

Music and Videoclips: Does a Videoclip Influence the Perception of Music?

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Abstract (extended version), and Original Table of Contents

Abstract (extended)

This study explores the question if a song (popular music) is perceived and rated differently when presented alone comparing to when presented together with a promotional videoclip. In different words, from the point of view of the musicians: Is my music modified by additionally produced promotional videoclips?

Thirty-six adolescents and adults (of both sexes) had to fill out semantic differentials after having listened to three different songs, each under one of the following conditions:

1. The song was presented alone, thus audio only:
A = audio only
2. The song was presented with the corresponding promotional videoclip:
A/V match = audio and video match
3. The song was presented with a random videoclip:
A/V mismatch = audio and video do not match

Due to this experimental design it was possible to make statements on how the different songs were perceived under different conditions.

The raw data was processed extensively with PC software for statistical evaluation, specially developed by the author.

These are the main findings:

- (A) The correlations between condition A and A/V match as well as between A/V match and A/V mismatch are high.
This can mean that subjects instructed to rate music do this quite similarly, independently from the presence of a matching or mismatching videoclip.
- (B) The variance within the A/V match condition is smaller than within the A condition.
This can mean that presenting a song together with a corresponding videoclip decreases the possibilities of the listeners/viewers to interpret and adapt the music in his own way.
- (C) The variance within the A/V match condition is smaller than within the A/V mismatch condition.
This can mean that it is difficult and perhaps arbitrary to rate an incompatible or unmotivated music video mix, and that an appropriate video clip makes the "meaning" of the music more unequivocal.

In addition to these main findings, minor (and more complex) conclusions could be drawn from the data. Hence it was made clear that a promotional videoclip has a statistically significant influence on the perception on music.

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