Cross-linguistic, cross-cultural study on music metaphors represented in music criticism

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1. Introduction

As the two distinguished cognitive linguists Lackoff and Johnson claimed (1999), our understanding of abstract things is largely affected, shaped, and thus defined by metaphors. These conceptual metaphors, both metaphorical language and thought, are grounded in basic bodily experiences (sensorimotor) of human beings. Metaphors not only plays a role in human thought, understanding, and reasoning, but also contributes to the creating of our social, cultural, and psychological reality. In this sense, music is no exception. Music is one of the most abstract domains of human experiences: it is a temporal and multidimensional art. Its medium is sound and, its common elements are pitch (which governs melody and harmony), rhythm (which is associated concepts tempo, meter, and articulation), dynamics, and the sonic qualities of timbre and texture. It is inevitable that this complex system is conceptualized in terms of space, human body and many other more concrete experiential domains. What’s more, the creation, performance, significance, and even the definition of music vary according to culture and social context. Thus, the present paper will examine music metaphor uses that are linguistically realized in the form of music reviews by two different cultures.

Prior to conducting cross-linguistic analysis, defining the scope and meaning of “music criticism” should be preceded to better picture what this paper concerns. In a broad sense, music criticism can be any activities that engage in music-critical discourse through different modality, written, spoken, and e-discourse, through varying degrees of professionalism, writing skills, and commitment. In a narrow sense, music criticism is defined as a genre of professional writing, typically created for prompt publication, involving “the intellectual activity of formulating judgments on the value and degree of excellence of individual works of music, or whole groups or genres” (The Oxford Companion to Music) and commenting about the aesthetics, history, and evolution of music. The notion of “professional” signifies writers’ assumed expertise through training and experiences, their membership in a musical community, and the validity of their critical thoughts and knowledge about the music of that community. For the current study, the latter definition will be used.

From the definition, it is clear that a specific discourse community can wield a great deal of control over a genre adopted to represent their knowledge, ideology, faith, or purpose. This is such a wake-up call to re-evaluate the single-minded assumption in which music is identically conceptualized from the same cognitive perspectives across cultures and languages around the world.

Thus, this paper examines metaphorical expressions which are used to criticize the same genre of music in a similar conventional writing style, from two seemingly dichotomous cultures, Westerns and Non-Westerns. The primary goal is to be sensitive to cases of entrenched, or dead, metaphorical expressions which we take for granted because it is natural in music terminology. Then, it will identify the metaphors manifested in the highest number of metaphorical
expressions and their central meaning focus (central mappings). By direct contrastive analysis, the paper will examine whether the notion of universality, which is presumably grounded in correlated human physical experiences and cognition, truly exist across the two sets of the authentic music discourse. I think it is an important attempt to distinguish between universality and cultural specificity, although universality and cultural variation should not be treated with a dichotomous approach. As Yu (2008) points out that while the bodily based of language and cognition are more likely to be widespread or universal, the choice of variations from among many possible options within the nature of bodily experiences depends largely on cultural understanding and interpretation, the secondary goal of the present study is to examine aspects of culture and social environments that motivate different cognitive tendencies

2. Literature review

Previous research working in the framework of the Conceptual metaphor theory has identified several music metaphors. One of the key studies (Johnson & Larson, 2003) analyzes the three most dominant, important metaphors: metaphors of musical motion (the MOVING MUSIC metaphor, the Musical LANDSCAPE metaphor, and the MOVING FORCE metaphor). They showed how each metaphor is grounded in our basic bodily experience of physical motion and physical force in general. It claims that the way we learn about space and physical motion should be crucial to how we experience and reason about musical motion. They all are related to motion which is the result of human interaction with music, since music has the power to move us, to give rise to feelings, and to enact changes in our body-mind.

