

Analyzing the Role of Metaphor and Metonymy in Music Criticism

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Due to the intangible nature of music, the terminology used to make reference to it is highly metaphorical and metonymic. Any speaker, no matter his degree of knowledge or specialization, uses the same conceptual mechanisms when talking about music. One of the subgenres in which this use is more evident is in music criticism, where the speaker uses metonymy and metaphor (or, in most of cases, a combination of both of them) in order to describe and explain music phenomena, trying to convey an opinion at the same time.

This paper offers the conclusions obtained through the analysis of the conceptual metaphors and metonymies used in some randomly chosen pieces of music criticism, aimed at different kinds of readers in terms of their formal musical education. The metaphors and metonymies (as well as their combination) object of analysis are conceptual ones, which are exploited in varying degrees by the authors in their critical discourse, and which thus contribute to its *coherence*, in the standard sense this term has in Discourse Analysis (Brown and Yule, 1983). Our objective is to identify the similarities and differences between these texts as regards the metaphors and metonymies used by the authors, as well as the role that they play in their discourse.

Consequently, the analysis is the result of the combination of the techniques of Conceptual Metaphor and Metonymy Theory, on the one hand, and Discourse Analysis on the other (Alba-Juez (2009) and Schiffrin *et al.* (2001)). Besides, the study belongs to the field of study of Cognitive Linguistics, which claims that conceptual metaphor and metonymy are basic cognitive mechanisms (Barcelona (2000), Kövecses (2002), Lakoff (1993), Lakoff & Johnson (1980)). It is also a further demonstration of the idea expressed by Lakoff and Johnson (among others) which claims that abstract concepts and perceptive experiences whose meaning, intentionality or structures are not directly apprehensible require the use of metaphor and metonymy in order to be described or explained.

This paper is also connected to the tradition focused on the research about the role of metaphor and metonymy in general discourse as well as in different specific discursive genres (Zanotto, Cameron and Cavalcanti (2008), Caballero (2006), Steen (2007), Kövecses (2010), Barcelona (2007), Gibbs (2008) and Panther & Thornburg (2003)).

Keywords: cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor, conceptual metonymy, music criticism, discourse analysis

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