Reclassifying Popular Music from the Perspective of Aspectual Hearing

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Abstract. Popular music has gradually become one of the mainstream music today. It's encompasses a wide range of styles and expressions. The pop music is deeply loved by people all over the world. Popular music is often closely associated with commercial entertainment activities, and its audience is mostly young people. The perspective of "aspectual hearing" provides a multi-faceted and multi-level auditory perception for the audience. This article aims to explore how can popular music be seeing from the perspective of "apsectual hearing". In order to better understand "aspectual hearing" this article will first dicuss the concept of "aspectual seeing". And combining the diversity of the concept of "aspectual hearing" with musical parameters (such as rhythm, melody), as well as research on different cultural backgrounds and personality factors to better classify popular music. Through these methods, we provide new insights into the classification of popular music. It is not only a product of entertainment, but also a carrier of emotional expression and social connection.

Keywords: Aspectual hearing, Popular music, Music classification.

1 Introduction

Due to its diversity and global spread, popular music has formed many classification methods. These categories are often based on regional style, musical elements, cultural influences, and audience characteristics. However, innovation methods of classification are still requires.

The concept of "aspectual hearing" mainly comes from the field of philosophy which influenced by Ludwig Wittgenstein's aspect-seeing. Aspectual seeing actually has the concept of "seeing-as". It can be said that pictures never show things in general, but always from a specific aspect, from a specific perspective or in a specific situation. It is a process of cognitive understanding, recognizing pictures from different perspectives[1]. I learned about the concept of "aspectual hearing" at a lecture during the winter vacation. And the "aspectual hearing" often extends to the auditory realm. As well as often used the "aspectual hearing" to discuss how people interpret sound in different ways. So this will be a very interesting point that will allow us to categorize popular music better. This article will use the concept of "aspectual hearing" to conduct an in-depth discussion and classification of popular music.

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2 Aspectual Hearing

2.1 The Original Concept

When talking about the concept of “aspectual hearing". I would like to introduce the concept of "aspectual seeing". The “aspectual seeing” is simply visual perception. I want to illustrate this concept with a simple duck-rabbit diagram. Look at this picture, what’s your first impression. It's a rabbit or a duck. This is a vague picture drawn by psychologist J. Jastrow in his book "Fact and Fiction in Psychology." Whatever the rabbit or duck is correct. Assumption I don't tell you. When you saw the picture was the rabbit, you might just think it was an image of a rabbit. But if I lead you to think of the rabbit ears as the duck's beak. You will see that the second result is duck (as shown in Figure 1). In the article “When ducks become rabbits", it is said that changing associations will also change the way the image is understood [2]. I also saw in “Music Perception and Musical Communities" that the uniformity of listeners' perception of pitch is actually an observation. If you give it something or a concept, then this perception will change or be replaced [3]. This illustrates well that “aspectual seeing" will change after we give it certain associations or concepts. It shows that “aspectual seeing” is a kind of diverse and multifaceted perception.

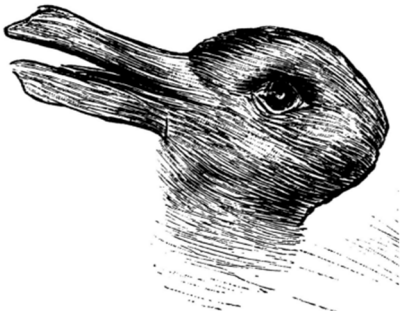

Fig. 1. Rabbit and duck optical illusion by Joseph Jastrow, from the 23 October 1892 issue of Fliegende Blätter (in public domain).

2.2 Aspectual Hearing and Music Perception

In fact, the “aspectual hearing”can also be said to be music perception. Music perception refers to the human ability to interpret and experience music through cognitive and emotional processes. It can sense various elements of music, such as pitch, rhythm, melody and so on. Music perception can be used to perceive emotions and emotion. But everyone's perception will be different [4]. Music perception often has different perceptions in consonant tone combinations. Consonant tone combinations tend to be perceived as pleasant, stable, and positively valenced; dissonant combinations tend conversely to be perceived as unpleasant, unstable, and negatively valenced [5]. Differences in vision can also give us different musical perceptions [6]. That's why I mentioned “aspectual seeing”. It helps us understand “apectual hearing” better. Aspectual

