

Understanding Non-Lexical Vocables (Handout)

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Example 1: *Musurgia universalis* (1650), Book I, fol. 30: “Iconismus III”

Term(s)	Context	Source
“Meaningless texts”	Peyote songs	Nettl 1953
“Meaningless-Nonsensical syllables”	Pacific Northwest Indian music	Halpern 1976
“Vocables”	Navajo ceremonial music	Frisbie 1980
“Non-lexical Vocables”	Traditional Scottish music	Chambers 1980

Table 1: Evolution of the Concept

10'

tense muttering / walking on stage

urgent

tense muttering

distant and dreamy

urgent

tense mutt

witty

very tense

hm

distant and dreamy

(sing to me) (tome...) to (ta) be few (co) [ø] [e] [e]a... [a] (to /co/ be words) [i] (to be for (ka) [ø]

hd

tense muttering

very tense

nervous laughter

impassive

dreamy and tense

d

(to be /co/ for us Lo) [gi] me [ut] (ta)(ka)be... [?] a /wo/ /man/ [i] /a/ ...

giddy nervous

tense

urgent

tense L. urgent

relieved

wistful

bewildered

hm

2'

wing/ [u] [o] [to] allowing us/gi/ (a /tru/ to me) (allowing us to be) [?] (ca/ta.) [?] (be/la...) [a] give me a few words

