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WHERE MUSIC AND TEXT MEET: A MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF VISSI D'ARTE ARIA

ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to scrutinize the factors that determine the multimodal character of operatic performances while analyzing *Vissi d'Arte* soprano aria of Giacomo Puccini's *Tosca*. By using blending theory (Fauconnier and Turner 2002) as well as Brandt and Brandt's six-space model of conceptual integration (2005), we will try to show that the integration of auditory and verbal modes of communication that accompany each operatic performance should be approached, first and foremost, as a conceptual operation – “the reflection of cognitive capacities of human beings” (Zbikowski 2009a: 448). It is also claimed that it is complex and dynamic conceptual operations that contribute to a better reception and understanding of arias in the speaker – hearer interaction.

Keywords

operatic performance, multimodality, conceptual blending, *Vissi d'Arte* aria

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(...) to analyze an opera-to analyze its constituent parts
 and then to see how these fit together,
 musically and dramatically- is a multifaceted process
 that requires a considerable amount
 of gear-changing
 (Drabkin 2014: 245, after Rossi & Sindoni 2017: 62)

INTRODUCTION

Being a combination of a multitude of elements such as music, text, gestures, scenery, costumes, or dance, opera becomes one of the most complex and,

simultaneously, most challenging meaning-making events (cf. Rossi & Sindoni 2017). The way operatic performances are received and interpreted by the audience can barely be predicted: opera remains variable, dynamic, and is usually determined by many factors, the most important of which are various modes of communication used. No less important is also the way these modes are processed in the interaction between the potential listener and the artist during the performance, as well as how they shape and communicate the ultimate message of a given operatic acting (Rossi & Sindoni 2017).

Studied mainly from a musicological perspective, usually limited to musical, staging or theatrical aspects (cf. Rabb 2006), opera is still unappreciated as the empirical material in the linguistic analysis, especially the one carried out from a multimodal as well as cognitive perspective. This 'lukewarm' attention obtained from linguists seems to stem from two interrelated factors. Firstly, with its complexity and diversity, opera is considered too huge a challenge for a linguistic analysis. Secondly, with a whole gamut of variables, starting from the changes in the *mise-en-scène*, various soloists performing and interpreting the same aria, and finishing in the corrections made both in the libretto and the score for a particular performance (cf. Harris-Warrick 2016; Strohm 1985), opera becomes 'an unstable medium' (Drabkin 2014: 245), which also impedes an in-depth linguistic study.

Approaching opera from a linguistic perspective is as much challenging as justifiable a task. It becomes even more justifiable when we adopt a cognitive stance according to which meaning becomes the central target of the linguistic endeavour (cf. Evans & Green 2006; also Kardela 1992), simultaneously allowing for all the factors that determine it, i.e. the situational context in which a given meaning is likely to occur, the role of interlocutors responsible for encoding and decoding the necessary information in the act of communication, or various modes that allow us to enhance its potential.

Whether perceived as too complex or too unstable, opera seems to fulfill all the abovementioned parameters and does remain a meaning-making event. Additionally, with a plethora of communicative modes involved, it also becomes a challenging multimodal event (Rossi & Sindoni 2017), the pivotal objective of which is to strengthen the meaning as conveyed in a given operatic performance or its part and thus boosting its reception among the audience.

The present paper is an attempt of a cognitive-*cum*-multimodal analysis of *Vissi d'Arte* soprano aria of Giacomo Puccini's *Tosca*. Within the course of the proposed analysis we will try to discuss the importance of two modes of communication involved in the performance of a famous aria, music and text, and portray the aria as the result of blending multimodal inputs, the main objective of which is to contribute to a better reception of this form of art by the audience. Allowing for the fact that each operatic performance should

also be rendered a meaning-making event where we find “the reflection of cognitive capacities of human beings” (Zbikowski 2009a: 448; also Kühl 2007), the analysis in question will be a cognitive linguistics-oriented study, based on the six-space model as proposed by Brandt and Brandt (2005; also Brandt 2009). While analyzing *Vissi d’Arte* we will try to show that each operatic performance is not only a multimodal event, but it is also the result of complex and dynamic conceptual operations that lead to better reception and understanding of an aria.

1. OPERATIC PERFORMANCE AS A MULTIMODAL EVENT

Despite the fact that the very structure of each operatic performance calls for the simultaneous activation and ‘co-deployment’ (cf. Rossi & Sindoni 2017) of various resources, opera has received limited attention in multimodal studies, resulting so far in only a few credible publications.¹ Meanwhile, approaching opera as “an eminently multimodal event”, the meaning of which “can only be understood by reintegrating all the systems, resources, and components that work in combination in every operatic performative event” (Rossi & Sindoni 2017: 81) is not a novel observation as it coincides with the 17th century observation put forward by an Italian composer Marco da Gagliano, who first described opera as a form of ‘total art’ (after Rossi & Sindoni 2017: 63).

