to move a lot to cover various stories on campus. I think it was fascinating that I could even keep my iPhone in the same pocket. I carried it everywhere I went and took many pictures. But what I liked the most were the crisp pictures of small animals that I took from about 3 feet away utilizing the zoom function when I worked on animal rescue stories. Yeah, this thing has amazing zoom! However, the most interesting feature is the Eco mode. Because the mode provided faster warm-up times and saved the standard battery, I didn't carry an extra battery.

I bought another camera today as a gift for my girl friend's birthday. She is a student journalist too and I have faith that she will like it because I researched to find a camera for work and I found it was impossible to get any better camera in the price range of this one. It is a reasonably priced camera. I will be printing out the instruction manual obtain it on-line through the website for her because the instruction booklet that came with the camera was terrible.

Figure A.3 (cont'd)

Overall, even with the cons considered, this modern compact camera is really good value for the money.

It helps my career in journalism!

Figure A.4 A Structured Review (Utilitarian Consumption)

I am a student journalist and I purchased this camera for my work. It went way past my expectations.

Pros:

1. Slim: Fit nicely into a jeans pocket. Found no difficulty moving to cover various stories with the camera in a pocket. Fascinating that it is even possible to keep a cell phone in the same pocket.
2. Amazing zoom: Possible to take crisp pictures of small animals from about 3 feet away utilizing the zoom function.
3. Eco mode: Most interesting feature, providing faster warm-up times and saving the standard battery. No needs to carry an extra battery.
4. Reasonably priced: Impossible to get any better camera in the price range of this one, based on my research for a camera for work. A good gift for student journalists like me.

Cons:

1. Terrible instruction booklet: Had to obtain the instruction manual online through the website.
- Overall: this modern compact camera is really good value for the money even with the cons considered. It helps my career in journalism!

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