ecstatic

whimpering

hd

distant and dreamy

faintly

say

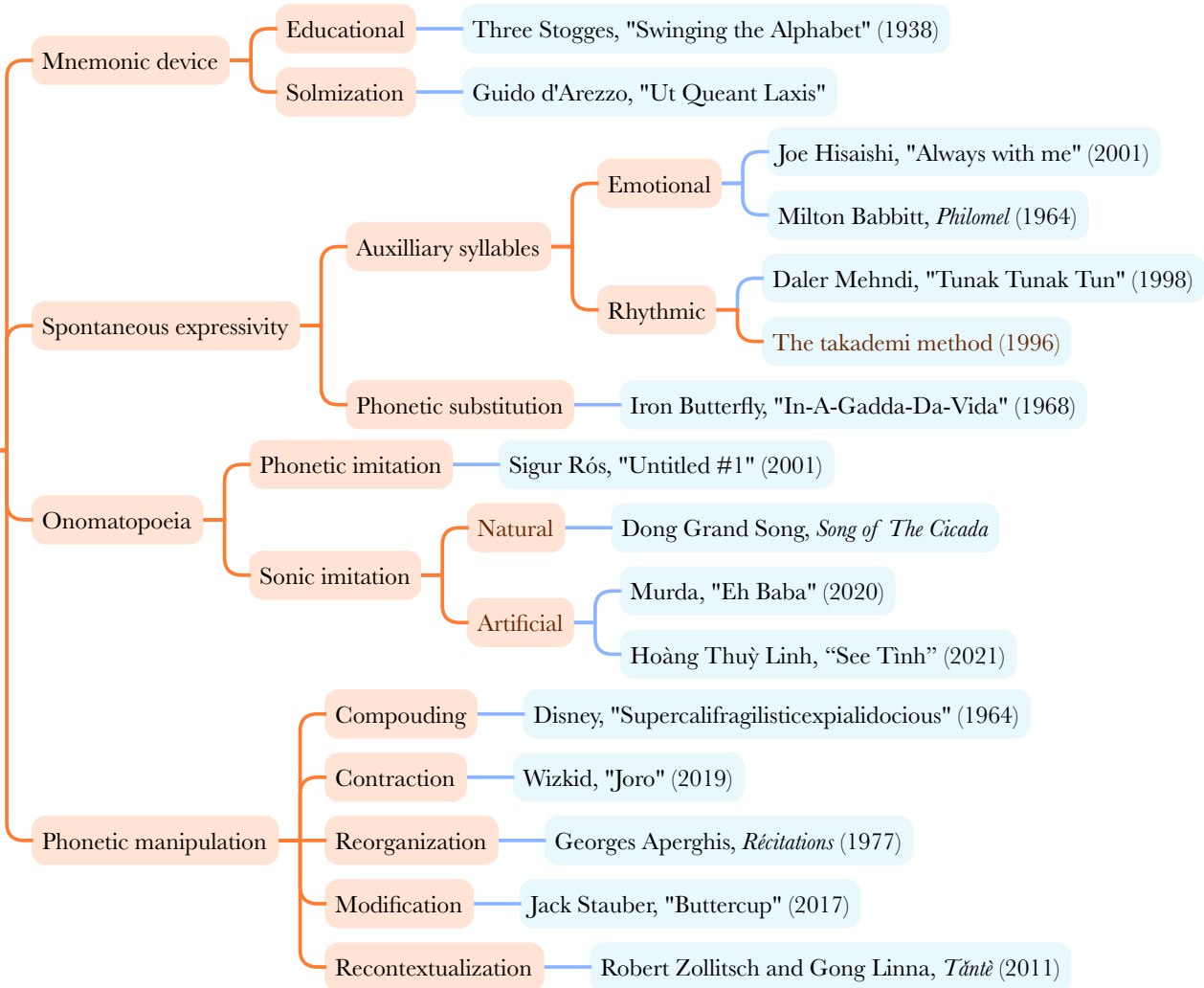
tense tense

dreamy dreamy

for [o] a /wo/ [u] /man/ [u] [a] ...[a] ...[e] ...[e] ...[i] [u] me /tho/ we build for us be us [a]

Example 2: Vocal techniques shaping NLVs in Berio, *Sequenza III* (1966)

Example 3:
A Tentative NLV Typology



Tiger Hu, “Emperor” (2006)

中文

[Verse]

守候了三世的家臣，
说我觉醒在这一代。
祖先为我起的名字，
注定我将文武全才。
音符划分了我的世界，
左起蓬莱，右到瑶台。

Oh-oh, oh-oh, oh-oh!

从我出生开始就富有四海。

[Prechorus]

我是自我加冕的皇帝，
拥有至高无上的权力。
决定兵戎相见，
决定休生养息。
决定高官厚爵，
决定终生奴役。

[Chorus]

我听到吾王万岁， Oh
万岁万岁万万岁！
笑里春秋多少泪，

Hey-yee, hey-yee, oh, bah-bah-ley!

Pinyin transliteration

[Verse]

shǒuhòu le sānshì de jiāchén,
shuōwǒ juéxǐng zài zhèyīdài 。
zǔxiān wèiwǒ qǐde míngzì,
zhùdìng wǒjiāng wénwǔ quánhái 。
yīnfú huáfēnle wǒde shìjiè,
zuǒqǐ pénglái, yòudào yáotái 。

Oh-oh, oh-oh, oh-oh!

cóngwǒ chūshēng kāishǐ jiù fùyǒu sìhǎi 。

[Prechorus]

wǒshì zìwǒ jiāmiǎn de huángdì,
yōngyǒu zhìgāowúshàng de quánlì 。juéding bīngróngxiāngjiàn,
juéding xiūshēngyǎngxī 。juéding gāoguānhòujué,
juéding zhōngshēngnúyì 。

[Chorus]

wǒ tīngdào wúwáng wànsuì, Oh
wànsuì wànsuì wànwànsuì!
xiàolǐ chūnqiū duōshǎo lèi,

Hey-yee, hey-yee, oh, bah-bah-ley!

English translation (mine)

[Verse]

Our clan servant has waited for ages,
To claim our rise in my generation.
My ancestors bestowed my name,
I'm destined to be omnipotent.
Music has my world divided,
From Penglai to Yaotai.

Oh-oh, oh-oh, oh-oh!

I was born with unlimited wealth.

[Prechorus]

I am the self-crowned Emperor,
who has unparalleled power.
I abjudicate wars,
I abjudicate peace.
I abjudicate privileges,
I abjudicate freedoms.