It appears that the MOTION metaphor has been well known and long studied by many cognitivists and other researcher from different fields. It is sensed that none of the previous research have paid attention to the cross-cultural comparison in music metaphors. Therefore, inspired by the preliminary analysis of my own data, I attempt to take a more creative approach, by not just revisiting the pre-established finding, but rather identifying other unique metaphors and the patterns of their central mappings selected by each culture. The genre of music criticism largely can be divided into two categories: description and evaluation. Based on the recurrent tendencies and patterns from my own data, it is believed that the Motion metaphor is commonly used for the descriptive language, whereas other metaphors are typically used for the evaluative, or critical, language. The linguistic metaphors vary from dead to innovative, and there is a tendency that the more innovative metaphor is more evaluative. These critical linguistic acts in metaphors will provide a space to account for the cultural implications.

3. Data and methodology

The data used for this paper is music reviews from two classical music magazines: February 2014 edition of “BBC Music Magazine” and March 2014 edition of “Music Journal.” They both are leading music periodicals, specializing in classical music, and their targeted readers are somewhat limited to musicians, musicians-to-be, and music-afficionados that regularly attend recitals and listen to CDs. BBC Music is passionate about the world of classical music and provides an expert monthly guide to everything an enthusiast needs to know, covering all aspects of live events, broadcast and recordings. Written by the expert critics and with over a hundred new reviews added every month, “the archive dates back to the magazine's launch in June of 1992 and now includes over 30,000 album reviews,” (http://www.classical-music.com). The first issue of Music Journal appeared in April of 1988. The main contents of the magazine are
covering all aspects of live events and musicians, both domestic and international. It proposes musical policies, informs the public of advanced musical information, constructs professional criticism and analyzes and records historical music stories (http://www.eumakjournal.co.kr). The section of music reviews in both magazines is regularly and considerably allocated as one of the most important and expected contents. The addresses of these journals are musicians, musicologists or simply people with interest in classical music.

The setting that the magazines offer will delimit more controlled contexts, such as the level of expertise of the participants (readers and critics), register regulated by the work of professionals, and common goals of the publications.

To distinguish linguistic metaphors from no metaphorical linguistic items, I used metaphor identification procedure (MIP). In the process of identifying the metaphors, some of metaphorical linguistic expressions are obvious cases of metaphors, but other are considered less obvious. I believe there are two explanations for that reason. First, like other concepts, some of the expressions are already dead, thus effortlessly used and understood in our reasoning of music. Secondly, the texts itself can be a little challenging since it requires a certain level of prior knowledge and expertise to fully understand the contextual meaning.

4. Findings

As the previous research claimed, the MOTION metaphor is commonly found in both language data as one of the key metaphors, as in following examples:

Korean data: …짧은 피아노 전주로 시작하여, 낮은 음에서 높은 음까지 사설을 늘어 놓는 듯 호소력을 가리고 옆조리듯 노래한 후, 두 번째 곡의 선율이 옛 이야기 속으로 빠져든 듯한 느낌으로 흘러나온다. 마지막 론도에서 바순 연주 기료를 다양한 표현하며 마무리되었다. (It is started with the introduction of piano, and then sings an appealing song as if haranguing the editorials from low notes to high notes. The second song flows into old tales and it ends with expression of the various bassoon performance techniques in the last Rondo).

English data: Pienaar floats across the keyboard, realizing Bach’s fiddly passage work…

However, other distinctive, noteworthy metaphorical patterns emerge as significantly in each language data. This claim is just proved by the two examples provided above. Besides the MOTION metaphors, they are full of other expressions such as “passages” “haranguing editorials”, and “singing a song”. In the following section, the paper will respectively list the identified metaphors with the examples for each language data.

4.1. Korean data

**MUSIC IS LINGUISTIC EXPRESSION**

This is the most frequently used metaphor in the Korean data. Language seems to be a fairly accessible source domain to be mapped onto the target domain. Both language and music are an abstract domain, but the visible, material, and quotidian aspects of linguistic manifestation seem
to make the domain of language a little more concrete and physical one. Under this metaphor, two distinctive sub metaphors emerge: MUSIC IS VERBAL RHETORIC and MUSIC IS LITERATURE.

