

The Creative Launcher

Journal URL: <https://www.thecreativelauncher.com/index.php/tcl>

ISSN: 2455-6580

Issue: Vol. 8 & Issue 2, (April, 2023)


Publisher: Perception Publishing

Published on: 30th April, 2023

Peer Reviewed, Refereed, Indexed & Open Access: Yes

Journal DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.53032/issn.2455-6580>

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Article History: Abstract Received on: 18th February 2023 | Full Article Received on: 20th March 2023 | Revision received on: 6th March 2023 | Plagiarism Checked on 28th March 2023 | Peer Review Completed on: 12th April 2023 | Article Accepted on 15th April 2023 | First Published on: 30th April 2023

Research Article



Correlating Language and Music for the Activation of Human Mind

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 <https://doi.org/10.53032/tcl.2023.8.2.09>

Pages: 65-69

Abstract

As Heinrich Heine puts it, “Where words leave off, music begins”. Music and language belong to a common origin i.e. sound, a form of energy. In other words, language and music are two sons of the same mother. Language and music both engage the auditory system, utilizing similar neural pathways to process sound and rhythm. Just as language relies on patterns of sounds and syntax to convey meaning, music utilizes melody, harmony, and structure to evoke emotions and communicate messages. A language always talks about the speech sounds that are produced by the vocal cords while music is the outcome of non-oral sounds or sometimes may be the oral sounds. Both language and music have the ability to elicit powerful emotional

responses in individuals, stirring feelings of joy, sadness, or nostalgia. The rhythmic and melodic elements in music can enhance language processing by providing a rhythmic framework that aids in memorization and comprehension. Though language and music are not always complementary to each other but one seems incomplete in absence of the other. Language and music share the capacity to convey complex ideas and narratives, allowing us to express our thoughts and experiences in nuanced and creative ways. Studies have shown that exposure to music can improve language skills, including vocabulary acquisition, syntax comprehension, and verbal fluency. The use of prosody, intonation, and rhythm in language mirrors the melodic and rhythmic components of music, highlighting their interconnectedness. Musical training has been found to enhance linguistic abilities, as musicians often demonstrate better pitch discrimination, phonological awareness, and language learning skills. Language and music can both serve as cultural markers, reflecting and preserving the traditions, values, and identities of different communities. The shared neural processes involved in language and music suggest a deep-rooted correlation, as they tap into fundamental mechanisms of auditory perception and cognitive processing. The present research article is a descriptive study on the relationship between language and music and their effects on the mind and body of the human beings. In the first section of this paper, the linguistic aspects that are akin to music have been attempted to be pointed out. Similarly, in the following section, the core of the music has been discussed in context to language. In the third section, a comparative study of language and music has been done on the basis of the points discussed in the preceding sections. Finally, the paper also discusses as how the amalgamation of the two i.e. language and music can be helpful in activating the human mind and the body.

Keywords: Sounds, Vocal cords, Language, Music, Amalgamation, Activation, Human mind, Correlation, Cognitive effects, Neural pathways, Emotional response, Brain activity

1. Introduction

As we all know, language and music morphologically lose their significance being the minus-sound entities. They only become relevant when produced either by the vocal cords of the human beings or produced either naturally or artificially by any other means – living or non-living, respectively. Whenever any sound is produced, it touches all living and non-living things around creating a direct or indirect effect on all of them unless it fades away. The intensity of such sound may vary from living to non-living depending upon the distance and the level of pitch.

Our ancestors worked hard on speech sounds. We all have heard that the chanting of a particular *sloka* used to create fire or many saints had the capability of transmitting themselves with the effect of sounds or there were many others who could perform magical activities with the help of speech sounds. Many scholars are of the view that all these statements quoted in our *shashtras* are not false. Those saints had combined the particular chunks of sounds to make words and further combined the words together in such a way that when these garlands-like set of sounds were uttered on a particular pitch, it being a form of energy, used to create fire. These

garlands are often known as the *slokas* or hymns. Thus, they had various types of *slokas* (set of sounds) to perform different miraculous activities.

Now, the question arises as why we can't produce fire after chanting those hymns at the present time. In order to have the answer to this question, once again, we need to peep into our past. As we already know, the task of teaching and learning was so tedious at that time. There was no supply of notebooks or notepads there. Many important facts were written on the leaves of various plants. The entire education was based on *shruti* system. In other words, under *shruti* system, the teacher used to recite *slokas* and the students had to memorize them. Later, an oral test was conducted by the teachers where the students used to recite those hymns as taught by their teachers.

Under such circumstance, there is a great possibility that a particular student might have misunderstood or mispronounced a particular sound of a *sloka* when the teacher was reciting it. And once, a *sloka* lost any sound from its set, it is but natural that it also lost its effect. The loss of the appropriate pitch level, incorrect writing or hearing of a particular word, and wrong way of delivering the lecture by the teacher are some of the other reasons that may be accounted for the loss of such effects. As a result, most of these *slokas* lost their significance for the general mass.

The present paper is just an attempt to outline the points where language and music may be seen getting face to face. A language cannot be thought without the voice and other prosodic features such as tone, accent, stress, intonation, juncture, amplitude, pitch, frequency, etc. Similarly, the music also depends upon the rhythm, pitch, amplitude, frequency, intonation, etc. Thus, it calls for a comparative study of the two themes under discussion.

