

SYNCOPATION AS THE MAIN REASON FOR SONGS' CONTAGIOUSNESS IN
MODERN DANCE MUSIC

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To begin with, when comparing different musical genres and the effects used to appeal to an audience, it is apparent that some of them are extremely catchy, making listeners feel the rhythm and often repeat it after the musical piece was experienced. In such a sense, studies hypothesize the potential correlation between the phenomena called syncopation and the particular degree of a song's contagiousness. To test the hypothesis, one should appeal to the existing body of scientific evidence to either prove or disprove the claim. In such a context, one should argue that syncopation, an occurrence of predictable musical elements within a piece, is the primary reason for a song's contagiousness in modern dance music.

As a starting point, one should indicate that the reason people may feel the rhythm of a particular dancing song, and repeat such a rhythm even after the song ended, lies in humans' psychological ability to recognize particular patterns. More specifically, musical pieces that involve gaps in their rhythmic structure, such as repeating beats, encourage the human brain to fill such gaps physically. In the words of experts, gaps in beats "provides us with an opportunity to physically inhabit those gaps and fill in those gaps with our bodies" (Doupleff 2014). In a similar manner, while pattern recognition appears to be one of the brain's core features, filling gaps within the musical structure, defined as syncopation, is a person's natural ability. As a result, songs that effectively use syncopation to appeal to a distinct feature of the human brain appear to be the most contagious.

Going further, studies were conducted to prove that syncopation has a direct relation to the way particular songs are more contagious to human mind than others. In the article titled "Syncopation creates the sensation of the groove in synthesized music examples," the authors tested humans' sensation of wanting to move when listening to music by adding syncopation to simple melodies (Sioros et al. 2014). When conducting two separate experiments, the results suggested that even moderate levels of syncopation inclusion resulted in significantly higher rates of a melody's contagiousness, something that the authors defined

as a groove (Sioros et al. 2014). Another study proved that rhythmic complexity in the form of syncopation are associated with the highest levels of song and music contagiousness with modern musical styles like funk, hip hop, and electronic dance music. More specifically, the authors of the study titled "Syncopation, body-movement, and pleasure in groove music" offered substantial evidence suggesting that there is a direct relation between syncopation often employed in the musical genres mentioned above and one's desire to move and experience pleasure (Witek et al. 2014). As a result, the evidence shows that syncopation is the core factor defining the contagiousness of a particular musical piece—especially the one offered by modern dancing musical styles.

Based on the evidence presented, it may be concluded that the initial hypothesis was proven valid. There is a substantial body of evidence showing that song contagiousness is directly related to the level of syncopation included in a particular musical piece. Moreover, it is apparent that modern dancing music employs syncopation the most. Therefore, modern genres like funk, hip hop, and electronic dance music are proved to be the most contagious. As a result, the next time a person hears a beat and has a great urge to move, one should be sure that such a musical piece effectively exploits syncopation.

Reference List

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