MUSIC IS LITERATURE is concerned with the written production of language. It usually refers to a specific genre of writing with shared conventions of discourse community. The linguistics expression found in the Korean data shows relevant mappings developed from this metaphor. The musicians are conceptualized as interpreters and their performance as interpretations. Musicians are expected to be well-trained to read music in a certain way that is acceptable and valid in classical music community, but they can also take their own liberty to re-interpret the music piece to some extent. For instance, in (1), the performer is positively evaluated for his legitimate reading which is based on baroque era music and in (2), one’s interpretation is questioned for its quality and effectiveness by the critic who is considered to be an expert and knows the legitimate boundary of interpretations. Thus, the composer is not explicitly revealed in this context and but is seen as a writer of musical texts who has original intentions behind the texts.

(1) 소리에 대한 자유로움으로 음악의 방대함을 전하는 해석은 아니었지만, 작품의 구조와 창의력을 면밀하게 구성하고 있는 편으로, 고전음악의 형식과 테두리 안에서 전형적인 연주해석을 근거하며 진지한 고적음악을 완성해주었다(His performance style was not an interpretation that conveyed the immensity of music through freedom of sound, but, was grounded on a typical interpretation within the framework of classical music and completed the earnest/serious classical music).

(2)평자는 그의 음악적 해석이 홀륭하고 효과적이었다기보다는…I don’t think his music readings was not splendid or effective…

Also, components and organization/structure of music is conceptualized as rhetoric components of literature. Musical works have theme, introduction, conclusion, chapters, pages, variation, paragraphs, stories, and dramatic tension just like any other literature work. For instance, in (3) and (4), the music pieces are written and performed with motives, themes and their thematic development.

(3) 특히 이들의 음악에는 음악형식의 완곡함이 돋보이는 주제와 그 발전과정에서 드러나는 넉넉한 형식미가 어쩌면 학생들에게는 가장 중요한 기본적 요소면서…때문에 그렇게 가르친 게 아닌가 여겨진다(It is assumed that the musicians were taught this way because the theme and beauty of form highlighted in the course of its thematic development are the most basic components).

(4)첫악장 알레그로는 8개의 모티브들로 시작되어 주제 선율의 경쾌한 변조를 통해 전개되었으며…(The first movement started with eight motives, developed through the main theme’s variation…)

(1) 소리에 대한 자유로움으로 음악의 방대함을 전하는 해석은 아니었지만, 작품의 구조와 창의력을 면밀하게 구성하고 있는 편으로, 고전음악의 형식과 테두리 안에서 전형적인 연주해석을 근거하며 진지한 고적음악을 완성해주었다.

(2) 평자는 그의 음악적 해석이 홀륭하고 효과적이었다기보다는…I don’t think his music readings was not splendid or effective…

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The mapping aforementioned can be applicable to any genres of literary work such as poetry, plays and novels. Specific genres are not identifiable, but it is generically perceived as a story as in (5) and (6). More specifically, in (5) it is often conceptualized as picture books with emphasis of visual representation. In the same vein, each movement of music piece is described as each page of the book which contains a unique story, thus collectively creating a coherent story. The nature flow of musical movement is appraised like the natural and discontinued development of the story is appraised in (6).

(5) …각 악장마다 그림책의 책장을 한 장 한장 넘겨보듯 고유한 색과 이야기를 담아 표현하였다(… expressed each movement with original color and story, as if leafing through a picture book page by page).

(6) 각 악장에서 다음장으로 넘어갈 때 끊김없이 자연스럽게 이어지게 연주하여 하나의 스토리로 구성되어 음악의 전체 구성하는데 이해를 도왔다(Playing without discontinuity from one movement to another constructed a whole story, so that helped (the audience) understand the overall structure of music.

Furthermore, musical sound dynamics is mapped onto dramatic tension in literature. The well-expressed dynamics in terms of gradualness and matureness is considered to build a good amount of tension as in (7).

