

MASTER'S THESIS

The role of melisma in language-music interface in Zuoquan folk songs

ZHAO, Kaixin

Date of Award:
2020

[Link to publication](#)

General rights

Copyright and intellectual property rights for the publications made accessible in HKBU Scholars are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners. In addition to the restrictions prescribed by the Copyright Ordinance of Hong Kong, all users and readers must also observe the following terms of use:

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from HKBU Scholars for the purpose of private study or research
- Users cannot further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- To share publications in HKBU Scholars with others, users are welcome to freely distribute the permanent URL assigned to the publication

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Studies on the relationship between language and music have been done for a long time. In addition to comparing their similarity in processing and evolutionary from a cognitive perspective, many studies also discuss the interface of the structure in music and prosody, and the contour in language tone and music melody. This dissertation focuses on the two aspects of music and language interface. With Zuoquan folk songs as a carrier of analysis, this research tries to figure out how melisma, a common music technique used in traditional Chinese music, plays a role in expressing the relationship between music and language. Through observation, it is found that melisma reflects the stress in the prosodic structure of language to some extent. Also, by using melisma, the enriched melody on most of the syllables corresponds to the tonal contour of the syllable. In conclusion, melisma is indeed a cue to represent the interface of music and language.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE.....	i
ACCEPTANCE	ii
DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 The main research question.....	1
1.2 The data used in this research	5
1.3 Research processes	6
1.4 The overview of this dissertation	6
CHAPTER TWO: ZUOQUAN AND ITS FOLK SONGS	8
2.1 Overview of Zuoquan.....	8
2.2 Zuoquan folk songs	10
2.3 Dialect features reflected in Zuoquan folk songs.....	14
CHAPTER THREE: MELISMA AS A MEDIUM OF MUSIC AND LANGUAGE	18
3.1 A brief on melisma	18
3.2 The structure of music and language.....	20
3.3 Tone-tune correspondence	22
CHAPTER FOUR: ZUOQUAN TONOLOGY	25
4.1 Tonal inventory	25

4.2 The generation of Zuoquan tones	33
CHAPTER FIVE: THE STRUCTURAL INTERFACE OF MUSIC AND LANGUAGE	40
5.1 The grouping constraints of Zuoquan dialect.....	42
5.2 The prosodic stress of Zuoquan dialect.	47
CHAPTER SIX: THE ROLE OF MELISMA IN TONE-TUNE CORRESPONDENCE	51
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION.....	59
REFERENCES	61
APPENDICES	68
Appendix 1: Ten Zuoquan Folk Songs.....	68
Appendix 2: Transcription of the Ten Folk Songs.....	69
Appendix 3: The wordlist of Zuoquan dialect	84