J-pop and K-pop Dance Music Videos:

Japan in the Face of Hallyu

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I, THE UNDERSIGNED MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE,
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J-pop and K-pop Dance Music Videos:
Japan in the Face of Hallyu

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ABSTRACT

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Since the turn of the millennia, the popularity of South Korean pop music has steadily grown and exploded worldwide. One reason may be attributed to global exposure through K-pop dance music videos. As an ambassador through the worldwide web, dance music videos are characterized by stunning visuals, advanced videography and editing, immaculate dance performance, and chic infusion of its respective country’s culture.

In recent years, Japan’s dance music video voice has been weaker in contrast to South Korea. Despite Japan being an early pioneer of the music video genre itself, the country pauses in the face of international popularization. It is the purpose of this research to find the reasons why and suggest the steps Japan might take to be a stronger global competitor. If there is remediation, what are the ways in which both countries can continue to showcase each’s own unique pop culture through the dance music video medium?

In particular, this thesis will observe and analyze how the film, culture, and dance elements in Japanese and Korean pop dance music videos communicate their image to the world and what each country has to offer. Topics on production value, mimetic dance, kawaii culture, Hallyu, and attention economy will be vital to this research. Even though the music industries of J-pop and K-pop will be explored, the main focus will be on music videos—specifically dance music videos—their visuals, and where they lie in the global market.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my family, despite their differences, for always being there to support whatever “crazy” thing I try to do next. Especially many thanks to them for checking in on me every so often and letting me occasionally bounce ideas off of them. Also, thank you to my cat Luca, who was always there to ask for food or lay on my papers, but also curled up next to me during the late nights.

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To all, thank you, I am forever grateful.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

What is a music video?

Before discussing a dance music video, first, what is a music video? Quite possibly, the two words can almost describe themselves perfectly. Generally across the globe, a music video is a short film made specifically to accompany a piece of music. Oftentimes videos are the time length of one full song, though sometimes can be longer to add story or skill elements.

The main goal of a music video is to exteriorize music, to extend the space of a song from aural into the visual world.

This goal is the reason why music videos are important. Music on its own, aside from what is considered “awesome”, “clutch”, “dope”, or “cool”, is a collection of sound waves reverberating into the ear, capable of providing an emotional, cultural, therapeutic, or enthralling experience. Sound waves are invisible to the human eye (unless it travels through a visible medium but that is a separate research topic) and this is where the visuality of music videos amplifies a person’s musical experience.

There are various types of music videos. To name a few of the more common types, music videos can be a short film, have a storyline, showcase the artist, feature flashback footage or performance footage of the artist, be a video with song lyrics, be abstract and experimental, and of course, they can be dance music videos. Most times, music videos are a combination of
these types and many others. Music videos also instigate the creation of music video parodies, remakes, adaptations, and covers created by people from all walks of life.

This flexibility of the genre is what makes music videos captivating and a way for people to connect with their favorite artists, discover new people, or create their own content. For connecting with artists for example, on a scale between listening to an artist’s music and going to their concert, a music video experience can fall somewhere in between the two and are often more accessible and sometimes free to watch.

In the 21st century, music video numbers have multiplied exponentially to where they are almost a necessary requirement for top of the charts artists, well sought after by most artists at any level of fame, and can also be made right at home. Video making equipment is more commercially accessible which would theoretically raise the number of music videos made. This could heighten the pressure and competition to make the next “WOW-ing” music video. Today’s technological capacity and visual image editing are a clear reason for this rise in music videos and also the reason why the possibilities for music videos are virtually limitless.

**What is a dance music video?**

A dance music video highlights dancing choreography as a major component of a music video. The dancer or dancers may either be the song artist or artists themselves, or they can be hired backup dancers. Many times, entertainment industry trainees gain experience being backup dancers. Other times, it is a team of people which travel with the artist.

The dance music video is popularly made by artists who have dancing talent, perform at live shows, and want to draw attention by featuring talented dancers. A well-known example from the American music industry is Beyoncé’s *Single Ladies* dance music video. The point of dance is to utilize the capabilities and expressions of the human body to convey a certain
meaning or feeling which may be found in the music lyrics.

Even though dance music videos can be expensive and rather time-consuming to create, they are often an audience’s first point of contact with the image of the artists, feel of the song, and execution of dance choreography. It also constantly puts pressure on the video creators to make something compelling. With the capability of releasing the video in multiple digital formats, dance music videos are an enticing form of effective and efficient outreach. This makes dance music videos indispensible to J-pop and K-pop artists, and a strong predictor of their success in the 21st century.

**J-pop and K-pop’s Dance Music Videos**

Currently, Japanese popular music is referred to as J-pop and South Korean popular music is referred to as K-pop. Both industries include an array of music styles such as pop rock, electropop, bubblegum pop, art pop, pop punk, etc. These shortened idiomatic terms like J-pop and K-pop are also used in other Asian countries with C-pop for Chinese popular music and T-pop for Taiwan.

In the J-pop and K-pop arena, dance music videos are a distinctive part of the musical genre and most times, the artist or artists themselves are the dancers. This is why a common requirement of both South Korean and Japanese pop idol talent agencies is the potential candidate must be able to dance at least by the end of training. Dancing translates into live performances, television guest appearances, and showcasing talent, and is a critical part of successful marketing.

**Recent Global Market Values of the J-pop and K-pop Music Industry**

Although the focus of this research is on dance music videos, looking at the overall global music market of Japan and South Korea will give a better idea of where each country
stands in respect to one another. According to the Recording Industry Association of Japan (RIAJ) and their annual Statistics Trends reports, Japan had the second largest music number of global recorded music sales at $2.6 billion dollars in 2014. The first place position is the U.S.A at nearly $4.9 billion dollars. In contrast to this, the South Korean music industry is 8th in the world at $265.8 million dollars (RIAJ, 2015). Compared to Japan’s $2.6 billion dollars, South Korea is just above one tenth the size. However, by examining past RIAJ reports, one will find the Japanese global recorded music sales market drastically decreases after 2012, while South Korea’s is gradually increasing.

Between 2010 and 2014, Japan went from being the world’s top seller of recorded music—in 2010 it had even surpassed the United States—to dropping 36% in annual profit, which is the difference of nearly $1.47 billion dollars annual profit. South Korea on the other hand, has grown 55% within the same time frame (RIAJ, 2012, 2015). Since 2015, RIAJ has not released statistics on recorded music sales by country.

The following is a chart of Japan, South Korea, and the U.S.A. (The U.S.A has been added only for additional comparison.)
If this trend continues, Japan may be on a collision course with the South Korean global recorded music sales market. If this were the case, how can the Japanese market return to its previous state and how can dance music videos potentially play a role in the process?

**Importance of Dance Music Videos: First Impressions and No Excuses**

At any given time, a dance music video may be the first time a person encounters an artist. For this reason, a video can have substantial power over an audience, potential audience, or passerby, and therefore also have power over the artists themselves. Especially after 2000, music videos may no longer be considered just a bonus to a song, but a vital branding, marketing, and outreach strategy. This is why whatever is in the video is up for judgment no matter where in the world a person sees it.

Also for this reason, mistakes and mediocrity can be much less forgiving. There will almost always be backstage reasons why something did not go right in a film production. For instance say the camera stopped working, there was not enough funding, a crew member was fired, the weather was unruly, a cast member was sick, etc. Because of this, observing videos and forming opinions of them without knowing the whole story may seem unfair. However, the bottom line is, whatever is in a video, is in the video, up for grabs, ready for whoever’s hands it falls into, no exceptions. Within the time frame of the video, one will not find a disclaimer or explanations stating what went wrong and asking for forgiveness of any shortcomings. If there is one, it may be in jest, be a real compelling reason, or otherwise be a display of lacking professionalism.

At the same time, even with the pressure to make flawless or compelling content, this also opens up the floor to using the new media power for the benefit of an artist. A story, idea, dance motion, costume, set design, camera technique, theme, etc. can be communicated with an
artist’s song and add further meaning, and possibly keep an audience “hooked”. With live performances, seeing the artist actually dance or wear what is in a music video in a live setting can be exciting. The digital world steps into real life. In addition, anything used in the video—props, staging, confetti, etc.—can be incorporated into a live performance. After a live performance, a person can look back at a music video and say “I actually watched this happen!” From this, a personal connection to a real life experience can be formed between the two forms of musical entertainment.

In this way, music videos and dance music videos have been unleashing a new potential of digital entertainment. Truthfully, it does come with pressures such as the financial and creative cost of making a video, and also the cost of potentially failing to make a successful video. However, this pressure may be tackled by examining a phenomenon which is seemingly unrelated—how professional athletes perform under pressure.

“What separates good athletes from extraordinary athletes is often their ability to perform in high pressure situations. The best skills in the world aren’t valuable if athletes can’t perform when it matters most – in competition….Some people are able to respond in a manner that helps their performance, known as a challenge state. But, other people enter into a threat state, which hinders their performance” (Morin, 2014).

From this, even the best performers, best cinematographers, best directors, or best everything may have a chance of failing to make a popular dance music video if they see these new pressures as a threat. It could be worth more to be up for a challenge: to make a video worthy of someone’s first impression.
attention economy: A concept where the goal of marketing is to grab the attention of the consumer as if attention were an article to trade, almost a form of currency. “Attention economy” can be applied to music video creators, especially those who are trying to capture the attention of dance music video consumers (Newman, P.592).

Hallyu and Korean Wave: “Hallyu” is a word in Korean which generally translates to “Korean Wave” and is the term used to describe the influx of Korean culture at the national and international level (Kao, 2012, Farrar, 2010). A distinguished proponent of Hallyu is the ever prospering South Korean entertainment industry.

kawaii culture: “Kawaii” translates to the word “cute”. Kawaii culture indicates the affinity for everything cute and can include anything from cute pens, cute food, cute accessories, cute clothing, cute phone apps, to practically all things cute which is colorful, innocent, fluffy, or sweet. This trend may have grown because kawaii has been “presented as child-like, in contrast with a negative social representation of adult life as involving hard work, duty, and lack of freedom” (Hinton, 2014). Kawaii culture itself could have stemmed from various places between being an “expression of Japan’s postwar impotency and the childlike relationship to the United States” (Cheok, P. 297), and being a part of the shoujo culture which appeared around the 1980s (shoujo are young girls in high school up until early 20s) (Hinton, 2014). This kawaii
culture can be observed in both J-pop and K-pop dance music videos and is a reason why Japan and South Korea can be potential global markets for each other and rivals at the same time.

**Licca Doll effect**: (Disclaimer: This is a phrase created for the purpose of this research and has not be suggested by Licca Group or TakaraTomy.) Licca-chan is a dress up doll with a 50 year history in Japan as of July 4, 2017. Over 60 million units have been sold worldwide and she is notorious for her eyes which slightly look up to the left. “She isn’t looking straight at you,” explains Licca Group Product Development Manager Ayumi Kinoshita, “If a doll is staring right at you, it would be a bit scary.” It is these eyes, which indirectly look at the owner that is the Licca Doll effect, which can be present in some dance music videos.

