

Master's Thesis Abstract

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Name:

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Title

When people talk about music: Analyzing the practice of Café Music of Philosophy

The purpose of this paper is to clarify whether the language people use when talking about music is creative or not by focusing on the language ordinary people use when talking about music and conducting a "Café Music of Philosophy" workshop where people introduce each other's favorite music.

Many attempts have been made by Western philosophy and musical aesthetics to explain all phenomena, including music, in words. Whereas, Sontag (1996) has mentioned putting art into words. She cited the cave murals of Lascaux and Altamira as primitive art, pointing out that this is magic or incantation, in other words, an experience. She also cited the theory of imitation (mimesis) later put forward by Greek philosophers. From there, Sontag asserted, the dichotomy between "form," which is art itself, and "content," which is verbal interpretation, was born. However, Akiko Ikeda (2010) referred to the possibility of words coming as close as possible to the event itself. No matter how hard we try, words cannot become the object itself. Ikeda points out that poets who eventually become aware of the "unknown," which cannot be expressed in words, become speechless and silent. And then, while maintaining silence, the poet's awareness of the "unknown" is filled with a vast vision of words. There is no will of the poet, and the words become consciousness itself, the event itself. This is what Ikeda calls "creation." Saussure (1972) called letters, speech, and words in the head "signifier," and the concepts signified by them "signified." Words, Saussure asserts, are arbitrary combinations of signifier and signified. If the voice in your head is a signifier, then the music in your head is part of it. If this is the case, we can assume that music and words exist together in the head, and when we try to put them into words, we may be able to create what Ikeda calls "creation." However, the subjects Sontag and Ikeda referred to are limited to critics and poets, respectively. Based on this background and context, the following research questions are derived in this paper: 1) How do ordinary people talk about music? 2) Are the words with which people talk about music creative?

In order to analyze the language in which people talk about music, action research was conducted through a workshop called "Café Music of Philosophy," which was modeled after the "Café Philosophique" created by Marc Sautet in Paris, France. Action research is a research method in which the researcher and the subjects work together to create a new space through this process. In the "Philosophy Music Cafe," participants brought their favorite songs and introduced them to each other. What I learned from the first session was that "participants tended to flow into talking about their information and their impressions of the songs" and that "all participants followed up with the researcher." In the second session, I introduced the song and asked the participants to speak, limiting their comments to their impressions of the song. What I found was that "the range of words used was narrowed and fewer comments were made" and that "it was painful for participants to have their comments forced upon them by the researcher." From the above, this paper concludes that: 1) the public speaks of music from a variety of perspectives, including their own knowledge and impressions; 2) the language that emerges to speak of music without limitations is creative. Future issues include improving the way the workshops are conducted so that participants can talk about music in a more casual manner.