



The structural features of music and emotions processing

Piotr Podlipniak⁽¹⁾ & Edward Jacek Gorzelańczyk⁽²⁾

- (1) Faculty of Musicology, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland
- (2) Institute of Psychology, Kazimierz Wielki University, Bydgoszcz, Poland

Every kind of music, like speech, has the hierarchical structure of sound. The processing of music by the human nervous system induces specific emotional responses dependent on the structural features of music. The contemporary knowledge of music processing by the nervous system and of the evolution of animals' sound communication permits to distinguish the traits of music which contain information about the type and intensity of emotions. This knowledge allows to suppose which of these features are universal and which culture-specific. The qualitative coding of basic emotions in music takes place mainly at the segmental level where it consists in using of the perceptible traits of the sound, such as intensity, pitch and the timbre of sound. At the suprasegmental level both the quantitative and qualitative coding of basic emotions consists mainly in the changes in the tempo and intensity of sound. A significant role in communicating emotions through music channels is also played by a set of culture-specific cues linked to cognitive processing. The aim of the presentation is to explain the way in which the hierarchical coding of emotions takes place in music.