**mimetic power**: Coined by Dr. Keith Howard, mimetic power is the phenomenon where the act of copying a move or dance associated with a song has the potential to further connect them to and spread influence of the song (Cheng, 2015). It is like a chain reaction of dancing.

**production value**: The worth of a film, video, or performance as *perceived* by consumers based on the elements included in the production. For example, valuable elements may include featuring famous celebrities, well designed sets, superior costuming, catchy lyrics and dance choreography, and quality use of lighting and equipment. These are all elements which can potentially raise value of the production to “look” valuable. It is important to note, this does not mean, for example, the most expensive lights will certainly raise the production value. There is a chance some cheap flashlights will do a better job depending on the desired effect. The final product simply has to be *perceived* as valuable. High production value is when the final product incorporates a large number of valuable elements to look high quality. Low production value is the direct opposite, where the final product lacks valuable elements and appears low quality. Ideally, high production value is achieved with the least amount of money.
**soft power**: First created and defined by Dr. Joseph S. Nye from Harvard University, soft power is when a country that has the “ability to attract and persuade (Nye, 2004)” rather than conquering by force. Japan is considered a soft power country (Kao, P. 5) until recent militarization in 2016.

Film shot terms: Attached is a chart displaying different types of camera shots and their names. These terms will be used to describe the film shots used in dance music videos.

*Photo courtesy of Plantsbrook School Center*
CHAPTER 3
LITERATURE REVIEW

Early Beginnings of Music Videos

Music Videos. The start of the music video phenomenon was largely introduced by the American MTV television channel. In “Musical Visuality: A Phenomenological Essay on Music Television” (1995), Kevin Clark Williams investigates MTV and the connection the television program has made between audio and visual performance. He explains, “MTV has forced us to reconsider video, television, music performers and music fans… the ways that popular music and television are seen, made and consumed have been consumed with the arrival of MTV” (Williams, 1995).

Further into his essay, he describes how in film, music is scored for the visual, but for MTV, it is backwards where the visual is made for the music. Despite the article being written in the early days of music videos, Williams articulates very well how “In music videos… everything in the music video comes alive and dances to the music…the music is the diegesis of the music video” (Williams, 1995). This specific article is before the boom of YouTube and the advancement of foreign MTV channels such as Japan’s MTV Japan, FujiTV, TV Tokyo, WOWOW Prime, and Korea’s Mnet, KMTV, Channel [V], and MTV Korea (Leung, 2012). Though MTV today has much less emphasis on music videos and more on advertisements and reality television today, MTV was an important step in merging music and video.

Dance Music Videos. In addition to the idea of fusing music and video, in a 2003 Music
Week article, “Dance Reinvigorated by Migration into Left Field”, Adam Webb addresses the dance genre of music—not to be confused with athletic dance movement—and how the dance genre is using other mediums of art to further their expression. This is written 8 years after Williams’s article on diegesis. Adams states, “With musicians becoming increasingly involved in other fields, the correlation between music, video, and art is gradually becoming seamless.” Even though this article is not about pop music, it still addresses the welding together of art forms in history, and the new lines of influence that have been opened because of it.

In the year when Webb’s article was written, 2003, technology had advanced to where music and videos could be downloaded to devices. English electronic music duo partner Matt Black predicts “I see the dance and electronic music revolution as a kind of rehearsal for those techniques to be applied to making…you could call it audio-visual composition…some excellent art will come out of it”. He was right; a whole industry has come out of it. This article is a time capsule back to the start of the music video and provides a perspective on how far music videos have come in just a few decades.

**Common Ground: J-pop and K-pop Idol Training Systems**

Though each country will have its differences, both utilize an idol training system where after local, national, or international auditions, candidates are chosen to be trained by the entertainment company they auditioned for (Leung, 2012). This process can be rather intense where each person is scrutinized and many well qualified individuals are not selected for one reason or another. After years of training, the talent may be able to debut—maybe. If trainees are not fit for debut, they will not make the cut. This can be a very taxing process, though it has been a longstanding mechanism where new talent debuts every year (Leung, 2012).
J-pop

Background. “J-Pop is the Quiet Storm in American Culture” was a 2006 news article in *Asian Week Magazine*, written by Austin Oesuke on the birth, growth, and prospects of J-Pop. Oesuke describes how the post WWII American occupation was the source of Western music genres. There was a transition from “rock and roll, which contained social themes, to simpler songs about love and life experiences” (Oesuke, 2006). Then, in the 90’s, disco and techno was added to create what is closer to “J-Pop” as it is known today. Before the turn of the millennia, Oesuke notes artists such as Ayumi Hamasaki, Hikaru Utada, and the South Korean singer BoA, and their astronomical achievements in Japan. He notes, “Now J-Pop is influencing other Asian countries like Korea” (Oesuke, 2006).

This article narrates how Japan was first in the revolution of Asian pop music. It points out Japan has had many successes in the video gaming and anime industry. The successes in this industry have become a launching board for pop music such as Nami Tamaki, who was a singer for the wildly popular Mobile Suit Gundam anime (Oesuke, 2006). In addition, Puffy Ami Yumi, the dynamic duo which had their own running Cartoon Network series, was met with support in the United States at their concerts. Singer songwriter and producer Utada Hikaru and her work with Disney’s Kingdom Hearts game theme song has also had success in the U.S.A. Due to this, Oesuke predicts following the success of video gaming and anime is J-Pop.

Despite this, even at the time he is writing, Oesuke still states “no J-Pop artists have experienced commercial success in the United States” (Oesuke 2006). From around the time Oesuke wrote this article and on, South Korea starts to take over the Asian pop industry. Even though times may be changing with artists like Jin Akanishi having success both in Japan and America (Kao, 2012), it does not foresee the dip coming for J-pop in the future. Oesuke’s article
is able to give insight to the history and prospective of Japanese pop music right up to where the scales started to be flipped.

**Investing in J-pop for the Future.** Despite some recent decline, Japan still has reasons to continue advancing their entertainment industry. For some time now, Japan has been experiencing the effects of 1) lacking its own natural resources and 2) declining birth-rates and rising elderly population. In *Going Worldwide: Marketing Strategy for Japanese Popular Musician to Successfully Enter the U.S. Mainstream Market*, Ling-Chun Kao suggests the entertainment industry may have something to offer in comparison to natural resource dependent industries. “The entertainment industry…does not depend on raw materials, but has the potential to achieve exponential growth as well as generate revenues for a very long time without large production costs if they are able to continuously satisfy people‘s entertainment needs” (Kao, 2015). The first portion about J-pop not really requiring raw materials is promising, however maintaining the satisfaction of consumers is easier said than done.

**J-pop Marketing Phenomenon: AKB48.** In 2005, gigantic idol groups were born in Japan—48 people strong to be exact. The “AKB” in AKB48 is for “Akihabara”, a place in Tokyo known for anime, gaming, and technology, is a project conjured by entertainment producer Yasushi Akimoto (Kao, 2012). The brand has since then grown to incorporate other places in Japan with groups such as SKE48, NMB48, HKT48, NGT48, SDN48, and STU48 (AKB, 今年, 2012, AKB48, 来夏, 2016).

In “AKB48 ‘Election’ Shows Marketing Brilliance” (2012), writers Patrick St. Michel and Daisuke Kikuchi highlight the idol group’s massive annual election event. The article articulates how fans purchase CDs, which come with a ballot, to cast their vote for their favorite idol girl out of the 48. “Die-hard fans, those obsessed with individual members, will buy extra
copies to procure more ballots” (Kikuchi and St. Michel, 2012). The election is held at the famous Nippon Budokan and a 3 hour special television program which garners the “general awareness…almost on part with a real politician election” (Kikuchi and St. Michel, 2012).

This entertainment strategy is fully equipped with music videos and the person with the most votes is crowned the top girl and becomes center girl of every performance and video for the next year. The top 16 get to perform on special occasions and be in the videos (Kikuchi and St. Michel, 2012). This is a competition between girls and encourages them to improve each day. The article exclaims how it is a marketing miracle, however it does not explicitly highlight how AKB48 is still waiting for more international fans.

AKB48 is an infinitely evolving entertainment group because older members of the group eventually graduate and either continue their entertainment careers outside of AKB48 or leave the entertainment industry. This creates room for new girls to enter every year. This seems like the perfect immortal strategy but on an international scale, this ever evolving group could potentially be too much to follow. Avid fans can maintain connection, but newer audiences or a passerby may have difficulty relating to group members if they are constantly changing every few years. Perhaps globalization will come, or keep to its domestic popularity where people enjoy the growth and evolving members. There is also the argument where the model may be a domestic phenomenon where every country needs a 48 member group representing regions of a country. In actuality, this has already been happening with groups like SNH48 for Shanghai, China, TPE48 for Taipei, Taiwan, BNK48 for Bangkok, Thailand, MNL48 for Manila, Philippines, and JKT48 for Jakarta, Indonesia (AKB48 to Launch, 2016, AKB48 to form, 2016). Perhaps in some years there will be one in the U.S.A. as well.

Television is Sovereign. As seen with the wildly popular AKB48 television broadcasted
election, it is important to note, in Japan television is the most unified and favorite medium for entertainment and information in Japan. “TV’s Grip on Japan” by Rob Schwartz puts a perspective on the power of TV in Japan. An average Japanese person watches 30 hours of TV per week, one of the highest figures in the world. Even though an estimated 90% of people in Japan have internet service, the center of news and information continues to be television (Schwartz, 2013). The research done also shows most demographics prefer TV over internet.

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<th>Source of Information in Japan</th>
<th>Television</th>
<th>Internet</th>
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<td>Males (Age 20-34)</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females (Age 20-34)</td>
<td>93.8%</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
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Based on this information provided by ASCII in Schwartz’s article, television has a higher percentage of users for news. An important point of this article states Japanese television does not target specific demographics and is a unified entity. Because of this, a Tokyo broadcasting executive notes, “companies that are going for ‘mass’ exposure will often simply gravitate to the platform with the most eyeballs”—which is television (Schwartz, 2013). Schwartz does not say why Japan shies away from targeting demographics, though the size of the country and nationalistic feelings could be a few reasons why. Also, although it is not noted by Schwartz, the rising number of elderly in Japan may keep television popular.

On the other hand with the music side, Haji Tamaguchi, Avex Music Publishing President, says not one platform is stronger because each genre of music needs different marketing strategies (Schwartz, 2013). It would be interesting to know what he thinks is best for pop and how music videos play into these strategies. On a final note with television, Schwartz identifies BeeTV, Avex’s television platform for mobile phones as another way for people to
watch television anywhere. Based on this article, if music and music videos need to be popular, television exposure will be essential to being successful.

