

Figurativeness - As The Principle Of The Imagery Of Pop Music

Изобразительность - Как Принцип Образности Эстрадной Музыки

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the role of figurativeness as a fundamental principle shaping the imagery and language of pop music. Figurative devices like metaphor, simile, hyperbole, and personification are examined as tools pop artists employ to convey meanings beyond literal interpretations of lyrics. Theoretical analysis reveals how figurativeness allows more profound expression of themes in pop music related to love, heartbreak, identity, empowerment, protest, and more. Perspectives from linguistics, literary theory, aesthetics, and musicology are synthesized to assess the functions and effects of figurative language in pop music poetics and songwriting. Ways figurative language converges with musical elements like melody, rhythm, and vocals to create an immersive aesthetic experience are also investigated. Findings support figurativeness as a defining property of pop music poetics that enables the genre's affective impact and cultural resonance.

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Аннотация. В этой статье исследуется роль образности как фундаментального принципа, формирующего образный строй и язык поп-музыки. Рассматриваются такие приёмы образности, как метафора, сравнение, гипербола и олицетворение, как инструменты, используемые поп-исполнителями для передачи смыслов за рамками буквальной интерпретации текстов песен. Теоретический анализ показывает, как образность позволяет более глубоко выражать темы поп-музыки, связанные с любовью, разбитым сердцем, идентичностью, раскрепощением, протестом и другими. Синтезируются взгляды из областей лингвистики, литературоведения, эстетики и музыковедения, чтобы оценить функции и эффекты образного языка в поэтике и авторстве песен поп-музыки. Также исследуются пути схождения образного языка с музыкальными элементами, такими как мелодия, ритм и вокал, чтобы создать погружающий эстетический опыт. Результаты подтверждают образность как определяющее свойство поэтики поп-музыки, которое обеспечивает эмоциональное воздействие жанра и его культурный резонанс.

Ключевые слова: образный язык, метафора, образность, поп-музыка, тексты песен, эстетика

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada obrazlilik pop musiqasi obrazlari va tilini shakllantirishning asosiy tamoyili sifatida o'rganilgan. Metafora, tashbeh, mubolag'a va tashxis kabi obrazli vositalar qo'shiq matnlarining so'zma-so'z talqinidan tashqari ma'nolar ifodalash uchun pop ijrochilari qo'llaydigan vositalar sifatida ko'rib chiqilgan. Nazariy tahlil sevgi, yurak qoni, o'zlikni anglash, ozodlik, norozilikka oid mavzulardagi chuqurroq ifodalarga erishishda obrazlilik pop musiqasiga imkon berishini ko'rsatadi. Tilshunoslik, adabiyotshunoslik, estetika va musiqashunoslik nuqtai nazaridan yondashib, pop musiqasi poetikasi va qo'shiqlar yaratishdagi obrazli til vazifalari va ta'sirini baholash maqsadida tahlil qilingan. Shuningdek, obrazli til unsurlarining ohang, ritm va vokal kabi musiqiy unsurlar bilan uyg'unlashib, estetik tajribani yaratishi yo'llari o'rganilgan. Natijalar obrazlilikni pop musiqasi poetikasini belgilovchi asosiy xususiyat sifatida, bu esa janrning ta'sirchanligi va madaniy aks sadosini ta'minlashi asoslangan.

Kalit so'zlar: obrazli til, metafora, obrazlilik, pop musiqasi, qo'shiq matnlari, estetika

Introduction

Pop music encompasses a diverse range of styles and genres, from rock to R&B, hip hop to country. However, beneath this diversity, figurative language provides a unifying thread shaping the poetics and aesthetics of pop music as a whole. Figurative language, such as metaphor, simile, hyperbole, and personification, allows pop artists to express meanings beyond literal interpretations of lyrics. Figures of speech act as tools for crafting imagery that conveys the essence of pop music's preoccupations, from love and heartbreak to identity, empowerment, and social commentary. As Roman Jakobson declared, "poetic language cannot restrict itself to the lexical meaning of words" (1. 35-40). This principle rings true for the language of pop music, which relies heavily on non-literal figures of speech to achieve its effects. Exploring the poetic function of language reveals how figurativeness operates as a foundational principle guiding the aesthetics and impact of pop music. Fine art is characteristic of such a group of arts as music, painting, graphics, sculpture, and relatively architecture. Figurativeness is closely related to the concept of image, i.e. a living idea of it. Figurativeness is clarity, imagery, picturesqueness. Musical visualization is the transformation of natural sounds and voices into music - the murmur of water, the singing of birds, the intonation of the human voice.

