
Perception of rhythm in language and Music

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Rhythm is a phenomenon which is obviously present for both language and music. Couched in more recent neurocognitive terms, rhythm is part of the predictive structure for language as well as for music. However, it is unclear whether the term “rhythm” has the same meaning in these two domains, and both musicologists and cognitive scientists have disputed this.

In the present contribution, I argue that there are central aspects of rhythm which are shared between language and music. Empirical evidence comes from studies (corpus-based and experimental) demonstrating that regular alternation is preferred in the perception of language.