Hadzantonis, Michael, RMIT University, Australia

Sociolinguistic Siblinghoods of English and Popular Music: Drawing the Global Linguo-melodic Parallels

The study investigates the notion that the evolving and expanding sociocultural patterns of the English language, both as one standardized international language, and as a set of localized varieties, share strong structural commonalities with those of modern music. As such, the current study identifies modern influences to the English language, its emergent sociolinguistic patterns, and exposes its evolving directions, identities, and sociocultural propensities, while drawing parallels between the language and popular music. The study thus locates directions of change of English as an international language, where the propensities for change in music also catalyse changes in international standardized and localized Englishes. The study cartographises inner, outer, and expanding circle influences to English, and thus examines the global expansion of English, comparing the expansion with that of evolving musical styles. Consequently the study positions the comparison within a framework of language intelligibility vs identity, and standardization vs fragmentation. The central theme of the investigation therefore becomes the observation of how the outer and expanding circles, both linguistic and musical, influence the inner circle, which in turn influences popular standardized English speech patterns, and concurrently motivates music popularization. Finally, the investigation predicts future linguistic patterns in the English language and musical styles.