Methods

This article synthesizes perspectives from metaphor theory, linguistics, literary studies, aesthetics, rhetoric, and popular music studies to elucidate the central role of figurativeness in pop music poetics. Metaphor theory provides insights into how figurative tropes structure thought and experience. Conceptual metaphor theory reveals metaphor's cognitive role in framing abstract domains like love and time in concrete terms. Linguistic analysis of song lyrics elucidates rhetorical strategies of figurative language use. Literary criticism of pop songs as contemporary poetry explains figuration's aesthetic functions (2. 78-85). Philosophical aesthetics weighs the artistic effects of musical and lyrical metaphors. Rhetorical theory considers how figures operate to persuade audiences. And popular music studies examine links between musical and lyrical expression. Synthesizing these interdisciplinary perspectives throws figurativeness into sharp relief as a principle of imagination underpinning pop music poetics.

Results

Analysis of pop music through the lens of figurative language reveals salient functions of lyrical tropes. Metaphor dominates as a way to conceptualize intangible experiences like love, heartbreak, joy, freedom, and transcendence in concrete sensory terms. By structuring abstract domains metaphorically, pop lyrics engage listeners' physical and emotional experiences. A song equating love to a physical force, for instance, makes love imaginable as a palpable sensation. Similes comparing love to journeys or magic extend the metaphorical impulse, enriching pop music's imagery. Hyperbole exaggerates for dramatic effect, inflating heartbreak into utter devastation. Personification animates emotions as characters like the playful "lies" of Fleetwood Mac's "Dreams." All such figurative devices shape pop music's affective power.

Pop metaphors also capture cultural zeitgeists. The Beatles' "Revolution" figures social change as a wheel in spinning motion. Metaphors of light portray hope amid turmoil, as in "Bridge over Troubled Water." Figurativeness conveys protest themes through symbols like cages in "Born to Run." In these cases metaphors

crystallize broader cultural meanings. Finally, lyrical tropes interact with musical elements. Repeated metaphors synchronize with choruses, while shifting metaphors align with changing melodies and rhythms. This musical-lyrical synthesis magnifies figurative language's impact (3. 147-156).

Just as fine arts like painting, graphics, and sculpture rely on figurativeness to convey imagery and ideas, music also utilizes figurative language to create vivid representations of emotions and experiences. Figurativeness enables both visual artists and musicians to give tangible form to intangible concepts and feelings. Visual arts use symbolic images and sensory details to represent complex themes and imaginative visions. Similarly, figurative language in song lyrics brings emotions and passions to life through concrete details and symbolic metaphors.

For example, a painter may represent the concept of longing through a symbolic image of a distant horizon. Likewise, a songwriter may symbolize longing through a metaphor of an unreachable star. The figurative images clarify and embellish the artwork's meaning (4. 1).

While music cannot perfectly reproduce the actual frequencies and timbres of non-musical sounds, it can evoke their general contours and energy. Composers aim to capture the most characteristic and recognizable qualities of real-world sounds. So while musical onomatopoeia may not achieve photorealistic fidelity, it can stir vivid imaginations of the sights and sounds of life through artful figurative composition.

By incorporating figurative elements like onomatopoeia along with symbolism and metaphor, composers enrich music with layers of meaning. Just as language relies on figurativeness to paint sensory images, music employs imaginative mimicry and symbolism to conjure worlds that resonate with listeners. Musical figurativeness thus expands music's expressive palette.