With all the breadth of resources involved, opera entirely fulfills the three key premises of multimodality. Firstly, its meaning is constructed with the aid of various resources (or modes), each having its “distinct potentialities and limitations” (Jewitt, Bezemer & O’Halloran 2016: 3). Secondly, the process of meaning making results in the production of multimodal wholes, the decoding of which is inextricably bound up with the third premise, i.e. the exploration of all semiotic resources used in the process of making “a complete whole” (Jewitt, Bezemer & O’Halloran 2016: 3). Nevertheless, claiming that it is enough to conform to the three premises to provide a good multimodal analysis of an operatic performance would be a too far-fetched generalization, as distinct variables have to be taken into consideration. The complexity of opera, and, what follows, the dilemma with the profile of multimodal analysis to be adopted is best portrayed in the following observation:

Each multimodal artifact can be read, understood and received differently, depending on the context and semiotic expertise of the receiver. An opera, for example, can be interpreted very differently by an occasional specta-

¹ Much as the overwhelming majority of papers have been dedicated to opera, this medium is primarily explored from a musicological or performance studies perspective. Opera understood as a multimodal meaning making event has gained attention in the realm of linguistic and discourse studies only recently (see, e.g. Rossi & Sindoni 2017; Hutcheon & Hutcheon 2010).

tor or by a hardcore fan (...). The combination of resources and how they are read and interpreted by communities or societies is neither static nor predictable and may vary considerably across time and space according to context. (Rossi & Sindoni 2017: 61)

As stated above, it is virtually impossible to capture the essence of each and every mode and explore its contribution to an overall reception of a given operatic performance. Each attempt of a multimodal analysis should be profiled with reference to what it aims to convey since, as observed by Rossi and Sindoni, “no definitive analytical framework can be provided when any complex multimodal fact is involved” (2017: 65). Nevertheless, it seems that in the case of operatic performances two aspects of multimodality should always be taken seriously into account, *viz.* (i) *multimodal communication* and (ii) *multimodal interaction* (Jewitt, Bezemer & O’Halloran 2016). By *multimodal communication* we understand the way a given message is communicated by the speaker (i.e. the performer) to the recipient (the audience) with the aid of accompanying resources, as well as how the message obtained by means of applying various modes influences the final reception of a given performance. *Multimodal interaction*, in turn, explores the process of integrating various modes to obtain a meaningful whole. Both these aspects are very much in line with what cognitive linguistics offers to account for a context-dependent and dynamic meaning construction in the speaker-hearer interaction, especially while recalling the notion of conceptual blending (cf. Fauconnier & Turner 2002) as proposed in the revised form of the six-space Brandt and Brandt model (2005).

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS USED

The multimodal character of the proposed analysis inheres in understanding communication and representation to be more than about language. As observed by Jewitt (2009: 12, see also Kress 2009):

Multimodality assumes that representation and communication always draw on a multiplicity of modes, all of which contribute to meaning. It focuses on analyzing and describing the full repertoire of meaning-making resources that people use (visual, spoken, gestural, written, three-dimensional, and others, depending on the domain of representation) in different contexts, and on developing means that show how these are organized to make meaning.

Still, allowing for the fact that a credible holistic multimodal analysis of a given operatic performance cannot be offered in the form of a single original paper, a cognitive-*cum*-multimodal analysis proposed herein will limit itself to the study of two fundamental modes being the essence of opera, *viz.* (i)

music (the score), and (ii) text (the libretto), the material in question being *Vissi d'Arte* aria of Puccini's opera *Tosca*.

The choice of modes for the analysis is not random here, but rather draws on a multiplicity of observations pertaining to an interplay between the two in the process of meaning construction (see, *i.a.* Zbikowski 2015, Maeder 2011, 2013, Lerdahl 2003). A daring statement made by McClary who notices that “meaning is not inherent in music but neither is it in language” (1991: 21) immediately compels us to approach music and text as interdependent modes which, when combined together, build “bridges (...) between the musical form and representational contributions of the language involved” (Bateman, Wildfeuer & Hiippala 2016: 28). The complementary, or even ‘hybrid’ (cf. Lerdahl 2003) character of the two modes in question is also stressed in a cognitive-oriented line of argumentation. Music and text are believed to stem from the same cognitive resources (cf. Zbikowski 2009b, also Jackendoff 2008), simultaneously being rendered as belonging to two distinct domains, each having a different function ascribed. Thus, the function of language (whichever form of representation, written or spoken, is recalled here) is mainly limited only to WHAT is communicated², rather than HOW the message is communicated, which immediately makes the text ‘monodimensional’ (cf. Maeder 2013). Music, in turn, is usually defined as “the enhancement of affect associated with an activity” (Jackendoff 2008: 197). In this sense, it becomes the factor responsible for evoking emotions that accompany the text.

