

## THE STUDY OF RHYTHM IN POPULAR MUSIC. APPROACHES AND EMPIRICAL RESULTS

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### Background

Recently, cognitive psychology of music is getting more and more involved with popular music. There are new and interesting issues and phenomena to examine, e.g. the perception of timbre and texture, that is very important in certain styles of popular music, or the rhythmic organisation especially in those genres, where the music aims to “move” you emotionally and/or with your body.

- metaphoric motion of rhythms and their relation to body movement, dance and emotions;
- perception and production of microrhythmic play (e.g. in swing quavers or snare drum backbeats);
- issues of interactive processes between musicians and/or listeners.

### Aims

The paper aims to explore the research on the perception, cognition and production of rhythm in popular music (jazz and other African American styles as well as rock and contemporary dance music). I want to summarise the main issues, the theoretical and empirical approaches to rhythm phenomena and, last but not least, I would like to show some perspectives for their further empirical examination.

There are several methodological approaches to study those issues: experimental approaches with musicians and listeners (e.g. production experiments, similarity ratings); analyses and measurement of music; qualitative interviews with musicians and listeners (e.g. focused interviews).

### Implications

A cognitive approach to rhythm in popular music goes far beyond a better understanding of the popular music styles under question, it may also enhance the models of perception, cognition and production of rhythm.

### Main Contributions

Among the main issues there are:

- pulse salience and meter induction: how does it work? Which musical parameters (e.g. timbre, pitch, articulation) contribute to the perception of accents patterns?
- polyrhythmic pattern models as emergent cognitive schemas, stabilised by rehearsal – or polyrhythm as „rhythmic rivalry“, rhythmic tension and metric ambiguity;