hearing is similar to “aspectual seeing”, and it can also be considered a type of auditory perception in music perception. The core concept of “aspectual hearing” is to perceive and experience music from multiple angles and aspects. I would like to understand “aspectual hearing” better with a good example. It was “World Trade Center Rcording: Wind After Hurricane Floyd” by Stephen Vitiello. If you listen to the recording first, you will initially feel that it is the sound of workers moving goods. Or maybe something is torn. Let's take these sounds as our first perception. Next, I will tell you the background of its creation. It is a sound art work he completed in 1999. This is Stephen Vitiello recording sound in a studio on the 91st floor of a World Trade Center building. Vitiello became fascinated by the difference between the cityscape below and the building's heavy, sealed windows. He used specially designed contact microphones and ultra-sensitive microphones to capture the vibrations of the building structure and the surrounding sounds. It shows the sound of buildings swaying and cracking under the weight of strong winds the day after Hurricane Floyd hit New York City. This time you know the general background of the creation and then you can feel it. If you are careful, you will feel the sound of the wind. You can also feel the interaction between the building and the wind. This recording can be understood as a dialogue between nature and the city created by humans. Next I want to give you some information to experience this recording. I will tell you about the 9/11 incident. On September 11, 2001, the terrorist organization Al-Qaeda carried out a terrorist attack in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania, USA. They used planes to hit the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, causing them to collapse completely after the attack, and surrounding buildings were severely damaged. Later, this recording became a sonic memorial to the lost World Trade Center. Then you listen to this recording again. When you listen to the recording again after i talk you about 9/11 incident, you will feel a different experience. You will hear sounds that are not in the work. Maybe you will hear the sound of the wind interacting with buildings turn into the sound of the plane roaring. I gave you three different music experiences. Experience this recording from different perspectives. After three different narrations, you will experience three different recordings. That's what I'm talking about “aspectual hearing”. Experience music from different aspects and angles. If a good piece of music uses this concept, I believe you will have a good musical experience. So in summary, the “aspectual heaing” is to use multiple angles and aspects. And use the different feelings you perceive to understand and interpret a piece of music.

3 Rethinking the Classification of Popular Music

3.1 The Contemporary Situation

The popular music is a kind of music that is easy to understand and close to the lives of the masses.It is different from traditional folk music or classical music. Simply to say, it is a kind of music that is popular among the masses. The products produced by pop music have a certain degree of commercialization. There are various popular music classification methods at this stage. I saw various classification methods for music gen-

res on the NetEase Cloud Music software in China. It is more than 30 types of classification, including hip-hop, electronic music, folk music, Chinese style and so on. If we further classify it, taking hip-hop and rap as an example, it can be further divided into fusion rap, regional rap and so on. On QQ Music, it is divided into about 20 categories, including Cantonese, R&B, anime music and so on. It seems that there are many ways to classify popular music.

Considering an innovative classification method it is necessary to talk about music preferences. No matter how you distinguish popular music, your personal preference for music will never change easily. According to research, music preference is correlated with age [7]. And there is no big difference between young and old people in the use of music. Older people even prefer happier and popular songs to adjust their mood. And everyone's preferences and use of music are different [7]. And several studies suggest that age may be the largest predictor of music preferences. Common findings are that younger listeners are fans of Rock and Pop, while older listeners more often turn to Classical and Jazz [8]. Some findings suggest that age, gender, ethnic background, social class and/or personality type can distinguish individual music tastes[8] From this we can see that, from the perspective of music preferences, no matter which aspect, pop music exists in people's preferences and use. The popular music has gradually integrated into people's lives in many ways.

3.2 New Perspective of Classification

The core concept of “aspectual hearing” is to analyze a piece of music from multiple perspectives and in a diverse way. As we mentioned in the picture in 2.1, it may look like a rabbit at first glance. But if we change the angle, it becomes a duck. Using the core concept of “aspectual hearing.” I divide pop music into two categories. One is named the “mainstream popular music”, and the other is named “niche innovative popular music”. According to the concept of “aspectual hearing”, the follwing part of the aeticle will present a comprehensive analysis of popular music on “the surface” and “in depth”.

“The surface” refers to the perception of a musical work purely from the surface through musical elements such as melody, rhythm, and musical style. “In deep” means to feel the music after having a deeper understanding of its creation background and connotation.