To conclude, the domestic market of Japan can be considered more tolerant of Japanese-borne ideas and therefore be a more accepting audience. In this way domestic efforts may be more attractive and the needs of the international stage may not be pre-programmed into domestic efforts. If Japan were to work towards globalization, groups would benefit from being further trained for the international market with a possible first step in linguistic capabilities or continue to find marketing breakthroughs as seen with AKB48.

K-pop

Background. On the South Korean perspective of the birth and growth of J-Pop, Eun-Young Jung illustrates her experience of the early Japanese pop influence in a dissertation piece. She describes three different presences of Japan in South Korea including “the ‘illegal’ presence (1980s-1997), the ‘transitional’ presence (1998-2004), and the ‘newly sanctioned’ presence (2004-present)” (Jung, 2007). She describes how Japanese cultural goods were banned even up until 1997 because of historical and economical tensions from the inhumane Japanese occupation and effects of WWI and WWII. Jung speaks about a time in the 1980s when she was young and bought Japanese pop music off the streets, not knowing it was illegal. “Even then I remember feeling that the musical sound was more polished and sophisticated than in the Korean pop songs of the day” (Jung, 2007). Still, she reminds the audience Japan and South Korea inevitably have a “love-hate” relationship because of historical, political, and economic backgrounds.

Jung states the overall exposure of pop musicians in directly affects popularity. Japan is a very different place that can read differently to people (Jung 2007). In this way, the opinion of Japan could possibly be split many ways if what is being produced is received in various ways.
Lee Soo Man the Founder. The innovations of Japanese pop and music video are taken and adapted by South Korea after the 1997 ban on Japanese cultural goods was lifted. South Korea proceeds to take the Japanese innovation to the next level and create internationally acclaimed pop girl and boy bands. Lee Soo Man, a pioneer of commercializing K-pop founded S.M. Entertainment early on in 1989 and is credited to being one of the first to succeed in his methods of debuting successful K-pop groups and soloists. At the beginning, he surveyed girls to find out what they wanted from idol groups and scrupulously selected auditionees to be trained for the entertainment industry (Leung, 2015). S.M. Entertainment is still the leading entertainment company in South Korea.

Rising Popularity. In a 2010 issue from *Billboard* titled “Korea’s Hot Export” by Rob Schwartz describes one of the top South Korean girl bands, Girls’ Generation (So Nyuh Shi Dae (SNSD) in Korean or Shoujō Jidai in Japanese) and how it is rapidly descending on the Japanese music market. One of the crucial points made in this article is about South Korea using YouTube as a way to spread the popularity of K-Pop. Schwartz notes Japan is forbearing the influx of K-Pop, however Susumu Machida, the managing director of Girls’ Generation’s Japanese label, says he “‘began capitalizing on the YouTube buzz by releasing a DVD compilation of the act’s videos before issuing a record’” (Schwartz, 2010). K-pop entertainment companies have continued to release music videos before starting the sale of music and DVDs. This can be seen as a way to release the image of the music and create a “hype” for both the music video and the music release. These released music videos from companies like S.M. Entertainment, JYP Entertainment, YG Entertainment and recently, Big Hit Entertainment often have millions of views per video. For example, the article by Schwartz notes in 2010, music videos “Gee” and “Hoot” from Girl’s Generation have “racked up 30.1 million and 5.9 million views, respectively”
(Schwartz, 2010). Since the time this article was written, the views have escalated to 188.2 million and 38.3 million as of July 2017.

Machida also notes that for South Korea to gather traction internationally, “‘Its first stop is Japan.’” The kawaii girl’s ideal works in Japan and the previous Japanese interest in other popular South Korean pop idols such as BoA and Tohoshinki made it a promising market. Girls’ Generation’s hit songs “Tell Me Your Wish” and “Gee” in South Korea were introduced as “Genie” and “Gee” in Japan, with Japanese lyrics and music video but the same dance. According to the article, the singles were #4 and #2 on Billboard’s Japan Hot 100 respectively (Schwartz, 2010). In other words, Girl’s Generation alone—a girl pop band from South Korea—has taken 2 of the top 5 spots in Japan’s rankings.

Aside from music videos, Schwartz also adds how one of the members, Sooyoung, is able to speak fluent Japanese which also helps with concerts and getting on Japanese television shows. As noted earlier with the article by Schwartz, “TV’s Grip on Japan”, Japanese television has excessive influence on Japan. If Sooyoung and Girl’s Generation were on Japanese national television, this can inform thousands or millions of people of their existence and can prompt people to find out more about them online, where they can find the group’s polished music videos waiting just for them. This goes to show a positive television presence is coupled to an internet and video platform presence especially in Japan.

Psy and “Gangnam Style”. South Korea continues to take the world by storm and so does Psy and his record smashing hit “Gangnam Style”. As of July 2017, the dance music video has garnered 2.9 billion hits on YouTube—the most ever recorded to date—and is most definitely on its way to reaching 3 billion. The outrageous and witty music video along with the infamous “Gangnam Style” dance may have some people rolling and hopelessly hooked, and others simply
disgusted. Either way, it does not fail to make a strong impression even on American celebrities like Tom Cruise, T-Pain, Katy Perry and Britney Spears. The song undoubtedly launched him into success in the American market and caught the attention of the globe as “Gangnam Style” ranked #1 on iTunes charts in 31 countries (Psy’s, 2012).

**Japan and Soft Power**

For many years, Japan has been described as a “soft power” or a country that has the “ability to attract and persuade (Nye, 2004)” rather than conquering by force. This may be true up until Japan regained the ability to militarize in 2016—despite lack of popular vote from its citizens (Avni, 2017, Phippen, 2016). At the same time, although soft power can have a political connotation, it can also be cultural. Rather than directly embarrassing or hurting someone by telling the truth, Japanese people may offer an indirect statement to refer to or suggest the truth. If soft power were applied to dance music videos, the video would hopefully have the “ability to attract and persuade”. A soft power dance music video may be considered to be less direct or forceful in dance style and may suggest a cultural theme or meaning. At the same time, the less forceful nature would still need to attract and persuade an audience. This does not mean music videos must be all sparkles and unicorns, but something about it should attract the viewer’s attention, whether it is humor, beauty, story, absurdity, thrill, skill, horror or the like.

In some ways, soft power may not be enough to communicate to an audience, and maybe the music video space is a safe area where artists can be direct. A direct way of communicating may be more impactful or hold attention for the viewer. The term “short attention span” has been used to blame younger generations of becoming disinterested quickly due to increased consumption of media. The idea may be true or not, though its general idea of a selective and hungry audience could potentially challenge the potency of soft power.
In the journal *New media, young audiences and discourses of attention: from Sesame Street to ‘snack culture’*, Michael Z. Newman asserts “short attention span” may be more of a phrase used as a way for people to handle the drastic technological changes of the last half century. “In essence it functions as a rhetoric of ‘The kids these days!’” (Newman, P. 594). This suggests “short attention span” could be a phrase simply indicating the criteria for what is deemed interesting or worthy of watching has become stricter. Thus, soft power may be far too indirect or slow to attract an audience.

The same conclusion could persist even if the idea of having a short attention span is scientifically proven. If dance music videos were to be successfully watched, they must hold the attention of the viewer. One plausible difference would be the added consideration for health of the audience. A way to describe this form of vying for attention is the idea of *attention economy*, a term coined by Thomas H. Davenport and John C. Beck, where the goal of marketing is to grab and maintain a person’s attention (Davenport, 2005). Whether this economy is sustainable or healthy is up for questioning, however, its effect is observable by YouTube, where channel owners are constantly competing for the attention of consumers. Soft power or not, the dance music video industry is wrapped into this attention economy and a young generation with possible shorter attention spans or higher expectations.

**Government Support Structures**

After “Gangnam Style” by Psy, Korea University’s World Association for Hallyu Studies was founded and funded by the South Korean government (Cheng, 2015). There is debate about whether the study of South Korean pop is credible and honorable in the academic community but nonetheless, “Ph.Ds from Poland to Argentina are doing such things as scrutinizing the latest music videos from eight-member girl group Girls’ Generation, chatting up middle-aged Japanese
women who camp out in line for tickets to see their favorite Korean boy band” (Cheng, 2015). Some unamused scholars may deny credit to the studies being done on K-pop. However, as the Korean Wave continues to gain strength and power, so might the curiosity and credibility of Korean Wave studies, which is promptly being supported by the South Korean government.

In another news article by the Korean Times, it reports South Korea started a 10 week long K-Pop star school which trains students in Mexico the same way a K-pop star would be trained. “The first 6 weeks will be dedicated to learning Korean lyrics…In the following four weeks, participants will receive advanced training in singing and choreography.” (Kpop, 2016) Real Korean industry professionals are flown over for this program and it is financially backed by South Korea’s Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism (Kpop, 2016). Mexico has many fans of K-Pop and South Korea has started a different way of globalizing pop music and culture. This article can support one of the reasons why K-pop may have a stronger global presence than J-pop.

The South Korean government clearly sees its culture as of utmost importance. Although the founding of the university and K-pop star school in Mexico is rather recent, the South Korean government support dates back to 1998 when South Korea formed the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, which is now known as the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism (Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism, n.d.). Also in 1998, the South Korean government launched a culture avocation program at $500 million and as a Time Magazine article by Roland Kelts exclaims, “Fifteen years later, its artists dominate the pop-music charts in Asia, its television and movie titles are top sellers throughout the region, and the whole world knows a South Korean rapper named Psy” (Kelts, 2013). Euny Hong, author of The Birth of Korean Cool exemplifies the South Korean government’s perspective, "It turns out that the Korean government treats its
K-pop industry the way that the American government treats its automobile and banking industry, meaning that these are industries that have to be protected."

Japan on the other hand, 15 years after South Korea in 2013, has approved a similar $500 million project named “Cool Japan”, which will promote Japanese culture over the course of 20 years under its Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) (Kelts, 2013). The hope is to support public entities with exporting Japanese culture, however this does not include private companies. Mika Takagi from METI’s International Economic Affairs Division says about private companies, “If their companies are not successful, that’s not our fault.” From this response, it could be fascinating to do future research on what kind of difference supporting private companies would make. At this point in time, it may be too early to tell how much of an impact “Cool Japan” has had and because it was started 15 years after South Korea, more time may need to pass before results are comparable. In the 2013 article, Kelts is not too optimistic, 5 years have passed since then and maybe a change is noticeable in dance music videos from public companies.

