The role of context in consumers' responses

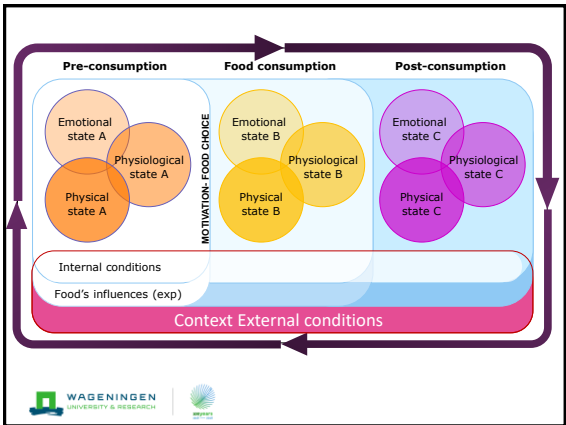Think out of the booth!

Dr. Betina Piqueras-Fiszman

Marketing and Consumer Behaviour - WUR
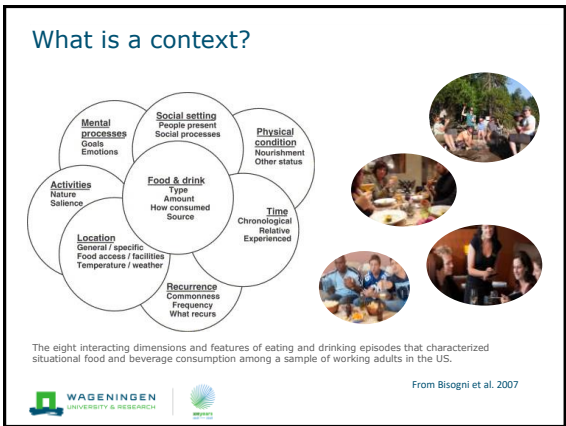
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Outline

- Why/when should we involve a context? What is worth evoking?
- Methods to evoke a context
- Methodological issues: effectiveness, vividness, relevance to the consumer, level of detail, appropriateness
- Comparisons with natural settings: what have we learnt?

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Why involving context?

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Pre-consumption — Food consumption — Post-consumption

MOTIVATION- FOOD CHOICE

Emotional state A / Physiological state A / Physical state A

Emotional state B / Physiological state B / Physical state B

Emotional state C / Physiological state C / Physical state C

Internal conditions

Food's influences (exp)

Context External conditions

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Why do YOU consume a product?

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What is a context?

Mental processes — Goals, Emotions

Social setting — People present, Social processes

Physical condition — Nourishment, Other status

Activities — Nature, Salience

Food & drink — Type, Amount, How consumed, Source

Time — Chronological, Relative, Experienced

Location — General / specific, Food access / facilities, Temperature / weather

Recurrence — Commonness, Frequency, What recurs

The eight interacting dimensions and features of eating and drinking episodes that characterized situational food and beverage consumption among a sample of working adults in the US.

From Bisogni et al. 2007

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Why/when should we involve a context? What is worth evoking?

Product → **?** → Choice
Product liking
Emotional state

Why/when should we involve a context? What is worth evoking?

- To make subjects ignore that they are in a lab /less awkward
- To have more product discrimination
- To increase external validity
- To put subjects in a certain mindset
- To determine under which conditions a product is more liked (mkt)

Methods to evoke a context

Simulated context – physical "fake" setting, imagined, Virtual Reality

"Ok, so if I were in these conditions…, how much would I like this product."

Methods to evoke a context

Written scenarios

A brief statement asking consumers to imagine a consumption context and provide written description.

Think about an occasion when you want something refreshing to drink. Clearly imagine you are experiencing this occasion.

Now, write down a detailed description of the occasion you are imagining. Please take your time and provide a description that is as complete as possible.

✓ Unique, personalised contexts

✓ Written descriptions

Methods to evoke a context

Written scenarios

'I have just been mowing the lawns on a hot summer's day. It has been hard work and taken about an hour and something cold and refreshing would be perfect.'

'A sunny summer day, late afternoon a gathering of friends, conversation, music, smell of food being barbequed in the air.'

Methods to evoke a context

Written scenarios

Wanting a refreshing drink (study 1)	**Having** a refreshing drink (study 2)
'It's a hot, humid summer afternoon and I have just biked home for a game of tennis at the local courts. I'm thirsty and hot, and want a cold drink to quench my thirst, cool me down, and give me some post-exercise energy boost.'	'Drinking from a water bottle or a bottle of some cold beverage mid-way up walking the Bethune's Gully walking track [Dunedin]. Cold wind but overly hot from the hike and stopping to have a drink. Not an athletic hike but more of a recreational walk up a hill. Probably standing up and a bit exhausted.'