(7) …극적 긴장감과 짜임새 있는 변주…(…dramatic tension and well-structured variations properly are expressed…)

What’s more striking is the second sub metaphor, MUSIC IS VERBAL SPEECH which pays more attention to verbal aspect of language use. Music texts, or scores, are written texts in MUSIC IS LITERATURE metaphor, now it is spoken language. Music as spoken language is considered as different types of speech, indirect or direct speech, or implicit or explicit, depending on situations and social contexts. In this case, the types of speech are the result of specific techniques or interpretation. As in (8), the musician shows bowing of indirect speech, whereas the musician in (9) is portrayed as talking in a direct, candid, straightforward manner.

(8) …간접 화법적인 보임의 모습을 보여준 바이올린리스트 루세브…(…Violinist Roussev who displayed the form of bowing which was indirection speech…)

(9) 그는…직선적이고 솔직한 결코 우회적으로 들려서 말하지 않는 직접 화법의 연주를 들려주었다(He told the performance of direct speech which was straightforward, honest, and not circuitous…)

The mapping above is a case in which a soloist talks to the audience in a unidirectional way. However, based on our everyday knowledge, there are different kinds of communicative situations such as one-on-one conversation, group discussion, or a communication between one and a group. In (10), the duet is perceived as a conversation between the musicians with simple-minded sensitivity, while (11) a communication in a big group.
(10)... 소박한 감성인 어린 대화… (the sincere conversation with the partner…)

(11)... 오케스트라와의 대화에서 이루어지는 상대성은…(the relativity that is fulfilled by the communication with the orchestra …)

In an extended sense, a musically well balanced performance in duet means a good mutual interaction between people. It is a social act between musicians, musicians and the audience, and musicians and the conductor. To better communicate with others, or have a better relationship, the interlocutors mutually make effort to understand the pragmatic meaning behind what is said on the surface. As in (12), musicians need ‘musical’ consideration, concern, and understanding for successful communication. The communication may not be always successful. If musicians fail to get their message across for whatever reason, the connection, or conversation, will break down as in (13).

(12) 상대에 대한 음악적 배려는 자신의 의지보다는 둘이 함께 했을 때 나타나는 이해와 거기서 나오는 소박함이다. (The musical considerations/concerns for each other came from their mutual understanding and its simplicity, instead of one’s own will).

(13)…청중과의 소통을 차단시켰다. (…blocked the communication with the audience)

Personification (MUSIC IS PERSON)

Personification is conceived as a form of ontological metaphor. Personification conceptual metaphors involve understanding nonhuman entities, or things, in terms of human beings. Personification permits us to use knowledge about ourselves to comprehend other domain. It is typically characterized by words and expressions referring to human body, appearance, or physical movement. Music is not humans, but they are given qualities of human beings. In the Korean data, the meaning focus is different from prototypical mappings. It is quite innovative and idiosyncratic. The central mapping is that the quality/feature of music is personality/character of human beings. Another interesting pattern found is metonymic application along with the personification. The most frequently used metonymy is THE PRODUCER FOR THE PRODUCT (THE AUTHOR FOR THE WORK).

Music is conceptualized through the descriptors (adjectives, relative clauses) to explain human’s character and personality such as being warm (14), being delicate, elegant, warm-hearted, humanistic(15), being innocent and not pretentious (16), not being sophisticated (17), and being less authoritative and pretentiousness(18). In a commonsensical sense, good personalities, or qualities, are used to allude to a positive evaluation of performers, their performances and their attitude to music. In contrast, the negative personalities correspond to a negative evaluation.

Interestingly, although it is hard to translate the sentiment of the lexicons into English, the qualities like ‘simple and honest, not ostentatious, easygoing, or humanistic” are exactly echoing the traditional Korean values.

(14) 그의 말리는 따뜻했다. (His Maler was warm).
(15) 섬세하면서도 우아함과 따뜻함이 함께 하는 인간미 넘치는 말리를 들려주었다. (He played Maler that was delicate, elegant, and humanistic with warmness).