**Potentialized Mimetic Power & Mimetic Dance**

Dr. Keith Howard from London’s School of Oriental and African Studies describes Psy’s “Gangnam Style”, as “potentialized mimetic power” where people can copy the specific dance associated with the music, making it viral. The same can be seen with Japan’s Pikotaro, who popularized “Pen-Pineapple-Apple-Pen” or “PPAP” and the short and long versions have 212.6 million views combined. Dr. Howard, however also differentiates Psy from K-pop boy bands like B2ST (pronounced “BEAST”). He says B2ST has “alternative meterosexuality” which is appearance conscious femininity in heterosexual males and idolization involved (Cheng, 2015) as do thousands of other K-pop music videos. This is another reason why “symbiosis and
parasitism’ of attempts by fans to mimic idol groups’ dancing” multiplies the popularity of music (Cheng, 2015).

This article does not specifically highlight music videos except for Psy’s “Gangnam Style” although there are thousands of dance music videos and one of the primary ways of learning dances is from these music videos. For this reason, in order to make the process easier, entertainment groups as well as fans or dance studios record dance tutorials or dance versions of a music video. S.M. Entertainment is notorious for this. Some of the videos are even mirrored, where the image is horizontally reversed, so the viewer can follow along instead of having to think which arm would be correct if they were facing the camera. These tutorials only make it easier to spread word about a song or K-pop in general. Plus, the people who learn these dances can become fully engaged and participate in K-pop, make it their own experience and sometimes perform it for their own friends. This is a snapshot of the potential “mimetic power” can have and is undoubtedly an extraordinary component of dance music videos.

Japan and Piracy

A 2012 BBC article reports on Japan enforcing their laws against piracy. Pirating is now a criminal offense and can send people into 2 years of jail time or a fine of about $25,700 for illegal files and 10 years of jail time or a fine of about $90,700 for illegal music and video downloads. This has led to outrage in several communities, however, the efforts of the Japanese government stem from a real concern. According to a RIAJ study, 440 million music and video files were bought legally and an astounding 4.36 billion were downloaded illegally. RIAJ makes the point where this means only 10% of music and videos are legal (Japan introduces, 2012). Judging by this article, this is a massive loss for artists and it could also change the way in which research is done in this project due to censored or blocked videos.
YouTube may also fail to be a safe place for music videos as there are reported video conversion sites which allow for users to download any video off of YouTube in multiple formats. Japan seems to already be aware of this, as most music videos on YouTube are either edited short versions, or unavailable to begin with.

**YouTube RED - Rights and Legal Issues**

YouTube RED is a paid video streaming service offered by YouTube in 2014. It is currently available in the U.S.A., Australia, South Korea, Mexico, and New Zealand and allows the user to save videos offline, play YouTube videos while using other applications, be ad-free, and have access to YouTube RED movies (YouTube, n.d.). However, with the onset of YouTube RED, rights and legal agreements have changed, causing some channels to have their videos blocked in the countries which have YouTube RED (Youtube’s, 2015). This means music videos online in Japan may not be available in the U.S.A. and can make music video searching difficult. There has been no official release of blocking from the owners of the channels, some of which have been reported to include AKB48, Pony Canyon, Yamaha, Flower, Scandal, and DirEnGrey (Youtube’s, 2015). This means the only information available are those produced by people who have noticed some videos are blocked in their country. It brings the question of whether YouTube will remain a sustainable platform for music videos or videos in the long run and whether or not the study will be accurate due to lack of access in some areas.
CHAPTER 4

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Methodology

This observation will solely focus on dance music videos, where a major component of the video is dance choreography. The visuals of both Japan’s and South Korea’s leading dance music videos will be analyzed from artists which appear on Japan’s Oricon Charts or Korea’s Gaon Music Chart and Soompi. Videos with exceptionally high YouTube views will also be taken into consideration. (It is important to note, not all videos which are popular are dance music videos.) Each country and their music videos will be observed and their respective strengths and weaknesses divided into the three sections and subsections of film, culture, and dance. The purpose is to discover the reasons for Japan’s recent declines as well as ways in which each country can continue to polish their own dance music video styles.

Film

Filmmaking is at least a massive library’s worth of writing, hence for the purpose of this research, the categories explored will primarily be visual with dance music video story and meaning, set design and props, editing, cinematography and lighting, and costuming.

Story and Meaning. Like any feature film or documentary, story is paramount to the impact it has on an audience. Even though a full story may be told in the truncated time frame of a dance music video, communicating at least a meaning or message of the song can be vital to its success or impact. Rather than the video being short-lived entertainment, videos can potentially
cause lingering feelings in the viewer and as cliché as it may sound, it can change how the person goes about their day, next few days, months, or years.

To start with K-pop, Girl’s Generation’s “Oh!” (2010, K-pop)\(^1\) tells a story of the group fawning over a guy—the football player—who is older than them and they practice their dance moves to impress him and win his favor. This is in particular is very relatable to young girls, but on the flip side it could also mean Girl’s Generation is trying their best to impress the “football player” male audience. T-ara’s “Roly Poly” (2012) and IU’s “You &I” (2011 – K-pop)\(^2\) are also exceptional at exploring the thoughts or memories found in a love story. Both are 12 minutes and 9 minutes long respectively, and could be considered a musical short film. Another heart-tugging example is Taeyang’s “Wedding Dress” (2009 – K-pop)\(^3\) dance music video. The storyline of him getting beaten to his dream girl by a mutual friend can be relatable for some people, and least pull sympathy from others. Based on these examples, many story driven music videos are love-story style and can be considered rather effective.

An example from Japan is Ayumi Hamasaki’s “real me” (2002 – J-pop)\(^4\) which expresses the story of robots programmed to dance a certain way and breaking out of their shell. Ayumi Hamasaki had a host of music videos driven by story and many of them could be considered heart-wrenching or moving. Many of them were not dance music videos and could not be included in this research, however, her style of storytelling is groundbreaking especially for the time in which they were released. Perfume’s “Pick Me Up” (2016 – J-pop)\(^5\) is an interesting story where even though the song is more about friends or significant others coming by to get them and go have fun, in the video, each member has a doppelganger which they pick up and are

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\(^2\) T-ara – “Roly Poly” (2011) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=afwK0Mv0lsY
\(^3\) Taeyang’s – “Wedding Dress” (2009) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIt6KClwFPw
\(^5\) Perfume’s – “Pick Me Up” (2016) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhfYis6VuXY
left with shopping goods and items. This could definitely be a promotional song for picking up merchandise when shopping. Another example is AAA’s “Lover” (2015 – J-pop)\(^6\) where the group goes out for the summer with a video camera to capture their memories. This setup is less complex, but can communicate the feeling of a fun summer. People who experience “summer break” can easily relate, though the concept may be too simple and get repetitive easily.

With story style music videos, many Japanese artists seem to be adept at showing the audience, but not communicating the deeper meaning of a song or dance. This is of course and analysis of a cross section of videos, but this cross section could be the same as anyone who encounters these videos. Some K-pop videos seems to do well in the ways of telling stories, especially love ones, where they will leave a deeper impression that can last longer than the duration of the video.

**Set Design and Props.** The set has the responsibility of bringing the audience into a world. For instance, in Generations from Exile Tribe’s “Hard Knock Days” (2015 – J-pop)\(^7\) the rustic engine room or ship mast sets along with the places they traveled allow for the audience to be engulfed in what is later revealed as a roaming sky flying ship. Moving parts such as the moving wheels in the background can be visually stimulating and add to the authenticity of the set. AKB48’s “Sugar Rush” (2012 – J-pop)\(^8\) sweets world also is capable of transporting the audience to a sort of candyland. Others include B2ST’s “Breath (Soom)” (2010 – K-pop)\(^9\) where its post-apocalyptic set effectively illustrates the desperation of someone leaving, as expressed in the song. Another one of their sets, white with bare trees, communicates desaturation and the

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\(^8\) AKB48 – “Sugar Rush” (2012) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhfYis6VuXY
feeling of deadness. The set is essential in being communicative directly and indirectly and take
the audience on an adventure.

Both K-pop and J-pop artists appear to set well, although with J-pop, elaborate sets seem
to have dipped out for some time when K-pop became more popular. Recently, they seem to
have started to be elaborate once again.

**Editing.** Editing to the natural beats and undulations of the song can seem like the picture
is dancing with the song.

**Rhythmic Editing.** One example is Babymetal’s “Karate” (2016 – J-pop)\(^{10}\) where the
different shots and layers cut according to the music. The video incorporates splitting the screen
with different shots to also add to this rhythmic effect. Another good example is in 2NE1’s “I
AM THE BEST” (2011, K-pop)\(^{11}\) music video, where right at the start, the edit changes shots
and shakes along with the beat of the song. It can place emphasis on the song and certain dance
moves which can be satisfying to watch. At the same time, there is a chance rhythmic editing can
cause tiredness in the eyes. This may be the point of some videos, but if the video is to reach a
wider audience, editors are more careful with how much of this technique is used, if used at all.

**Showing the Dance.** It is also crucial to show the dance choreography in music videos.
This may seem obvious but in some cases, cuts can be too fast or not be focused on key dance
steps. In music videos such as Girl’s Generation’s “Oh!” (2010, K-pop)\(^3\), T-ara’s “Number Nine”
(2013 – K-pop)\(^{12}\), and Perfume’s “Cling Cling” (2016 – J-pop)\(^{13}\) most sections of the dance,
especially the chorus dance are included in the video. This means the audience can be familiar
with or can learn the dance just from the dance music video edit.

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\(^{10}\) Babymetal – “Karate” (2016) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvD3CHA48pA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvD3CHA48pA)

\(^{11}\) 2NE1 – “I AM THE BEST” (2011) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7_lSP8Vc3o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7_lSP8Vc3o)

\(^{12}\) T-ara – “Number Nine” (2013) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qk52ypnGs68](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qk52ypnGs68)

\(^{13}\) Perfume – “Cling Cling” (2016) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=guqVgQFvXXY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=guqVgQFvXXY)
Set and Costume Changes. Different sets and scene change edits introduce new elements to the video. In many K-pop music videos, sets or costumes will switch mid-dance in the edit, almost as if the group did a quick costume change. One of many examples is After School’s “Bang!” (2011 – K-pop)\(^{14}\) where there are 2 different sets where the costume changes between blue, pink, and red variations. These, plus a casual scene with the girls outside is plenty of variation edited together. Another good example is Girl’s Generation’s “Genie “ (2010 – K-pop)\(^{15}\). For J-pop, in Momoiro Clover Z’s “Saraba Itoshiki Kanashimi Tachiyo” (2011 – J-pop)\(^ {27}\), the change between the black and white scenes can be visually stimulating, communicate their transformation, and carry the different meanings of dark and pure respectively. Another video which characterizes itself by changing scenes is Generations from Exile Tribe’s “Hot Shot” (2013 – J-pop)\(^ {16}\) and with the help of the visual effects, the change is almost seamless. However, overusing the technique could be distracting rather than fascinating for some viewers.