2. Musical Aspects of a Language

So far as the musical aspects of a language are concerned, one should switch on to the phonological properties of the language. A language basically comes into play when it is brought into utterance. Written languages do not produce any sound. In that case, a written language can be just compared to the musical notes depicted on a piece of a paper. It is, in fact, the oral sounds that require the prosodic features mentioned in the previous section.

2.1. Word categories

Each and every speech sound produced results in creating a specific effect, first of all, on the speaker itself. The abusive words come out only when a person gets angry. A soothing word is observed only from a speaker who is mentally happy or content. Similarly, a man only switches to a poetic language when he is either very happy or very sad or in a depressed mood. Meaning to say, word categories are selected automatically by the brain depending upon the mental set up or mood of a person.

2.2. Pitch and Amplitude

Similarly, the pitch and amplitude with which a word or a sentence is uttered also affects the physical as well as the mental set up of a person. When an angry man speaks louder than his usual pitch level, the speaker gets more sensitive and often drags his feet behind opposite to the direction of the speaker. In the same vein, a provocative speech makes the listener more conscious and often invites postural change in him/her. A lustful speech often makes the

listener lost in the words of the speaker and turns him on physically. These instances are enough to prove that the words do have effects on both – the body and the mind.

That may either be a provocative speech or a lustful speech; both of them choose a specific pitch or amplitude level.

2.3. Stress and Intonation

Again, stress and intonation together play an important role on the mind and body of a person. Though stress acts at the word level while intonation acts at the sentence level but the nature of their actions is quite similar. A stressed word is always more appealing and effective as compared to an unstressed word. A stressed word is capable of arresting the mind of the listener, may be for a very limited period of time. Unstressed words are just the plain words that may or may not puncture the layer of attention on the mind of the listener.

As intonation acts on the clauses and sentences, it has the capability to change the entire course of a discourse. The pre-intonation part of a sentence may convey the first meaning of one type while the post-intonation part may convey a second meaning. For instance, in certain cases, an exclamatory sentence and an assertive sentence do not make any difference in writing if the punctuation marks are not indicated in each case. So far as the spoken form of these sentences is concerned, the punctuation marks can be indicated only with the help of intonation. Sometimes, in spoken language, an assertive sentence is used as an interrogative one. It becomes possible only because of intonation. Thus, an assertive sentence has a varying effect on mind and body as compared to interrogative or exclamatory sentences.

2.4. Juncture and Frequency

Juncture or pause is another important feature of a language that affects the meaning, action and sometimes the motive of the listener. Juncture is in fact a pause that often occurs in between the two syllables or words. For example, '*six tea cups*' or '*sixty cups*', '*a name*' or '*an aim*', etc. The pauses do have a mental meaning for every listener. Juncture, like the stress and intonation, may change the meaning of a word, phrase, clause, or sentence. A pause makes the listener attentive and inquisitive to know the remaining part of the information. Therefore, pause and juncture - both have the direct effect on the mind and body of a person.

Frequency in speech sounds determines the level of understanding of the listener. It also tests the linguistic competency level of the speaker. The graph of frequency of speech sounds also determines the amplitude. The frequency is inversely proportional to the amplitude i.e. the amplitude of the sound decrease with increase in frequency. Thus, the effect of frequency in speech cannot be neglected as regards the body and mind of the listener.

3. Linguistic Aspects of Music

As we know, music always originates through the sounds. Unlike languages, music may be produced either from the oral sounds or non-oral sounds. It often acts as a coating over the speech sounds to make the speech sounds more pleasing and appealing to the mind. It is basically the rhythmicity because of the music that speech sounds gain a momentum and acts effective on the mind and body. As noted in the introductory section, music does require rhythm, meter, amplitude, frequency, etc.

3.1. Rhythmicity and Other Features

The rhythmicity is a unique feature of music. It is rhythmicity that creates a soothing effect on the mind of the listener. Rhythmicity is directly related to amplitude and frequency. It basically functions as the propulsive engine of a piece of music and it generates a composition structure. A rhythm is actually that feature of music which activates the nerves, sometimes makes the listener feel nostalgic, and provides positive vibes to mind and body.

As far as the other features of music such as amplitude, frequency, and meter are concerned, these function almost in a similar way as described earlier for languages. The amplitude increases the pitch level and as the wavelength increases, the frequency of the musical sound diminishes accordingly. Such kind of differentiation is observed depending upon the types of music. It seems important to mention here that different types of music have varying effect on different parts of the body and the brain.

4. Language and Music: The Correlation

It was only after the development of MRI technique, the notion about the relation between the language and music has got a dramatic change in comparison of the previous research articles. The findings of these more recent studies show that music and speech functions have many aspects in common and that several neural modules are similarly involved in speech and music (Tallal and Gaab, 2006). There is also emerging evidence that speech functions can benefit from music functions and vice versa. Dege and colleagues are of the view that pre-schoolers can benefit from a program of musical training to increase their phonological awareness. Lutz Jäncke concludes that the musical training may aid in the prevention, rehabilitation, and remediation of a wide range of language, listening, and learning impairments. On the other hand, this body of evidence might shed new light on how the human brain uses shared network capabilities to generate and control different functions (Lutz, 2012). The music therapy has become a highly demanded area of research in the present decade. The scientists, Linguists, and other researchers are working round the clock to make this field of study more practical, efficient, and effective for the welfare of the human mind.

Thus, after observing all the parameters, it seems that the music and languages are two sides of the same coin. One appears incomplete in absence of the other.

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