(16) 작곡가의 순수함이나 소탈함… (The innocence and informality/“easy-goingness” of the composer…)

(17) 음악이 세련되다고 말할 수 없었지만… (The music cannot be told as sophisticated and elegant…)

(18) … 수직적 권위와 겉멋을 내세우지 않는 것 그 자체로 보기 좋은 일이다. (It is good to see that their music does not impose the vertical authority and pretentiousness…)

MUSIC IS PAINTING
One of the frequently used metaphors is another form of art, painting. Like literature, it is regarded as a little less abstract concept than music, due to its visual representation of colors, designs, and textures. In this metaphor, a performer is conceptualized as a painter, music as a piece of art (both a whole piece and a momentary scene), the act of performing as painting. Typically, different colors in the painting are mapped onto the color of music. More specifically, colors correspond to different tonal qualities on micro level, or they correspond to overall music tone that a particular musician produces. For instance, (19) shows a painter who is drawing his own music calmly and unaffectedly. (20), (21), and (22) respectively show various sound tone such as impressionistic color, bassoon color, and warm color.

(19) 소신껏 자신만의 음악을 덤덤히 그려가는 연주의 이상을 추구하는 연주자…(a performer who pursues his ideal of performance by drawing his own music calmly and unaffectedly in his belief…)

(20) 마지막 곡은 프랑스 인상주의적 색채가 돋보이는 작품…(The last song is a piece in which the French impressionistic colors stand out…)

(21) …바순만이 가지는 독특한 색깔을 보여주었다. (…showed a unique color that only bassoons possess)

(22) 그의 연주는 노래에 따뜻한 색채를 닦입히고 있었다. (His playing was adding warm color to the song).

MUSIC IS ARCHITECTURE
One cannot experience any piece of music at a time. Therefore, architecture serves a tool to describe, analyze, and evaluate musical performance as occurring all at a time as a synchronic activity. Also, it shifts from a two dimensional perspective from a three dimensional perspective. The motion in a linear fashion would disappear or conflict with this image of architecture. Compared to the English data, this is one of the major metaphors in the Korean data. English music critics tend to break music down into small parts, evaluating basic units like skills, tonal
quality, and interpretation as if they are the only prerequisites to produce a decent quality of music. In opposition, Korean music critics tend to evaluate music as a whole, unifying musical and non-musical.

Choosing ARCHITECTURE metaphor over Building metaphor is to accentuate the aesthetic aspects of architecture. Thus, most of linguistic expressions have nothing to do with prototypical mapping that are used in Building metaphor such as the act of building and small parts of buildings, or groundwork. Instead, its meaning focus centers around the beauty of balance, framework, cubic effect of the artwork. Architecture can be conceived as an entity in varying ways, including the entire program of a recital, a piece of song, or a movement of a song. For instance, in (23) the whole program is conceptualized as a big building and the structure of architecture is conceptualized as the structure of the program. In (24), musical balance that enhances the overall structure and view of the architecture is positively evaluated, while the aesthetics of plastic arts (3-D) is described in (25)

(23) … 큰 틀에서는 전형적인 고전적 구도였다. (…in a macro level framework, it was typical classic structure).

(24) … 음악적 균형감을 높여서 전체의 구성을 돋보이게 하고 있었다. (… not only enhanced the musical stability but also made the overall construction stand out).

(25) 독일적인 형식미를 창조하기 위해 선택한 것이 아니었으나 할 정도로 조형미가 두드러진 것이었다. (The aesthetic beauty of plastic arts (formative arts) is marked, alluding to the hint that it is chosen to create the German beauty of form).

4.2. English data

MUSIC IS LINGUISTIC EXPRESSION.

As MUSIC IS LANGUAGE metaphor is the most frequently used metaphor in the Korean data, it is also one of the major metaphors in the English data. But there are differences in terms of its meaning focus and level of specificity and elaboration on an existing element of the source. Under this metaphor, two distinctive sub metaphors emerge: MUSIC IS VERBAL RHETORIC and MUSIC IS LITERATURE.