Musical figurativeness incorporates onomatopoeia as one element of musical characterization. Music can reproduce a variety of sounds from nature, humans, and human-made objects, conveying their tone color, dynamics, pitch contour, and rhythm. However, the timbre and pitch of non-musical sounds are recreated with less verisimilitude.

In other words, composers can use musical devices to mimic real-world sounds, both natural and artificial, to create figurative representations and images in music. For example, fluttering flutes may evoke birdsong, while loud crashing cymbals can depict a thunderstorm. The sounds of machines, animals, people, and more can be suggested through careful manipulation of musical qualities like dynamics, register, articulation, and rhythm.

Analysis

Rich figurative language grants pop music lyrical depth and an affective potency beyond what literal, straightforward descriptions could achieve. The imagery crafted through imaginative figurative expressions allows the genre to immerse listeners in the intense feelings and experiences that comprise pop music's core themes. By relying on non-literal rather than plain language to convey meaning, the lyrical aesthetics of pop music become more profoundly evocative and memorable. Hence figurativeness emerges as an essential poetic property of pop music lyrics, enabling the articulation of human truths through imaginative language. The prevalence of figurative language in pop music lyrics is no accident. Rather, figurativeness emerges from analysis as a fundamental principle of pop music aesthetics. There are several explanations for metaphor and other tropes' constitutive role in pop music poetics.

First, figurative language conforms to pop songs' compressed scale. Whereas novels have ample space to develop literal descriptions, pop songs' brevity demands lyrical shorthand. Figures like metaphor efficiently conjure sensory images and emotions without extensive literal explanation.

Second, music's non-semantic nature may require lyrics to provide symbolic meaning. Music writer Philip Auslander notes pop music's semantics reside primarily in lyrics, since notes have no fixed meanings. Executing lyrical images metaphorically compensates for music's semantic openness (5. 201-209).

Third, pop music conveys themes universally relevant to young listeners, for whom figurative language rings true to life experience. Love, time, freedom - pop's classic tropes - all structure youthful existence. Figures of speech express these intangible preoccupations more profoundly than plain speech.

Finally, lyrical figuration meshes with pop music's melodic, rhythmic, and vocal aesthetics. The give-and-take of verse-chorus form aligns with shifting metaphors. Singers' virtuosic vocal inflections animate lyrical images. Pop music's core subjects and structures suit figurative expression.

Musical imagery includes onomatopoeia as one of the elements of musical characteristics. Music can reproduce the various sounds of nature and man, as well as objects created by him, conveying their color, dynamics, pitch and rhythm. At the same time, the timbres and pitches of extra-musical sounds are recreated with less similarity. Music, while expressing, depicts at the same time. In the 19th century, in the work of impressionist composers, a new name for the musical genre "Program music" entered into musical terminology - music that has a program in its name, that is, a musical work reveals the image fixed in the title of the musical work. Both European and Russian composers worked in this instrumental genre: for example: - Modest Petrovich Mussorgsky in his "Pictures at an Exhibition" - philosophical portraits of real people, sketches of the prose of life, or the French impressionist composer Camille Saint-Saens and his "Carnival of Animals" "with the immortal at all times "The Dying Swan" (6. 4-5).

The expressive and visual possibilities of music in synthetic arts are much wider (a song without words and a song with words - semantic concreteness appears). The impressions of music in a stage performance and a concert performance are essentially different. In the most monumental synthetic genres involving music - ballet and opera - the ratio of arts is not the same. We will not call ballet musical. This is first of all a choreographic and then a musical work. But the art of opera, which includes music, literature, painting, and possibly choreography, is a musical genre, since the dramatic intensity falls on the shoulders of the musician. In various stage performances, the role of music is different, but it is clear that it complements and helps make the work more emotional (7. 26-30).

Discussion

The analysis presented here invites further exchange between fields studying pop music and figurative language respectively. Linguists focused on tropes may overlook pop music's extensive figurative lexicon, instead concentrating on literary or ordinary language examples. Meanwhile, popular music scholars examining lyrics and meanings may not fully engage theories of metaphor and aesthetics. Integrating perspectives from both domains can enrich the interdisciplinary study of pop music.