[Chorus]

I hear, “Long live my king,” Oh
Long, long, long live the king!
Tears and smiles are my life,

Hey-yee, hey-yee, oh, bah-bah-ley!

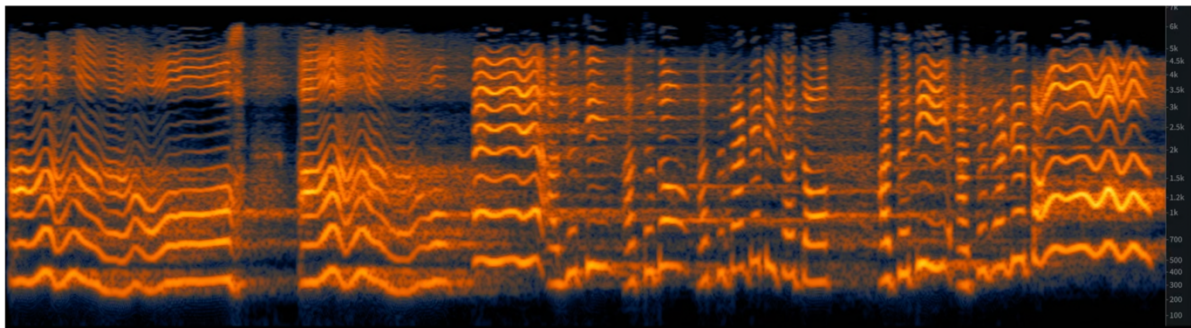
Example 4: Official Lyrics and My Transl(ite)r ation of “Emperor” (2006)

a. 仓 台 台 | 七 台 乙 台 :||

b. K t t | e t e t :||

c. 鼓 : X X X X X | X X X X :||
 钹 : X - X - :||
 小锣 : X X X X 0 X :||
 大锣 : X - X - :||

Example 5: A Luogujing 锣鼓经 Excerpt



a o ch a se di a se do a se da ge di ge do a se di a se da ge do

Sheet music for a vocal line and accompaniment. The vocal line is in G major and 4/4 time, with lyrics: a o ch a se di a se do a se da ge di ge do a se di a se da ge do. The accompaniment consists of piano and bass parts.

Example 6: Vocal Timbral Variety in Zollitsch and Gong's *Tǎntè* (2011)

Azis, “Сен Тропе” (2011)

[Verse]

Супер абонати,
само тарикати,
лъскави магнати,
оф-ле, оф-ле-лей! (x2)

[Chorus]

Але-ле-лей-па,
Але-ле-лей-па,
Але-ле-лей-па, ле-ле-лей-па,
ле-ле-лей-па! (x2)

[Verse]

Всички са на Сен Тропе,
други на Малдивите,
във Дубай пък третите,
Ах-ле-ле-лей, Ах-ле-ле-лей! (x2)

[Chorus]

Але-ле-лей-па,
Але-ле-лей-па,
Але-ле-лей-па, ле-ле-лей-па,
ле-ле-лей-па! (x2)

Saint-Tropez (2011)

[Verse]

Super subscribers,
Only smartasses,
Sleeky tycoons,
Oof-le, oof-le-ley! (x2)

[Chorus]

Ale-le-ley-pa,
Ale-le-ley-pa,
Ale-le-ley-pa, le-le-ley-pa,
Le-le-ley-pa! (x2)

[Verse]

All are in Saint-Tropez,
Others in the Maldives,
In Dubai are the rest,
Ach-le-le-ley, Ach-le-le-ley! (x2)

[Chorus]

Ale-le-ley-pa,
Ale-le-ley-pa,
Ale-le-ley-pa, le-le-ley-pa,
Le-le-ley-pa! (x2)

Example 7: Official Lyrics and My Transl(ite)r(ation) of “Сен Тропе” (2011)

Azis, “Кажн Честно” (2012)

Кажн честно!

Томас, хей-хей-хей-хей, ора!

