



University of HUDDERSFIELD

University of Huddersfield Repository

Rogers, Andrew and Gibson, Ian

Audiovisual synchrony: Cross-modal transient structure and tempo

Original Citation

Rogers, Andrew and Gibson, Ian (2013) Audiovisual synchrony: Cross-modal transient structure and tempo. In: Sixth International Conference of Students of Systematic Musicology, September 12th-14th 2013, Genoa, Italy. (Unpublished)

This version is available at <http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/21913/>

The University Repository is a digital collection of the research output of the University, available on Open Access. Copyright and Moral Rights for the items on this site are retained by the individual author and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full items free of charge; copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided:

- The authors, title and full bibliographic details is credited in any copy;
- A hyperlink and/or URL is included for the original metadata page; and
- The content is not changed in any way.

For more information, including our policy and submission procedure, please contact the Repository Team at: E.mailbox@hud.ac.uk.

<http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/>

Audiovisual synchrony: tempo and cross-modal transients

Andrew Rogers

Dr. Ian Gibson

*Department of Computing and Engineering, University of Huddersfield,
United Kingdom*

Background

What are the considerations of the composer when designing music to accompany a visual? Music is purposefully included within audiovisual products with considered reason; motivic, thematic, emotive, semantic or otherwise. Ultimately, music is employed to affect an audioviewer¹, yet the consequences of this multi-modal interaction lacks clarity. Investigating cross-modal interaction at the level of basic exposure to audiovisual works provides a foundation in understanding the audioviewer's percept.

The moving image and music are intrinsically temporal and consequently carry rhythmic potential. In the context of concurrent non-literal music (often referred to as 'background' or 'non-digetic' music) and moving images, our unified perception of the presentation is structured upon the interpretation of intrinsic audiovisual rhythms. Such rhythms are constructed via the periodic structure of transients within their individual modalities, and crucially cross-modally as auditory and visual transient patterns interact.

Multimodal integration studies have shown that synchronous audiovisual stimuli will bind, creating a unified percept functioning to increase the 'transientness' of such events. Dynamic attending theory understands that attention is subject to internalised oscillations, following peaks and troughs to create an oscillation of attentional magnitude cycles. The potential for auditory rhythmic manipulation to influence the unified audiovisual percept is engaging.

Aims

This investigation investigates the facilitation or inhibition of synchronous and asynchronous audiovisual processing using a modification of the reaction time (RT) paradigm utilised by Escoffier et al. to include evaluation of effect at varying tempi. It was hypothesised that RT would

reduce at tempi common to popular music and in synchronous rather than non-synchronous conditions.

Main contribution

Method

Nineteen British undergraduates (mean age = 18.5, SD = 0.8) voluntarily participated in the study. Neurobs Presentation software recorded RT as subjects responded via a computer keyboard stating the orientation of visual stimuli (incorrect answers were excluded). Trials were delivered in a randomised order with no rhythmic entrainment (silence) or with synchronous and non-synchronous rhythmic structures of 25 to 300 BPM (a simple bass-snare repeating pattern).

Results

RT decreases linearly with increasing tempo.

Silence and non-synchronous conditions inhibited RT compared to synchronous instances.

Conclusions

The inverse relationship of RT and tempo implies an increased effect of dynamic attending at higher frequency oscillations. Additionally, the synchronous trials further reduction of RT shows a cumulative influence of both dynamic attending and multisensory integration.

Implications

The application of music in audiovisual media is common practice. Music has the potential to move us emotionally, that entrains an audioviewer's dynamic attending, and then additionally synchronises with the visual modality, thus facilitating concurrent stimulus processing, is an effective method of increasing the salience and ultimately the attentional leverage of an audiovisual product. Controlled manipulation of attention has prominent benefits in promotional media, but uses extend far beyond this first example to all composed audiovisual media.

References

- Escoffier, N., Sheng, D. Y. J., & Schirmer, A. (2010). Unattended musical beats enhance visual processing. *Acta Psychologica*, *135*(1), 12–16. Retrieved from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001691810000776>
- Glenny, M., & Taylor, R. (1991). Eisenstein, Volume 2-Towards a Theory of Montage. Translation by Michael Glenny, British Film Institute, London.
- Jones, M. R. (2008). THIS chapter presents perspectives on perception of metre and rhythm, with a focus on dynamic attending theory (DAT). Three major sections address, respectively, metre perception, rhythm perception, and the role of time markers. *Oxford handbook of music psychology*. OUP Oxford.
- Joost, G., Buchmüller, S., & Englert, R. (2009). Audio-visual Rhetoric: Visualizing the Pattern Language of Film. *Undisciplined! Design Research Society Conference 2008*. Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, UK.

Koelewijn, T., Bronkhorst, A., & Theeuwes, J. (2010). Attention and the multiple stages of multisensory integration: A review of audiovisual studies. *Acta psychologica*, 134(3), 372–384. doi:10.1016/j.actpsy.2010.03.01

Nozaradan, S., Peretz, I., & Mouraux, A. (2012). Steady-state evoked potentials as an index of multisensory temporal binding. *Neuroimage*, 60(1), 21–28. doi:10.1016/j.neuroimage.2011.11.06

Biography

Andrew Rogers is a research student based in the School of Computing and Engineering at the University of Huddersfield. His research explores audiovisual interactions, focusing on the consequences of musical transient structure in audiovisual media.

Contact

andrew.rogers@hud.ac.uk

i In agreement with Michel Chion, when engaged with an audiovisual stimulus one does not simply 'watch' as this disregards the auditory elements, hence use of the term 'Audioviewer'