Close Ups. Especially for groups, close-ups and individual scenes edited into the video play a role in letting the audience familiarize themselves with the different members. Many groups in J-pop and K-pop incorporate this into their music videos. Some notable videos include: “Lion Heart” (2015)\(^ {17}\) from Girl’s Generation, where each girl has her own scenario and scene before they all come together at the end to discover the Lion. Also in AKB48’s “Sugar Rush” (2012 – J-pop)\(^ {8}\), there are some close-ups of the girls, as they spell out “s-u-g-a-r r-u-s-h”. However in some J-pop music videos such as Arashi’s “Guts” (2014 – J-pop)\(^ {18}\), there are not many close ups and even the close ups are still medium shots. This could be a cultural phenomenon of not wanting to get too close and invade personal space. Close ups can make the

\(^{14}\) After School – “Bang!” (2011) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GFDPZx9u_ns
\(^{17}\) Girl’s Generation – “Lion Heart” (2015) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVCubhQ454c
\(^{18}\) Video unavailable.
space intimate and the videos from Japan and South Korea seem to use close ups differently, which could be indicative of culture, or difference in video making styles.

**Cinematography.** Cinematography could have its own boatload of analysis and commentary, and just several of its elements will be highlighted in this research.

**Camera movement.** With camera movement, BTS’s “Not Today” (2015 – K-pop)\(^1\) utilizes the Jaws shot or dolly zoom shot made popular by Steven Spielberg’s film, Jaws (1975), causing an in-camera vertigo effect most notably at 0:57. Generations from Exile’s “All For You” (2015 – J-pop)\(^2\) uses camera movement as well as unique camera angles to create different perspectives as the members walk through the different spaces. Both of these examples are some of the more pronounced camera moves, but most videos from both J-pop and K-pop utilize camera movement for special effect, moving with the performers, or giving the audience a vantage point that they normally would not be able to see with normal human vision.

**Zooming Edits.** Although this taps into the editing section as well, these zooming edits are most likely possible due to the use of an extremely wide angle lens. This is especially seen in BTS’s “Not Today” (2017 – K-pop)\(^3\). For example, with a wide angle lens, even if the camera is only 1 foot away from someone, it can capture all of what the human eye could see from 4 feet away. The benefit of this is a large general area can be captured and then zooming in can be done in editing for a superhuman speed effect.

**One Shot.** Some dance music videos capitalize on being unique and one way to do so is to film the video in one continuous shot. This is not new to the industry but the one shot remains a fascination because the artists must get the performance right in one try. Oftentimes the one shot allows for focus on dance choreography because a different shot or angle cannot be edited in and

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\(^{1}\) BTS – “Not Today” (2017) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9DwzBICPhdM
it gives the audience a chance to see the artists as they are, without fancy editing or cutting their mistakes out.

An earlier example of this in K-pop is EXO’s “Growl” (2013 – K-pop)\textsuperscript{21}. Even at one point, one of the members, Kai drops his hat at 2:16, but recovers it in a second, making it unclear if the act was on purpose or a mistake. Quick panning can mask an edit where a cut may have been made, but the long shot style effectively shows the dance in “Growl” (2013 – K-pop)\textsuperscript{21}. However, most shots are rather wide and can distance the artist from the viewer due to the lack of close-ups. In another one-shot style music video by BTS “Save Me” (2016 – K-pop)\textsuperscript{22}, an advancement is made where the camera is able to capture individual shots while constantly moving around the space, almost disorienting the position of the viewer, but grounding them again during the wider dance segments. BTS, with their style of shooting and zoom editing as discussed before is able to regain the intimacy of a close-up while still performing in a one shot music video. This is just one of many daring styles of dance music videos and some may say the same background and lack of costume changes makes the video boring. It may not be everyone’s cup of tea, but for some people, it is worthy of being respected because it affirms the artists are human, real, and are professionals capable of performing in one shot.

\textit{360°}. There are two types of 360\textdegree which will be talked about. One is, virtual reality 360\textdegree viewing which is also one of the features of YouTube. People can angle their phones or click on the arrows to move the camera 360 degrees as if the viewer was actually on set next to the performers. Infinite’s dance music video “Bad” (2015 – K-pop)\textsuperscript{23} uses this technology and viewers can essentially be surrounded by the members. What fan would not want that? The other 360\textdegree I am referring to is the bullet time effect as done at 0:41 – 0:48 in Girl’s Generation’s “The

\textsuperscript{21}EXO – “Growl” (2013) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I3dezFzsNss
\textsuperscript{22}BTS – “Save Me” (2016) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZjt_sA2eso
\textsuperscript{23}Infinite – “Bad” (2015) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNqW6uE-Q_o
Boys” (2011 – K-pop)\textsuperscript{24} and 2:34 – 2:38 of SHINee’s “Lucifer” (2010 – K-pop)\textsuperscript{25}. This bullet time effect is seen in The Matrix (1999) and requires the set up of multiple cameras and visual effects editing. This goes to show some of the leading artists in South Korea already have a team of people trying to use new or more challenging technologies to enhance the production value of their creations.

**Lighting.** Lighting is the reason why any of the video is visible and deserves more credit than what will be discussed here, but to highlight some videos, Generations from Exile Tribe’s “Hot Shot” (2013 – J-pop)\textsuperscript{16} music video uses the colors of lights to stylize their video, not to mention they had extras hold flares in the background which adds depth to the space. Also in their “All For You” (2015 – J-pop)\textsuperscript{20}, the lights strike on in the last scene for an empowering effect. Girl’s Generation’s “Genie” (2010 – K-pop)\textsuperscript{15}, the lighting is responsible for the flashy stage effect in all of their scenes. It may also be possible to edit flashes of light into the music video, however the base lighting done on set can have a substantial effect on what magic can happen in the editing room. Through observing various videos, it is evident how lighting is capable of changing moods and communicate something completely different based on how the lighting is designed.

**Costuming.** The fashion and look of the artists can foster idolization. For example in 2NE1’s “I AM THE BEST” (2011 - Kpop)\textsuperscript{11} the punk look, hair color changes, and large accessories can become idolized and a “cool” fashion trend which some people may want to follow. Another similar fashion example could be from BTS’s “Not Today” (2017 – K-pop)\textsuperscript{19}. Different style, but similar idolization effect. An example from Japan would be E-Girls’s

“Follow Me” (2012 – J-pop)\textsuperscript{26} where the bright colors and patterns in their wardrobe may spark inspiration for viewers. Perfume’s “Pick Me Up” (2015 – J-pop)\textsuperscript{5} may also have the same effect. This contrasts with Momoiro Clover Z’s “Saraba Itoshiki Kanashimi Tachiyo” (2012)\textsuperscript{27} where the enlarged head of hair and lack of eyebrows could be considered alien and may not be easily incorporated into general fashion culture nor make people exclaim, “I want to look like them!” Not every video needs to have a massive impact on fashion, however the feelings of idolization and fawning over artists can certainly come from their appearance and what they wear.

**Culture**

This section will focus on how Japan and South Korea portray or add to their country’s culture, and will focus on the topics of viral videos, branding, assigning colors, metrosexuality, language, and product placement.

**Outrageous or Weird Goes Viral.** Some may say “it’s catchy” or “that’s real talent”, others may say or “please turn it off”, however many are just hopelessly pulled along with the infectious viral videos. Three examples, one from South Korea and two from Japan are Psy’s “Gangnam Style” (2012 – K-pop)\textsuperscript{28}, Pikotaro’s “Pen Pineapple Apple Pen” (2016 – J-pop)\textsuperscript{29}, and Kyary Pamyu Pamyu’s “PONPONPON” (2011 \textsuperscript{30}– J-pop) respectively. “Gangnam Style” with its spontaneous toilet seat elevator-popping horse-style yellow man dance music video, it is easy to raise an eyebrow and hard to forget. This is just one unimaginable phenomenon but the “Gangnam Style” dance, its dance music video, and suggested South Korean culture—not to

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\textsuperscript{26} E-Girls – “Follow Me” (2012) Full version unavailable. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkXdPTA5URk
\textsuperscript{27} Momoiro Clover Z – “Saraba Itoshiki Kanashimi Tachiyo” (2012) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWSbfCPkTBk
\textsuperscript{28} Psy – “Gangnam Style” (2012) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bZkp7q19f0
\textsuperscript{29} Pikotaro – “Pen Pineapple Apple Pen” (2016) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ct6BUPvE2sM
\textsuperscript{30} Kyary Pamyu Pamyu – “PONPONPON” (2011) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzC4hFK5P3g
mention Gangnam is a district of Seoul where Psy is from—all came together to make a video which took the world by storm.

Pikotaro is similar in a way and his seemingly suggestive mashing together of the words “pen”, “pineapple”, and “apple” play on humor as he wears an outrageous animal printed ensemble. Plus, his dance style, if copied, has a high potential of being humorous no matter who attempts it. The lyrics are written right on the screen in Japanese and English, instantly opening up the video to Japanese and English readers. Culturally, it can be commentary on how English is taught in Japan because one of the very first sentences taught to children is “I have a pen”. It can also communicate what may be considered a fun and silly side of Japanese culture.

Kyary Pamyu Pamyu could be considered the Lady Gaga of Japan and also a star of kawaii culture. Her music video which features the best of Japanese kawaii fashion and culture may seem odd to international viewers due to her affinity for concepts which are scary. From a dancing brain and skulls to the staff that comes out of her bright pink ear, this is one which is not easily forgotten as well. Currently it has 115 million views and of the music videos observed, it has one of the most views along with Pikotaro.

For Psy, Pikotaro, and Kyary Pamyu Pamyu, they were able to balance film, dance, and culture which means there may be some truth in the success of the synthesizing these elements—along with some signature comedy or oddness.

**Branding.** To let an audience know who they are, an important part of a music video could be to incorporate their group name or artist name. In SHINee’s “Ring Ding Dong” (2009 – K-pop) the group name, “SHINee” is in giant letters on one of the sets. Many of the members’ close-ups on this set also have it blurred out in the background. From there, an audience has the opportunity to connect the name to the group and possibly go and research them. Girl’s
Generation’s “Oh!” (2010 – K-pop)\(^4\) also has their name placed throughout the video. Even though the artist or song’s name may be in the title of the music video, having their own sign in a video could leave a stronger impression or send a message saying they are “a big deal”. Even with 2PM’s very first single, “10 out of 10” (2008 – K-pop)\(^3\), the beginning of the video actually introduces them with their names in English. This is another way of putting a name to the face and vice versa.

**Assigning Colors.** Japan is notorious for assigning colors to members, which will often determine the color of that member’s costume. For example at 2:33 in Momoiro Clover Z’s “Saraba Itoshiki Kanashimi Tachiyo” (2011 – J-pop)\(^2\), the wigs all have different undertone colors and those colors are not by chance, they are assigned early one. This could become easy identification of members in the video. It is also similar to Sailor Moon where different girls of different planets have different color themes. This could mean costumers do not have to worry about clashing colors between members, but it could also be restricting if an outfit needs to be a certain color. Not all outfits are color coded, nor do all groups assign colors, however, this is a trend in Japanese pop artists.