The mainstream popular music: through the feeling of rhythm and melody, it is easy to feel the core meaning and content of the music. It is easy to grasp the style of the music directly, and the music is popular and pleasant.The niche innovative popular music: through the melody and rhythm cannot directly clarify the style of the music, which will deviate from the general pop music style. It is necessary to dig deeper into the feelings in order to better experience and feel the music.

I would like to better explain these two categories through two examples.The mainstream popular music want to talk about is Rosé and European and American superstar Bruno Mars' collaboration “APT”. Before analyzing this song, let's talk about K-POP. She is a typical Korean K-POP member. When this song was released, some people questioned whether it weakened Korean culture, but it became a model of "Korean-

Western integration". K-POP combines the melodies of various musical styles to create a music with a rhythmic melody line. Coupled with novel dance moves and promotion in various commercial markets, it is loved by many people. With the support of the South Korean government, it has been gradually promoted to all parts of the world through online media such as YouTube, and has gradually become one of the mainstream music in the world[9]. Return to "APT", it tells the story of “Apartment Game”, a game theme in the Korean social scene. And because the dynamic melody is familiar to many listeners. The popularity of this song can be seen from the topics, playback clicks and covers on online media such as You Tub and TikTok. The number of views just on TikTok has exceeded 5.7 billion. Changes in mood also affect the perception of music[10]. Positive emotions make listeners prefer fast and obvious music. The dynamic melody of the music makes people love it. The song combines the European and American punk rock style with the Korean K-POP pop style. Just from the few short letters "APT" let the listeners are drawn into it. It is also popular among the public because of its simple and easy-to-understand melody and lively and brisk rhythm. Whether it is from the deep-level music theme or the surface melody and rhythm, the two are very consistent. And it conforms to the normal popular music style and the general public aesthetic style. So I can put it in the first category-mainstream popular music. It is a musical style in which the melody is easy to remember and the theme and melody are relatively identical.

And look at the niche innovative popular music. I want to talk about the song “Du Chang C Lou”. This is a very stylish song by Taiwanese singer Huang Xuan. This song combines elements of jazz, experimental electronics, etc., and breaks the mainstream popular music style through improvisational transitions and complex arrangements. This is an innovation in popular music. When you first listen to it, you will find the melody very special, the rhythm is irregular, and sometimes there will be dialogues.And judging from the lyrics, it's not easy to remember. It is very different from other popular music that we usually hear. It is a very special style of music. Understanding the work deeper, the ambiguous male and female voices in the song challenge the social norms of traditional gender roles. The whole song draws on the style of Broadway, and the theme expresses freedom and criticism as well as loneliness and freedom. “Alone” is the core theme of the song.After you have a deep understanding of the work, go to listen, you will have a different music experience. And you may not find it strange anymore. You can personally feel the spiritual wandering and loneliness of urban people in the bustling city. You will feel some loneliness in the humorous style of music. This is what I call the second style-niche innovative popular music. It requires you to feel more deeply and feel the music from multiple levels. Especially for a niche music like this. The first and second listen may give you different experiences after you have a deeper understanding of the work. Like the second type of pop music, it is not as melodious as the first type of pop music, the lyrics are easy to remember, and it is not a style that most people can accept.

4 Conclusion

In general, Using the concept of "aspectual seeing" by Ludwig Wittgenstein , we can gain a deeper understanding of "aspectual hearing". And using the multi-level and multi-angle concept of "aspectual hearing", popular music is divided into these two categories from various angles such as song popularity, melody and rhythm regularity and so on.

In simple words, the mainstream popular music is that the surface musical elements such as melody, lyrics, rhythm, etc. are easy for people to remember. They are deeply loved by the public, and the melody is pleasant to the ear.The niche innovative popular music is an innovative breakthrough in popular music, which is not very popular among the public, and the melody and rhythm are not easy to remember. But after a deep perception, you will have a different and special music experience.

Through this article, I hope everyone will have a better understanding and feeling of popular music and the classification of popular music. In the future development, I hope that music can be more integrated with various fields. Like working with today's advanced artificial intelligence. As well as hope that can have many different music which be integrated various culture can shows a creation of music.Bring us more and better music works in the future development.

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