Similar to the Korean data, MUSIC IS LITERATURE is concerned with the written production of language. The musicians are conceptualized an interpreters and their performance as interpretations. Musician are expected to be well-trained to read music in a certain way that is acceptable and valid in classical music community, but they can also take their own liberty to reinterpret the music piece to some extent. For instance, in (26) and (27) the readers of the musical text are positively evaluated for their original interpretation. In (28), it is emphasized that his way of interpretation is greatly different from the conventional reading in the circle. Unlike the Korean text, composers are not revealed as writers of musical texts who have original intentions
behind the texts. It is assumed that the individualistic society values more on self-expression and self-interest.

(26) He searches out the instrument’s capacity for gentle light and shade and remarkable resonance, culminating in a wonderful interpretation.

(27) These are, in short, fresh, spontaneous, original readings that shed new light on the keyboard player’s Bible.

(28) His virtuoso playing of the opening C major Prelude recalls the bravura warm-up exercises from which the genre evolved- A far cry from the reverential, romanticized readings often preferred by pianists.

Also, musical effects are conceptualized as rhetoric components of literature. Particularity, dramatic effects in musical literature are highly appraised in (29) and (30), while lack of the rhetorical tension is negatively evaluated, seen as plain, less entertaining in (30).

(29) …to highlight rhetorical gestures and dramatic contrasts.

(30) What he likes best, to judge from results, is heroic climaxes and dramatic punctuation.

(31) I miss the intrinsic drama of the Sonata.

Furthermore, components and organization/structure of music is conceptualized as rhetoric components of literature. This is easily found in the use of literature terminology such as an idiom (32), a passage (33), a phrase (34), characterization, dialogue, and development (35).

(32) The two slower outer movements pin down an idiom resembling a winsome fusion of Delius’s harmony and Khachaturian’s melodic flow.

(33) Realizing Bach’s fiddly passage work.

(34) His phrasing is admirably clear through the phrases themselves often fail to coherent those large-scale.

(35) …less Mozartian when it comes to characterization, dialogue, and development.

Interestingly, the second sub metaphor, MUSIC IS SPEECH which pays more attention to verbal aspect of language use is rarely found in comparison to the Korean data. As a result, the scope of mapping is very limited, leaving a generic one as in (36).

(36) He surely has been no less enthusiastic about the eloquent playing of Mahan Esfahani in his more public performance of these relatively neglected Sonatas.

MUSIC IS OBJECT

This is the most frequently used metaphor in the English data. It is part of ontological metaphor which is to assign a basic status of objects, location, substance, and container (objects and location) to many of our experiences. As a result, it enable us to see more sharply delineated structure where there is very little or none.
First, MUSIC IS OBJECT is often manifested by verbs (or nominalization) that serve to shift conceptualization from being intangible to being tangible, from being amorphous to having shapes, and from invisible motion to visible motion. For instance, the performer ‘gave’ some possession to the audience in (37), ‘creates’ some product in (38), and ‘mixes’ some tangible substances in (39). Also, grammatically, the music is a countable item as in (40).

(37) The Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra gave a complete cycle of the Beethoven Symphonies

(38) His exceptional sustained touch creates a warm legato in the second movement

(39) The second movement mixes languid sighs with questioning pauses (material)

(40) The EL contrabandist operetta fantasy is a serious rarity (a rare item)

Secondly, MUSIC IS OBJECT metaphor is realized through adjectives that refer to some physical characteristics/attribute of objects such as touch, measurements, size, shape (41), brightness (42), and weight/volume (43).

(41) The opening Allegro assai of NO.8 is measured, finely shaped, but rather dull. (Tactile)

(42) He searched out the instrument’s capacity for gentle light and shade (brightness)

(43) She often produces a heftier sound than Hough

Thirdly, MUSIC IS OBJECT metaphor is shown through the prevailing use of possessives that highlight the ownership of the musical act. This emphasizes the objectification/materialization of music in (45) and (46).