**Licca Doll Effect.** As seen in AKB48’s “Sugar Rush” (2012 – J-pop)\(^8\) much of the beginning goes without eye contact. This could be purely incidental, however when videos like Arashi’s “Guts” (2014 – J-pop)\(^3\) also do not have as many close-ups in comparison to some K-pop videos, it brings the point where this may be a distance relegated by culture. This may be a use of soft power, and though it may have its considerations for the viewer, perhaps countries used to more direct eye-contact will feel a slight disconnect in this.

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\(^3\) 2PM – “10 out of 10” (2008) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEmRoYV8vMs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEmRoYV8vMs)
\(^8\) Video Unavailable.
**Meterosexual.** This feminine male image is effectively displayed in SHINee’s “Hello” (2010 – K-pop)\(^{33}\) and could be considered a part of the kawaii culture, where the music video shows the delicate and sensitive, essentially “cute” side of males. Another example is GOT7’s “Just Right” (2015 – K-pop)\(^{34}\) and even features a little girl which they are trying to cheer up, as the song is about being “amazing, just the way you are” like American famous singer-songwriter, Bruno Mars’s “Just the Way You Are” (Mars, 2010). Their miniature size in contrast to the girl and surrounding objects could make them seem like the little positive voice inside the head, “kawaii”, and a pocketable size. Hey!Say!JUMP!’s “Chau#” (2015 – J-pop)\(^{35}\) effectively utilizes the same technique of cuteness and hand movements which may be considered feminine.

**Language.** In AKB48’s “Sugar Rush” (2012 – J-pop)\(^{8}\) the music video is speckled with Japanese onomatopoeia—in Japanese. Plus, the song title is in giant katakana letters. For those who can read Japanese, this can be entertaining, as it correlates with what the girls are doing in the video. On the other hand, those who cannot read it may either feel left out, puzzled, or intrigued by the foreign nature. For K-pop a good number use English in their music videos whether it is in the titling or set. Some examples are 2PM’s “I’ll Be Back” (2011 – K-pop)\(^{36}\), Girl’s Generation’s “Oh!” (2010 – K-pop)\(^{1}\), Hyuna’s “Bubble Pop!” (2011 – K-pop)\(^{37}\), SHINee’s “RingDingDong” (2012 – K-pop)\(^{40}\) and B2ST’s “Breathe” (2010 – K-pop)\(^{9}\). This is most likely for international outreach for people who use the English alphabet, whether it is fluently or occasionally in daily life.

**Product Placement.** As attention on dance music videos rises, so does the visual real estate value. In GOT7’s “Just Right” (2015 – K-pop)\(^{34}\), a fresh milk sweet roll is featured at

\(^{33}\) SHINee “Hello” (2010) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=skZxb5sBoiU
\(^{34}\) GOT7 – “Just Right” (2015) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrdk31Gcau8
\(^{35}\) Video unavailable.
\(^{36}\) 2PM – “I’ll Be Back” (2011) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMdoftj9WKU
2:58—a real product. In Girl’s Generation’s “Lion Heart” (2015 – K-pop)\textsuperscript{17}, Mr. Pizza, one of South Korea’s leading pizza shop brands (MK News, 2012), as well as SUM, S.M. Entertainment’s own store brand are featured (SUM Market, 2016). These product placements have the potential of taking the viewer out of fantasyland and back to reality, however, they can also be a prime form of advertising.

Dance

In this section, mimetic dance, iconic dance moves, extra dance music video segments, and just as a judging scoresheet may include, execution and formations of the dance will be observed.

Mimetic Dance. If a dance is too difficult, then it may not be mimicable and if the dance is too easy, then it may lower the perceived talent of the entertainers. For instance, in Generations from Exile Tribe’s “Evergreen” (2015 – J-pop)\textsuperscript{38}, the dancing may be much too difficult to be copied and done together with the audience, rather, it is their own style and form of talent being displayed. At the same time, this means mimetic dance is not as possible and caters to a narrower population of people who like their dance style. Another example is in AAA’s “Lover” (2015 – J-pop)\textsuperscript{6} where the dance is rather simple, but can make the performers look as if that is the maximum level of their dancing capability. The dancing seems relaxed, but it can also come off as nonchalant and unprofessional despite AAA’s outstanding contributions to their trade.

Masses of Dancers. This is the next step up from backup dancers—simply many backup dancers. This is not new to the industry and simply communicates the level of influence an artist has over a mass of people. For example, with the most viewed on YouTube, Psy’s final scenes of “Gangnam Style” (2012 – K-pop)\textsuperscript{28} has takes where a mass of people do the “Gangnam Style”


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dance. One of the effects it can have is telling the audience “everybody is doing this dance”. Truthfully, many people in the world did do the “Gangnam Style” dance at the time. Or with masses of dancers, there can be a different style like BTS’s “Not Today” (2017 – K-pop)\(^{19}\) where dancers fully masked in black are dancing with them like their own army, which can communicate “we have a big team”. Either way, masses of dancers can communicate how an artist has many followers and is capable of moving masses of people.

**Iconic Dance Moves.** With a music video like AKB48’s “Koi Suru Fortune Cookie” (2013)\(^{39}\) the dance may be simple but does not challenge the talent of the performer because 1) the dance is made to be copied and 2) it incorporates dance moves which had a high potential of becoming iconic. One dance move in particular is the dough kneading move near the beginning of the song. People who know the song would easily be able to associate the move with “Koi Suru Fortune Cookie”. Another dance move which may be considered iconic is the choreography for the “ring ding dong” section of SHINee’s “RingDingDong” (2009 – K-pop)\(^{40}\). The entire song’s dance choreography itself is not particularly easy, but the hip swing at “ring ding dong” became a hit as people could try copying it and either look comedic in the process or be able to emulate how SHINee performs it. A last example is Super Junior’s “Sorry Sorry” (2009 – K-pop)\(^{41}\) chorus dance has a similar effect to SHINee’s “Ring Ding Dong”, but the versatile lyrics of “Sorry Sorry” in the chorus make it possible for people to break out into the “Sorry Sorry” dance in multiple situations.

In this area, many South Korean artists appear to be better at making the moves iconic. Most of the reason is because the dance music video edits often highlights certain moves. When it comes time for their groups to perform live, those moves garner more attention because people

\(^{39}\) Video unavailable.

\(^{40}\) SHINee – “RingDingDong” (2009) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=roughtzsCDI

\(^{41}\) Super Junior – “Sorry Sorry” (2009) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6QA3m58DQw
know about them. In contrast, Japan seems to be able to show their moves, but not as explicitly
tell the audience what they could mean or establish a deeper connection with the audience
through them. Making a dance iconic can be a way for each country to establish its own style and
pop culture dancing.

**Extra Segment of Dancing.** For some videos, extra segments of dancing are included.
One example is a dance scene before E-Girls’s “Follow Me” (2013 – J-pop)\(^26\) with girls in
training exhibiting their expert dancing in school uniforms. It is its own segment of about 3½
minutes showcasing their dance. Their ending pose is a liaison into the actual “Follow Me”
music video. 2PM’s “Again and Again” (2009 – K-pop)\(^42\) also features a short skill-filled dance
segment of about 30 seconds after their music video. Each segment is unique in its own way with
skill, which can be instrumental in promoting their styles. A concern may be their lengths,
however. E-Girl’s segment could feel long and potentially lose the interest of viewers at the start
where 2PM’s segment seems more like a bonus at the end. E-Girls’s may translate well into a
concert performance while 2PM’s could be both a part of a concert as well as a featured section
on a television show, where the time is tighter.

**Execution and Formations.** The execution of a dance is the way in which a performer
does a move. If every member executes a dance step differently, or if a soloist does not do the
dance as good as or better than the backup dancers, the artists could look out of sync or not as
capable. The same happens with neat formations. One person out of line could throw off the
visual. One out of sync example is AKB48’s execution of “Sugar Rush” (2012 – J-pop)\(^8\). By
pausing the video at around 1:05, the arm placements become fully visible and are not together.
This is when the chorus dancing starts at “s-u-g-a-r”, and the move at “g-a-r” is not executed in
sync. Also at 1:04 the members are not in a clear “V” formation as shown later at 1:13. There is

\(^{42}\) 2PM – “Again and Again” (2009) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cUgReo37ECw
the possibility the set was too small and these details may seem small to some, but what appears on screen, appears on screen and can test the artist’s credibility. In recent years with C-ute’s “Dreamlike Climax” (2015 – J-pop)\(^{43}\) the execution is much cleaner. Unfortunately there is not an AKB48 video available to compare and see if there were improvements in the group since 2012. Arashi’s “Guts” (2014 – J-pop)\(^{44}\), Exile’s “New Horizon” (2014 – J-pop)\(^{45}\), and Ayumi Hamasaki’s “Beautiful Fighters” (2006 – J-pop)\(^{46}\) and “real me” (2002 – J-pop)\(^{4}\) also has clean formations and are visually engaging.

South Korea’s solo artist Hyuna, has a music video for “Bubble Pop” (2011 – K-pop)\(^{37}\) where she, along with her backup dancers, keep in amazing sync and they execute the movements together. This shows unity and can simply be pleasing to see such togetherness. Even if a person is not distracted by messy formations or execution, cleanness in both elements can help keep focus on the entertainment, even if it may be on a subconscious level. Particularly with BTS’s “Not Today” (2017 – K-pop)\(^{19}\), the massive pyramid formation at 3:34 seems unreal. The same is true for many K-pop music videos like TVXQ’s “Mirotic” (2008 – K-pop)\(^{47}\), Miss A’s “Hush” (2013 – K-pop)\(^{48}\), KARA’s “Mister” (2009 – K-pop)\(^{49}\), SHINee’s “Everybody” (2013 – K-pop)\(^{50}\), and Girl’s Generation’s “Genie” (2010 – K-pop)\(^{15}\). The list goes on. K-pop has created its own image of clean dancing and a higher chance of be respected by those in the industry and those who watch.

\(^{43}\) C-ute – “Dreamlike Climax” (2015) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UBmBGKjFuRQ
\(^{44}\) Video unavailable.
\(^{45}\) Exile’s “New Horizon” (2014) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l55sHty3h6I
\(^{49}\) Video unavailable.
\(^{50}\) SHINee – “Everybody” (2013) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKbNV-4b_g8
CONCLUSION & OUTLOOK

Especially through conducting these observations and research, one thing is clear: the J-pop and K-pop dance music videos are different in their own ways, as they should be coming from different countries. By juxtaposing different music videos with each other, it is almost unreasonable to make comparisons due to the different variables that go into a music video, not to mention the different cultures of each country. At the same time it is important to mark this time in dance music video history, where K-pop’s have already started to make history for itself whereas J-pop’s are starting to pick up steam again which seems to be ever since “Cool Japan” was decided upon in 2013.