[Verse]

Искам само тарикати,
Писна ми от дубликати!
Да ме мачкат в Мазерати,
Да са акань богати! (x2)

[Chorus]

Рак-так-так-так,
Рак-така-та-така-та-так,
Покажи ми как,
Научи ме пак! (x4)

[Verse]

Да съм твоята лежанка,
Да съм твоятн кривна банка,
Да съм ти адреналина,
Във кривта ти к*каина! (x2)

[Chorus]

Рак-так-так-так,
Рак-така-та-така-та-так,
Покажи ми как,
Научи ме пак! (x4)

[Verse]

Искам да съм VIP добавка,
Да ти бъда за загривка!
Ще ти стана тренировка,
На гръдта татуировка! (x2)

[Chorus]

Рак-так-так-так,
Рак-така-та-така-та-так,
Покажи ми как,
Научи ме пак! (x4)

Say Frankly (2012)

Say frankly!

Tomas, hey-hey-hey-hey, O’ra!

[Verse]

I want only smartasses,
I’m tired of duplicates!
To be crushed in a Maserati,
To be damn rich! (x2)

[Chorus]

Rak-tak-tak-tak,
Rak-taka-ta-taka-ta-tak,
Show me how,
Teach me again! (x4)

[Verse]

Let me be your couch,
Let me be your blood bank,
Let me be your adrenaline,
The c*caine in your blood! (x2)

[Chorus]

Rak-tak-tak-tak,
Rak-taka-ta-taka-ta-tak,
Show me how,
Teach me again! (x4)

[Verse]

I want to be a VIP nutrition,
To be your warm-up!
I’ll be your training,
The tattoo on your chest! (x2)

[Chorus]

Rak-tak-tak-tak,
Rak-taka-ta-taka-ta-tak,
Show me how,
Teach me again! (x4)

Example 8: Official Lyrics and My Transl(ite)r(ation) of “Кажн Честно” (2012)

Hoàng Thùy Linh, “See Tình” (2022)

[Chorus] (Official Lyrics and Translation)

[A] Giây phút em gặp anh là, em biết em see tình	First time I see you, I know I see my love
[B] Tình, tình , tình, tang, tang tính	L-l-la-lah-love
[C] Tang tình, tình , tình tang, tang, tang	Lo-lo-loh-loh-loh-love you
[A] Giây phút em gặp anh là, em biết em see tình	First time I see you I know I see my love
[B'] Tình đừng tình, toan, toan, tính	Love doesn't need any plan
[C'] Toang tình, minh tình tan, tan, tan, tình	Plan makes love break

Quốc Ngữ	Giây	phút	em	gặp	anh	là,	em	biết	em	see	tình
Chữ Nôm	曠	丌	爰	叵	嬰	𠂇,	爰	別	爰		情
English	moment		I	meet	baby	to be	I	know	I	see	love
Translation	First time I see you I know I see my love										

Quốc Ngữ	Tình	tình	tình	tang	tang	tính
Chữ Nôm	情	情	情	桑	桑	性
English	dìng	dìng	dìng	dang	dang	dìng
Translation	L-l-la-lah-love					

Quốc Ngữ	Tang	tình	tình	tình	tang	tang	tang
Chữ Nôm	桑	情	情	情	桑	桑	桑
English	dang	dìng	dìng	dìng	dang	dang	dang
Translation	Lo-lo-loh-loh-loh-love you						

Quốc Ngữ	Tình	đừng	tình	toan	toan	tính
Chữ Nôm	情	停	情	算	算	併
English	love	do not (go)	love	to intend	to intend	to calculate
Translation	Love doesn't need any plan					

Quốc Ngữ	Toang	tình	minh	tình	tan	tan	tan	tình
Chữ Nôm	徇	情	命	情	散	散	散	情
English	to ruin	love	fate	love	break	break	break	love
Translation	Plan makes love break							

Example 9: A Lyrics Analysis of the Chorus of “See Tình” (2022)