Figurativeness is also connected to human musical activity and enables the manifestation of inner emotions externally through song. In other words, the use of figurative language and imagery in song lyrics allows musicians to give form to internal feelings and experiences through external musical expression.

The "internal" encompasses the complex emotions, passions, and imaginations that motivate musical creation. By harnessing figurative language such as metaphor and symbolism, songwriters can translate intangible inner phenomena into tangible lyrical images (8. 70-71)

For example, a songwriter may use a metaphor portraying love as a journey, or symbolize longing through the image of a distant star. In this way, ineffable "internal" emotions are embodied in concrete "external" lyrical depictions.

The human capacity for figurative language allows songwriters to articulate elusive inner truths. Music then provides an external medium to communicate these feelings through performance. The interplay of lyrics and melodic vocals makes inner experiences comprehensible to listeners (9. 248-257).

Figurativeness provides the imagery, picturesqueness, and clarity that allow the arts to resonate with audiences. Just as paintings and sculptures conjure ideas through imaginative details, song lyrics rely on vivid figurative language to immerse listeners in the emotions of a song.

Resonant metaphors and symbols provide the lyrical "images" that enable music to convey profound human experiences. Figurativeness grants both music and the visual arts the power to manifest intangible feelings in tangible forms. It bridges the inner world of the artist with the outward expression of their vision. By harnessing figurative language, music achieves the vivid expression and resonance associated with fine art (10. 193-194).

By crafting figurative lyrics that symbolize intrinsic human feelings, songwriters can thus share their inner selves. Through the union of imaginative lyrics and expressive music, the inner realm of emotions is given external musical form. Figurativeness is the vital link between inner inspiration and outward song.

Additionally, the predominantly English-language examples used here reflect limitations of the existing scholarship. The aesthetics of non-English popular musics worldwide warrant examination through the lens of indigenous figurative traditions. Extending theoretical tools like conceptual metaphor theory to diverse global genres could unveil distinct aesthetic logics shaped by culture-specific tropes.

Finally, empirical study of lyrical figurativeness' reception among fans may reveal nuances of pop music's appeal. Linguistic analysis of tropes could complement psychological research on musical emotions and preferences. Investigating real-time listener reactions to pop music metaphors using psycholinguistic methods may clarify links between figurativeness and aesthetic experience. Such interdisciplinary expansion of perspectives on pop music poetics can illuminate this omnipresent contemporary art form.

Conclusion

The imagery and language defining pop music rely fundamentally on non-literal figurative expressions like metaphor, simile, hyperbole, and personification to articulate the genre's preoccupations. Figurative language allows pop music to capture experiences of love, loss, identity, rebellion, and imagination in vivid sensory terms. Tropes act as an engine of pop music's aesthetic power by crystallizing emotions into memorable lyrical symbols. Conceptual metaphors grant pop lyrics profound resonance by framing intangible feelings metaphorically. And figures smoothly integrate with musical elements like melody, rhythm, and vocals to shape the genre's signature sound. For these reasons, figurativeness emerges through analysis as a core principle guiding pop music's lyrical aesthetics and profound cultural impact. Recognition of this underlying property of pop music poetics opens new avenues for understanding the timeless appeal of well-crafted pop songs.

Pop music is characterized by extensive use of figurative language like metaphor, simile, hyperbole and personification in order to express the themes and subject matter that define the genre. Rather than using plain, literal language, pop song lyrics rely heavily on these imaginative figures of speech to convey the typical preoccupations of pop music in an impactful way.

By harnessing the power of metaphor, simile, hyperbole and personification, pop songwriters are able to articulate universal human experiences like love, heartbreak, identity, rebellion and fantasy. These non-literal tropes allow profound emotions and abstract concepts to be captured vividly in concrete, sensory terms that resonate with listeners. For instance, a lyricist may use a metaphor that equates love to a physical force of nature, or a journey to capture its intensity and unpredictability. Or they might amplify the devastation of a breakup through hyperbolic language. Personification also allows emotions to be embodied as characters in a lyric narrative.

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