Methods to evoke a context

Brief description + picture

Fruit with tableware / Fruit only

Weekday breakfast / Lunch outdoors / Dinner with friends

+ Context

Weekday breakfast	a) 7.2 (1.9)	a) 7.2 (1.9)
Lunch outdoors	b) 7.2 (1.8)	b) 7.3 (1.8)
Dinner with friends	c) 6.4 (2.2)	c) 5.9 (2.3)

Methods to evoke a context

Virtual Reality

Think about an occasion when you are having a family dinner during the week

Methods to evoke a context

Virtual Reality vs. Video vs. CLT

Liking and satisfaction ratings were not the highest in VR

MSc thesis van Hooft. 2017

Methods to evoke a context

Virtual Reality vs. picture vs. mock shelf

Pilot test by Erica van Herpen

Self-reported presence

Virtual reality / Picture / Mock shelf

Van Herpen et al. 2016, Appetite

Methods to evoke a context

Virtual Reality vs. picture vs. mock shelf

Number of products purchased

Melk / Cookies / Fruit

Pic / VR / Store

Van Herpen et al. 2016, Appetite

3

Methods to evoke a context

Virtual Reality vs. picture vs. mock shelf

Purchase of A brands

Van Herpen et al. 2016, Appetite

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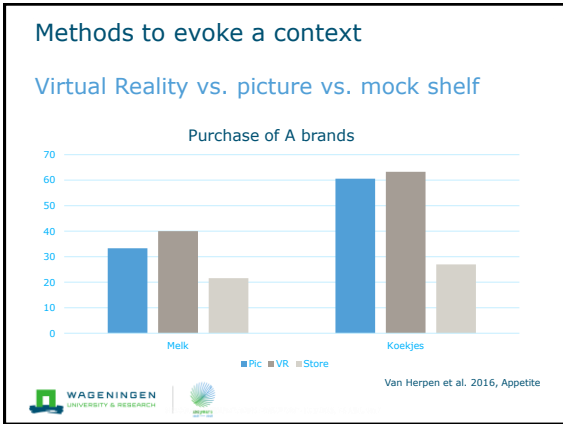
Comparisons with natural settings: what have we learnt?

- Virtual reality has potential in retailing contexts → Individual task?
- In sensory tests with foods (ingestion), vision is essential
    - → CLT/video preferred
- Results of VR are not always similar to reality
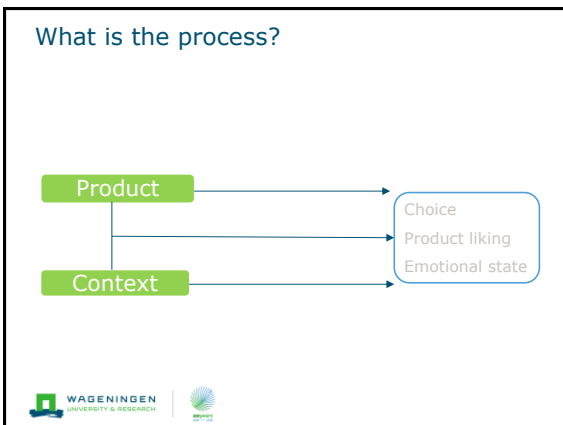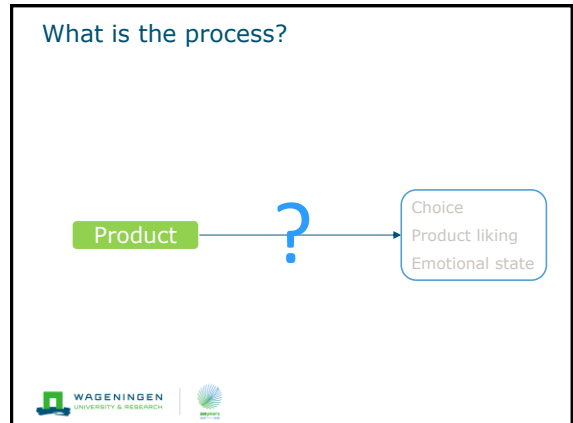   - Is it a problem?
    - Research question!

Memory-based vs. Hypothetical scenarios

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So is there a best technique?

Best in terms of what?
- Predicability of outcome (compared to reality)
- Closeness to the set up consumers would usually face?
- Closeness to the mindset people would be in?

Images from the virtual supermarket

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What is the process?

Product → **?** → Choice / Product liking / Emotional state

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What is the process?

Product
Context
→ Choice / Product liking / Emotional state

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Why/when should we involve a context?
What is worth evoking?

Product
Context
→ Appropriateness → Choice / Product liking / Emotional state

Piqueras-Fiszman, B., & Jaeger, S. R. (2014a). The impact of evoked consumption contexts and appropriateness on emotion responses. *Food Quality and Preference, 32*, 277-288.

Piqueras-Fiszman, B., & Jaeger, S. R. (2014b). Emotion responses under evoked consumption contexts: A focus on the consumers' frequency of product consumption and the stability of responses. *Food Quality and Preference, 35*, 24-31.

Piqueras-Fiszman, B., & Jaeger, S. R. (2014c). The impact of the means of context evocation on consumers' emotion associations towards eating occasions. *Food Quality and Preference, 37*, 61-70.

Piqueras-Fiszman, B., & Jaeger, S. R. (2015). Product-context appropriateness contributes to emotion associations under evoked eating occasions: Product-specific asymmetrical effects. *Food Quality and Preference.*

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Aspects to consider when evoking/ simulating context consumptions

- ❖ Effect on hedonic response / choice
- ❖ Ease of consumer use
- ❖ Product-to-context (or context-to-product?) match
- ❖ Wording of written scenario: broad or detailed?
- ❖ Hedonic method (not so relevant for sensory optimisation).

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Concluding remarks

➢ Contextual effects clearly exert an impact on product experience in natural settings.

➢ How can we best (and easily) capture it for research?

➢ What are we interested in?

➢ Avoid standardisation, create contexts (and questionnaires) meaningful to the consumer.

➢ As product-context appropriateness increases so does positive feelings, liking of product, likelihood of choice…

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Thank you!

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