(44) … his power and remarkable accuracy…

(45) … his luminous, delicate sound…

In regards with OBJECT metaphor, I’ve found three more interesting metaphors that are concerned with evaluative language. When it comes to praising musicality on micro level such as certain skills, tone, or techniques, GOOD IS LIGHT/BRIGHT metaphor appear. In (48), the sound is positively evaluated (luminous). In (49), the staccato technique is praised (sparkling). In (50), his fingering is appraised (dazzling). Whether BAD IS DARK metaphor is applicable is questionable.

(48) While the B major Prelude BWV 868 and the E major BWV 878 epitomize his luminous, delicate sound

(49) While the third is alive with sparkling staccato

(50) His dazzling fingering…

Another metaphor that is associated with good performance is GOOD IS CLEAR as in (51) and (52).

(51) His phrasing is admirably clear
(52) She conjures a Lisztain sparkle and crystalline clarity that sound exactly right.

Also the qualification of performance is comprehended through a quantitative system. (QUALITY IS QUANTITY). This resonates with non-verbal representation of the star rating system at the end of every review. The rating system is described: five “outstanding,” four “excellent,” three “good,” two “disappointing,” and one “poor.

MUSIC IS PERSON

In the Korean data MUSIC IS PERSON metaphor is essentially used to understand the personality of music in relation with the musician’s attitude toward music. It is more of a philosophical mapping. But in the English data, music is personified in a prototypical way such as dancing, swing, swaggering in (54) and being humorous in (55).

(54) Rhythms dance and swing (as in the nimble caprioles of the E flat Prelude or the swaggering dotted rhythms of the E minor Fugue, both from Book 2)

(55) The humor of the Merry Gathering of Peasants in the Sixth seems to escape his notice

MUSIC IS PAINT

Similar to the Korean data, one of the frequently used metaphors is another form of art, painting. The act of performing is painting (56) and the different sounds are different colors (57).

(56) He also takes liberties with tempo… to paint the sundry effects of different keys

(57) Hough brings an unusually wide range of keyboard color to bear on Brahms’s piano-writing.

MUSIC IS AN ENCHANTING FORCE.

MUSIC IS AN ENCHANTING FORCE is only found in the English data. It is seen as a sub metaphor of the MUSIC IS MOTION metaphor in which music is perceived as a force influencing the listener or the performer. But I think it should be treated as an independent metaphor because the ‘enchanting’ force is such an innovative way of conceptualizing music in a positive way with hyperbole. Music captures one’s mind (58), makes one feel dizzy (59), takes one’s breath away (60), and disturbs one’s mind (61).

(58) Jones’s playing of both instruments entralls.

(59) Despite the dizzying virtuosity, the playing is never heavy-handed.

(60) … the Preludes in G and B flat major from Book 1 or the D minor from Book 2 for a taste of his breathtaking dexterity.

(61) The B flat minor pair is hauntingly poignant.

MUSIC IS A CONTAINER
MUSIC IS A CONTAINER metaphor is only found in the English data. The linguistic expressions from this metaphor are almost dead expressions which are often signaled by prepositions and prepositional phrases, such as in, within, or out of. Many abstract entities like musical work, musical movement, concert, key, sound, interpretation, listening, rhythm, are conceptualized as containers. Musical works and musical movement seem to be more frequently thought of as containers as in (62) and (63).

(62) Apart from some weird pedaling in the Adagio expressive variation of Sonata No.10’s finale…

(63) He’s at his most expressive in the slow movements.

5. Conclusion and discussion: underlying socio-cultural motivation

Although my present study may have many limitations to make any generation or conclusion (mainly due to a limited amount of data and a preliminary stage of analysis in MA program), it is quite intriguing to observe discernible cultural patterns which are associated with the cultural dimension of individualism and collectivism.