Film

In general, both J-pop and K-pop dance music videos are filmed rather well. K-pop’s may be perceived to have a more polished look and seems to have a much better history, but J-pop seems to be doing better in recent years. Also with story dance music videos, both genres were capable of communicating them well. However, for regular dance music videos, K-pop tends to pull forward with being able to convey a meaning better than J-pop counterparts. This is because with some of the J-pop videos observed, even though they are adept at showing the dance, showing the costumes, showing the sets, they often fail to connect all of it back to the meaning of the song or the meaning of the video. This could make the viewer wonder and wonder how they should be feeling without ever really finding out. Another common observation was where the audience may not even know what to feel after they have seen a J-pop dance music video. This could either make a global audience think about what the meaning might be or simply feel uncomfortable. Either way, both J-pop and K-pop seem to have the skills and funding (recently for J-pop). This should make the next coming years in filming dance music videos exciting.

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Culture

Especially from observations on culture, it is clear enough to make the suggestion where K-pop dance music videos are stronger in catering to wider audiences. This means in general, if a person saw the video, they would have a higher potential to appreciate it. K-pop dance music videos seem to do well in walking the fine line of being cultured without being too provocative (Psy is simply an anomaly in this, just as he is in countless other situations). J-pop however, has the tendency to challenge ideas of all kinds. This means there is a higher chance of polarized opinions which can leave a viewer either well entertained or simply disgusted. This could be beneficial in communicating culture and making an impact, however, intense disgust can be a final blow to J-pop for some viewers. One common reason can be the improper use of English.

Even so, there are only so many clean “walking the line” K-pop dance music videos made until they start looking similar. This can actually leave a person feeling unfulfilled because each video they click could be somewhat similar to the last. This is where J-pop dance music videos may be able to come in and offer something different and entertaining whether it leaves an audience squealing with joy or horror. At this time, K-pop seems to be expanding to new technologies, dance music video styles, or cultural elements which keeps their content engaging but the question is: What else is next?

Dance

Until recent years, cleanliness and execution quality had dropped in J-pop dance music videos. K-pop consistently looks relatively professional across the board with this. The critique may seem harsh, however, the problem with messy formations and execution is it can communicate to the audience several things: 1) the group is not conscious of how they look  2) the group is not professional  3) the video is not made to be aesthetically pleasing. Some may say
the artists look like they are having fun and perfect formations may feel uptight. At the same
time, if their formations are right, there is also less room to go wrong. The audience could have
less opportunity to question their ability, professionalism, and image.

Professionalism and image is of utmost importance and if, perhaps, a group has a hit,
people may naturally gravitate to some of the group’s old music videos. It is crucial those people
are not disappointed. Ways in which groups create an image for themselves are seen through K-
pop’s hair coloring, J-pop’s costume coloring, and each groups costuming, branding, and
dancing.

**Final Observations**

Hopefully through this research, the merits and challenges of K-pop and J-pop has been
made clearer than before. This is a delicate time where tables are turning and it is fascinating to
think people’s perceptions may be changed within the next coming years. The evolutionary
capabilities of the arts industry is what makes it exciting and unpredictable in some ways. Even
in this time when Japan seems to be facing Hallyu, maybe there is a point where both countries
can find a balance in promoting their own “goodness” for the world to truly appreciate.
REASONS FOR RESEARCH

Why I started my Thesis.

As a pipsqueak freshman starting in the University Honors Program, J-pop music videos was my initial “big” idea when I heard about the slightly nail bite-worthy senior thesis. Quite surprisingly, the J-pop music video idea is a perfect combination of all three fields I ended up pursuing during my 5 years at Long Beach State. They are: film, Japanese, and dance. It is almost like the little pipsqueak knew.

The following are brief snapshots of my background in each study, provided only for the greater understanding of my perspectives and reasons for research.

First is film. I was first introduced to this industry in high school by Mr. Alex Graham. From being a first-time nervous news anchor to excelling in film bootcamps and finally being the senior class Producer, I had found my declared major for college. After being accepted into Long Beach State’s prestigious film production program, I have been lucky enough to be a part of the selected junior and funded senior thesis film directors, as well as become well rounded in film cinematography, producing, production, and film design.

Also in high school, I had a friend named Diana who was very much into K-pop. I eventually became hooked over the years and looked for a globally acclaimed Japanese version of these bands or artists, to which I was let down some. My hope for a stronger J-pop music video is a driving force of this thesis.

Next, born in America to a native Japanese mother and Japanese American father, Japan has always been ever-present at varying degrees in my life. From age 3-12, I went to 9 years of Japanese Saturday School and truthfully, the grueling work made me a dispassionate bilingual. After a 4 year break in high school, Japanese had been slipping away and I decided to continue
my Japanese education in college. I met Dr. Hiroko Kataoka and soon fell in love with the program and its faculty. Japanese became a second major and became the reason why I took one full academic year to study abroad at Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan. Despite the hardships of being abroad, the exhilarating experience is simply unparalleled. I was so invested and was honored to become the 1 year study abroad program valedictorian. What a dream! Through life, having Japanese heritage has been a delicate source of identity, love, and global perspective.

Last is dance. 2016 marked the 20th year in my dancing career. I have gained a well rounded experience in ballet, jazz, hip hop, pom dance, cheerleading, and competitive dance over the years and cultivate an affinity for dance-inducing music. During university life at Long Beach State, I dedicated 4 years (1 year break during study abroad) to the official Cheer and Dance Team, known for having a history of elite dancing, national champions, and a star studded coaching staff. We cheerlead for various university athletic sports, practice 6-9 hours every week, work at charity events, and annually compete in Orlando, Florida at UDA College Nationals. Through this I have come to understand the process of immaculate dancing.

This next part I thought of time and time again to cut out, but something tugged at me to keep it: Truthfully, I did not make the Long Beach State Dance Team at first, but after sending a 10 minute video to the head coach why I wanted to be on the squad, I was conditionally placed on the team. (To this day I am still shocked that 1) I sent that video and 2) my wonderful coach gave me a flying chance). In my final year, not only has the “conditional” status been lifted, but I have also had the opportunity to become 1 of 3 captains of the 2016-2017 squad. I have improved immensely, only through persistent work and extra effort to catch up. By having to learn the hard way, I feel I have learned something extra. Ultimately, the team has trained my
eye for dancing perfection and synchronization, which is ever so important in music videos, particularly dance ones.

All of these elements put together are why my senior thesis is about Japanese and South Korean pop music videos. The synthesis of film, Japanese, and dance are a fateful balance. It is my hope what I have written here has not put some people to sleep already, but rather added some weight to the meaning of this project and humanize myself as a researcher.

Thank you!
APPENDIX

SAMPLE OBSERVATIONS


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>AKB48</th>
<th>Girl’s Generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members in video:</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Video release:</td>
<td>USA – October 30, 2012</td>
<td>August 17, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Album/Single release date:</td>
<td>Japan – March 20, 2013</td>
<td>August 19, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labels:</td>
<td>Sony Music Entertainment Japan</td>
<td>S.M. Entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debut Year:</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
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AKB48 “Sugar Rush” (2012)

“Sugar Rush” was recorded for Walt Disney Animation Studio’s film, Wreck-It Ralph. In the film the protagonist plays for a game called “Sugar Rush” which is a go-kart racing game, similar to Nintendo’s Mario Kart. Wreck-It Ralph film producer Clark Spencer explains, “We've always thought of Sugar Rush—with its nod to anime—as a game that may have originated in Japan. So we went to Japan and got the hottest J-pop group to perform the song that really sets the tone for this ‘90s-era cart-racing game: young and hip (Walt Disney Records, 2012).”

Time Stamp Observations: AKB48 “Sugar Rush”