Both data employ shared metaphors such as MUSIC IS MOTION, MUSIC IS LINGUISTIC EXPRESSION, MUSIC IS PERSON, MUSIC IS OBJECT, and MUSIC IS PAINT metaphor. However, MUSIC IS ARCHITECTURE is only found in the Korean data, whereas MUSIC IS ENCHANTING FORCE, MUSIC IS CONTAINER, and QUALITY IS QUANTITY are found in the English data. What’s more crucial than this mere identification is the cross-cultural variation represented through the frequency of linguistic manifestation, the choice of central mappings of each metaphor, and application of extension and elaboration. Particularly, the different applications of central mappings in some key metaphors appear to be responsive to socio-cultural values and norms. When a source domain in applied to a target, only some aspects of the target are brought into focus. Automatically, the other aspects of the concept will remain hidden, that is, out of focus. Central mappings reflect major human concerns relative to the source in question. I believe they are the mappings that are most motivated experientially and culturally.

First, the cultural pattern arises from the use of different major metaphors. These variations are associated with holistic approach versus analytical approach. In the Korean data, the most dominant metaphors are LINGUISTIC EXPRESSION (VERBAL RHETORIC), PERSON, PAINT, and ARCHITECTURE. In the English data, the most dominant metaphors are OBJECT, LINGUISTIC EXPRESSION (LITERATURE), and CONTAINER. The ARCHITECTURE metaphors in the Korean data are used to evaluate music as a whole, unifying musical and non-musical components. This metaphor helps the readers/audience to pay attention to a bigger picture as an entity such an entire song or an entire recital, rather than attending to small components of music. This holistic approach to evaluating things and understanding the world in relation with a situated context comes from the Korean traditional philosophy.

Conversely, in the English data, the ARCHITECTURE metaphor is rarely used; instead the OBJECT metaphors (GOOD IS BRIGHT, GOOD IS CLEAR) are typically used to break music down into small parts. Music is conceptualized as an object that has basic units like skills, tonal
quality, and techniques. These attributions are mainly evaluated. These linguistic expressions match with the analytic tendency in the Western philosophy. The analytic nature of the Western culture is concluded with the QUANLITY IS QUANTITY metaphor that shows the star rating system at the end of every review.

Another cultural variation is revealed through the different meaning focus in the LINGUISTIC EXPRESSION metaphor and the PERSON metaphor. In the Korean data, more innovative central mappings and sub-metaphor are applied to the LANGUAGE metaphor, to accentuate the relational aspect of music. Thus, music is not seen as a simple monologue, but is viewed as conversational and communicative act not only among the musician, but also between the musicians and the audience/readers. It is conceptualized as a social act which prioritizes on harmony and relationships with other but avoid confrontation. In the same vein, the central mapping in the PERSON metaphor also emphasizes the qualities/ personalities that promote the harmonious relationship such as music being simple and honest, not ostentatious, easygoing, or humanistic. This listener-oriented, relation-focused mappings mirror the characteristics of collectivism in Korea.

On the other hand, in the English data, more prototypical mappings are found. For instance, they focus more on the role of the musician as an interpreter of the music texts, thus highlighting the aspect of written language. The sub-metaphor MUSIC IS VERBAL RHETORIC/SPEECH, which is frequently used in the Korean data, is rarely found. Thus, the verbal linguistic aspect is down played. In general, the written discourse has a lower level of eliciting readers’ involvement than the spoken discourse. Together, the central mappings are speaker-oriented. Especially in the MUSIC ISENCHANTING metaphor, music is conceptualized as a force that is imposed on the audience in a nonreciprocal way. The speaker-oriented, task-oriented linguistic expressions mirror the characteristics of individualism in the West.

In short, the existence of the primary metaphors between the two languages still support the conceptual metaphor theory by showing that the critics use a number of common sources to conceptualize music in a systematic way. However, this does not necessarily indicate any similarity in language use for cross-linguistic comparison. Each set of reviews goes beyond the generic boundaries of conceptualization of music and shapes contrastive patterns that strongly respond to its traditional culture, value, and philosophical orientation.
References