Video Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3VjVIFiv6A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Global Outlook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0:01</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>AKB48 name and song name upfront in English</td>
<td>Readers of English can understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:05 - 0:17</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Japanese onomatopoeia words written in Japanese. These silhouette scenes really seem to tie the piece together.</td>
<td>People who do not read Japanese might not understand or relate from the start, or the foreign feeling could be intriguing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:06</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Song title in large Japanese text</td>
<td>Japanese readers only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:18 – 0:20</td>
<td>Filming</td>
<td>Detailed sweets set raises production value. However, the edit only gives a 1 second window in this wide high angle shot to let the audience realize the sweets are enormous in proportion to the girls. Wow effect could be considered lost. Red background could be energizing or obnoxious.</td>
<td>Japan does “kawaii” very well and is the origin of the over-the-top Harajuku style. Video could benefit from highlighting this strength better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:20</td>
<td>Filming</td>
<td>Costuming includes multiple elements from head to toe and adds value to the aesthetic. However, the contrasting cupcake liner could press the dress from being cute to</td>
<td>Could be considered cute or “too much” cultured costuming for international audiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:20 – 0:32</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>No eye contact whatsoever. Licca Doll effect. Pairing the girls together in sets of 2 gives time for paired individuality without taking up too much screen time.</td>
<td>Cultures like America used to more direct behaviors may not connect with the performers from lack of eye contact. Get to know performers closer in smaller groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Easy to copy for mimetic dance, however it may not be considered unique or memorable.</td>
<td>May not draw enough attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:36</td>
<td>Filming</td>
<td>1 second shot does not match with the one before and breaks eye contact.</td>
<td>Multiple angles and different eye contacts may feel unnatural.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:37 – 1:02</td>
<td>Filming</td>
<td>Intercutting two-shots that do not have the other dancers in the background. Shots could be too similar.</td>
<td>Obfuscates the perceived space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>When the arms drop down, some arms are stretch wider than others, they are not the same.</td>
<td>Can communicate individuality or lack of synchronization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:02 – 1:03</td>
<td>Filming</td>
<td>Adds movement, shows the set, and adds production value.</td>
<td>Can reinforce the theme and pique interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:04</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Formations are messy. Members are not in line. As shown at 1:13, the formation should be a clear “V”.</td>
<td>Could lose respect for looking careless when dancing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Filming</td>
<td>The chorus begins and the camera angle is not in the center. The lack of symmetry could add to the girls looking messy in dance formation.</td>
<td>Potential to not be aesthetically pleasing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:05</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>When dancing the chorus which says “s-u-g-a-r”, the move at “g-a-r” is not executed in sync. By pausing the video, the arm placements become fully visible are not together.</td>
<td>Can communicate individuality or lack of synchronization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:06 – 1:07</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Dance incorporating some driving motions is a nice homage to the Sugar Rush game in <em>Wreck-It Ralph</em>.</td>
<td>People who have seen the movie may make the connection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:10 – 1:24</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Two-shots of the girls could provide insight as to how girls in Japan may act or act with each other.</td>
<td>Could foster curiosity about or disagreement with the actions.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1:26</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Scene change. Playful colors and shapes. Subject may be considered too close to the background and almost “trapped” in the corner. Individual time with girls in this set.</td>
<td>Holds the attention of the viewer by introducing a new world. Can feel claustrophobic to some people or feel like an closer space where the 1-on-1 time is more personal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Introducing colored glasses and colored eyes, reminiscent of those in <em>Wreck-It Ralph</em>. Fashion culture.</td>
<td>Interesting glasses and eyes could pique interest and curiosity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:55 – 1:57</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Japanese onomatopoeia. Big text in Japanese slang “ヤバイ” (yabai), equivalent of “Oh no, I’m in danger!”</td>
<td>Yabai refers to the girls playing the games and them getting into an “Oh no!” situation in the game. People could miss the humor with language barriers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:58– 2:00</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Scene change. Glasses spell “S-U-G-A-R” Shiny metallic white reflects purifying light onto the girls. Mirror walls conjure the illusion of an infinitely large space. Pops of color can add dimensionality.</td>
<td>Production value may feel raised even further in this segment and continue to hold interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Girls holding the word “シュガー” (shuga), meaning “sugar” and the left wall has “ガソリン” (gasorin), or gasoline.</td>
<td>More words that cannot be understood, “gasoline” could be weird for people who have not seen the film.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>There should be a 4-person box surrounding a 5-person “V”, both of which are uneven and crooked.</td>
<td>Messy formations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>High angle adds production value by showing more of the set, costumes, and the talent, but also shows the formations.</td>
<td>High angles contribute a different perspective and may be attractive to the viewer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:49</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>“V” formation is slightly off</td>
<td>Messy formations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:51</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Diagonal is not straight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:55</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Diagonal is not straight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:05</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Bubble balls coming down add a new element for the girls to interact with. It raises the excitement similar to confetti.</td>
<td>This can potentially be an element at a live concert.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:31</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Cutesy poses show Japanese “kawaii” style. With formations, however, the final ending pose is not very even or symmetrical.</td>
<td>May seem amateur since the final post is the final image of the performance.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>3:33-3:35</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Shows few seconds of what seems like after the director called “cut”.</td>
<td>Could seem like a mistake in the editing to some people and also destroy the image the girls were creating in the video.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:36</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Giant text says, “ゲームオーバー (gēmu ôb ā)”, or “game over”. Word goes with the gaming theme.</td>
<td>Language block is possible again but it effectively contributes to the game theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:39</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Turning off TV effect completes the theme.</td>
<td>Could connect with people who own or have knowledge about TVs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:41 – 3:53</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Song descriptions, artist, recording labels, and other information are included in English.</td>
<td>English readers can obtain this information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:54 – 4:39</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Credits. AKB48 often has film credits at the end of their music videos.</td>
<td>The English speaking audience can see the “who did what”, get to know the names of the girls, and open up the possibility of researching the group in depth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Girl’s Generation “Lion Heart” (2015)**

“Lion Heart” is the second single released from Girls’s Generation’s 5th studio album, “Lion Heart”.

**Time Stamp Observations: Girl’s Generation “Lion Heart”**

Video Link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVCubhQ454c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVCubhQ454c)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0:01</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Opens with all 8 girls in view</td>
<td>People who have not seen them before can see this is a group of girls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:03 – 0:09</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Delicious pizza scene makes the girls in pajamas look like they are comfortable and having fun. The pizza box says “Mr. Pizza, Ladies First” briefly which sets up the meaning of the song. Mr. Pizza is also one of the top pizza chains in South Korea—product placement.</td>
<td>Product placement can raise the awareness of a brand. This could be a message that the girls regularly eat pizza.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:15 – 0:18</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>TV video becomes the music video. Song title and group name included.</td>
<td>Group and song name are in English. The MGM logo is</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>0:20</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Chapter style segments video</td>
<td>Could take the viewer out of the magical world by seeming like a book, but may help to make sense of the video.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:21 –</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Quick cuts of information and VFX help establish where the audience is.</td>
<td>Establishes the reality of the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:25-</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Licca Doll effect.</td>
<td>Yoona is thinking about something, understandably not looking at the camera.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:27 –</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>The choreography builds as the girl in the center, Taeyeon slowly stands up and raises her arms. The right side of the formation is closer to the center than the left. Everyone is looking at the camera.</td>
<td>Builds energy right from the start. The formation is slightly uneven, but the subtlety has a less chance of being distracting. May feel a connection with all the members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:34 –</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Close up of Taeyeon looking straight at the camera in the outfit she dances in.</td>
<td>Close contact connection to the person singing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:38</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Quick change to being in the daydream, introduction of the lion.</td>
<td>The quick sequence may be confusing for some, but the change in costuming and vibrancy of color may make it more obvious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:41</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Heart effect and sound next to Taeyeon’s face</td>
<td>Sets up the attraction to the lion which all members will have.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:42</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Intricate formation.</td>
<td>Can become iconic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:44</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Yoon on the front left is too close to center and is blocking Hyoyeon at the bottom.</td>
<td>Brevity of the shot and Taeyeon in the center being the focus draws attention away from this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:47</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Taeyeon looking at the camera is</td>
<td>This means anyone looking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
looking at the lion. The blinking is in sync with the clapping sound of the song. at the video may be considered the lion in the video. Blinking makes the video connect to the song.

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<tr>
<td>0:49–0:54</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Close up connects to new girl, Sooyoung before pulling out to show the dance.</td>
<td>Helps make individuality a point even if there are 8 girls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Dance follows the notes of the song and the hand snap undertones. Hip swinging moves.</td>
<td>May be easier to put the movement to the song beat. Hip moving can be considered feminine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:52</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Scene change to blue and white</td>
<td>Adds production value and interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:54 – 1:03</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Quick cutting to set up both Sooyoung’s world and introduce the lion. Painting of Sooyoung adds production value and her painting the flowers can indicate she is talented and does not just paint images of herself.</td>
<td>Could seem too quick to enjoy the visuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:04–1:13</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Connecting back to Yoona in the train, who the audience is already aware of. The ticket is in her had again.</td>
<td>No need for much more introduction, could foster curiosity about the ticket.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:13–1:28</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Many close-ups of Tiffany singing the chorus. Medium and wide shots establish the setting shown by the set. Bright red car matches Tiffany’s dress.</td>
<td>Easy to understand situations, close up delivery of singing the song.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:18</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>The street signs are in English and miles per hour, but also include kilometers per hour underneath.</td>
<td>Music influence of the “Lion Heart” song from America in the song brought into the scene. Only English readers can understand. Both kilometers and miles per hour may satisfy more audiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:22</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Visual effects of lion fixing the car</td>
<td>Adds dramatic effect and covers up the hands or any need to judge the lion’s car-fixing skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:29 – 1:42</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Seohyun introduced in blue and white scene. Edit highlights the lion dance at “lion heart”.</td>
<td>The fanciness of the scene may keep up the energy of the chorus. Showing the lion dance for the duration can make it memorable.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1:30 – 1:35</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>“V” is symmetrical and even. Moves continue to go along with the clapping beat.</td>
<td>Professional, neat, and pleasing for the eye.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:38 – 1:42</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Lion dance indicative of the lion theme.</td>
<td>Copyable and memorable for the song.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:43</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Slow motion book falling draws attention to it. Playing with the speed of the lion diving for the book. Close up of the book.</td>
<td>Seeing the book fall is key in order for the sequence to make sense. Playing with speed adds drama. Seeing the book caught completes the story, but a diving lion may not be so still catching the book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:51</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>“SUM” on the box is the S.M. Entertainment market where people can buy company goods. “In the store, you can find varieties of edible collaborative products, which combine SM artists’ brands such as ‘TVXQ Truffle Chocolate’ and ‘Super Junior Ramen’” (SUM Market, 2016). More product placement.</td>
<td>Promotion of selling goods at “SUM”. Brevity may not disturb viewers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:03</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Pony dance move highlighted. Lines are slightly curved.</td>
<td>Promotes another iconic part of the dance, brevity of crooked line may not draw attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:04</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Backdrop is flat, foreground leaves added to add depth and covers the flat background.</td>
<td>Covering something that could be fake may make the audience not notice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:15</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>“emos” is Lee Soo Man, founder of S.M. Entertainment’s personal brand of wine (Lee Soo Man, 2009).</td>
<td>Let people know of the “emos” wine brand and possibly convey the luxuries of Lee Soo Man.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:17</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>First time in the video seeing the beginning of the chorus dance. 2:23 costumes effectively cover up the girls.</td>
<td>Draw interest from something new. Covers up, away from obscene or too suggestive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Focus on the hip movement. 2:23 spread leg hip swinging can have sexual connotations.</td>
<td>Femininity to the max, connecting with the lyrics of the song. Could be uncomfortable for some.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:41</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Throughout the video, not just in this section, 1719 August 5 at 8:05 has been a distinct Easter egg (Lee, 2017). The 1719 combines “Lion The music video is marketing and branding for itself. People who notice and understand may be intrigued.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Heart” dance music video release date and album release date which is August 17\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} respectively. Also, Girl’s Generation made their 2007 debut on August 5\textsuperscript{th}.

| 3:21 – 3:37 | Film | Scene change to 8:05. Lighting changes to orange to signify time change. Extras in the background are of different races. | Light change makes the scene more believable though it may be considered bright for 8:05 |
| 3:32 | Film | Yoona, who was introduced at the start of the music video is the one to find the hiding lion. | Yoona important for the group’s image and tying the music video together. |
| 3:42 – 3:50 | Film | Quick paced editing. | Can communicate exasperation. |
| 3:48 | Culture | The lion’s diary includes artist names within S.M. Entertainment. | S.M. Entertainment branding |
| 3:49 – 3:55 | Dance | More focus on dance, straight lines. Lighthearted innocent dancing. | Break from quick editing |
| 4:01 | Dance | Morphing formations into final pose formation. | Presentation of final pose can coincide with musical notes and neat lines while holding the position can convey a well finished performance. |
| 4:09 | Film | Sooyoung and Yuri are both in rose dresses that look very similar. | Could be confusing with the fast paced editing. |
| 4:14 – 5:13 | Film | Black and white like TV from when the music was inspired. | Adds to the theme. |
| 4:14 – 5:29 | Film | Play on humor, adds production value. Took extra shooting time. | Encourages people to watch as the song plays quieter in the background. |
| 5:30 – 5:36 | Film | “Girl’s Generation” and the “Lion Heart” names appear immediately followed by “S.M. Entertainment”. | Branding and reiterating the names of the group, song, and entertainment company. |
| Culture | Names are all in English | English readers only. |
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