Taking into account the above-mentioned considerations, arias prove an excellent material for a multimodal-*cum*-cognitive analysis. It seems that the contribution of music and text, both being discussed in detail in subsequent parts of this paper, is indispensable not only for the interpretation but also for the reception of an aria.

No less important is also the methodology assumed for such an analysis. Drawing on the observations made by Zbikowski, according to whom “certain combinations of words and music create a realm for the imagination that extends far beyond what words or music alone could summon” (2015: 158), the choice of conceptual blending theory (Fauconnier & Turner 2002), applied as the method for the analysis of all forms based on text-music interplay (songs, operas, masses, oratoria, etc.), is justified by earlier research (see, *i.a.* Zbikowski 2008, 2009b, 2015, 2018, also Pérez-Sobrino 2014).

Conceptual blending, considered a basic cognitive operation, adds a lot to a multimodal analysis as it can model input spaces exemplifying information in different modalities. Nevertheless, assuming that conceptual blends are considered to be contextualized ad-hoc structures that might be rendered as intentional, discursive chunks of information which emerge in

2 As pointed out by Zbikowski, language “gives us the means to represent symbolically objects and relations” (2009b: 376).

a specific communicative situation and which are always context-relevant, the question arises whether the basic Fauconnier and Turner four-space network model is not too general an approach to capture the specificity of the analyzed aria. The limitations of the Fauconnier & Turner model originate in the lack of clear explanation how and in what circumstances conceptual blends are constructed (see, e.g. Oakley & Coulson 2008, Cienki 2008, Veale & O'Donoghue 2000). The statement that the whole blending process consists in making “new meanings out of old” (Nordquist 2019: 1) on the basis of the integration of mental spaces activated “for purposes of local understanding and action” (Fauconnier & Turner 2002) in the process of thinking and talking is not satisfactory enough as it does not explicitly state the importance of background knowledge as well as the role of interlocutors in a communicative situation. Therefore, *in lieu of* the classical Fauconnier & Turner model of conceptual integration (2002), a revised six-space model as proposed by Brandt & Brandt (2005)³ will be offered for the music-and-text analysis of *Vissi d'Arte* aria, since blend analysis should take account of the situational context and the communicative purpose of constructing the blend assuming that a given blended unit is to mean “what it is intended to mean in a particular situation where it is uttered by someone” (Brandt and Brandt 2005: 219).

The Brandt & Brandt model is composed of six mental spaces, i.e. semiotic space, reference space, presentation space, relevance space, and a two-stage blended space (i.e. consisting of the virtual space and the meaning space). All mental spaces are linked to one another via different kinds of relations, which make “a figurative and dynamic semantic network that is designed to derive the (...) meaning of the utterance” (Brandt & Brandt 2005: 220). A schematic representation of the Brandt & Brandt model is presented in the figure below:

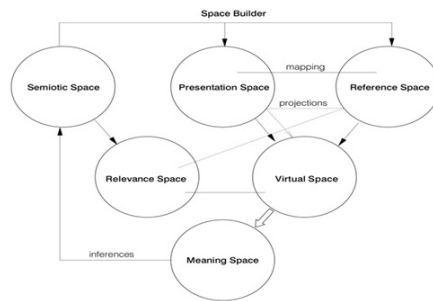


Figure 1.
Brandt &
Brandt's six-
space model
(2005: 235)

Let us now proceed to the analysis of *Vissi d'Arte* aria to see how text and music can be interpreted by applying the Brandt & Brandt six-space model.

³ See also Brandt (2005).

3. VISSI D'ARTE: THE ANALYSIS

The analysis offered here is the study of the famous *Vissi d'Arte* soprano aria as presented at the end of act II of Giacomo Puccini's *Tosca*. By applying the Brandt & Brandt six-space model (2005) we will try to examine in what way music and text integrate with each other to boost the content of a message comprised in the aria itself, as well as answer the question to what extent the integration of such two distinct modes may contribute to a better reception of the aria by the audience.

The pivotal theme of the aria is the blackmail the main character, Floria Tosca, falls victim to. Caught between a true love towards her beloved, Mario Cavaradossi and lured by the sinister Baron Scarpia, the chief of Roman police and persecutor of Cavaradossi, she is forced to make the most difficult decision: in order to save her lover (sentenced by Scarpia to death for treason) she must sleep with the Baron. *Vissi d'Arte* is essentially Tosca's cry of anguish as she is faced with the impossible choice: either way, she will have to betray Cavaradossi, in the form of sleeping with another man, or not doing everything she could to save his life.

Our considerations will begin with the reconstruction of the semiotic (base) space, considered by Brandt & Brandt the starting point for structuring the semantic content of the expected message where the interlocutors, i.e. the speaker and the hearer, share in the dynamic act of meaning construction. In the case of the analyzed aria, the semiotic space, or, more precisely, the very act of *semiosis*, takes place while listening to the operatic performance of *Vissi d'Arte*. Obviously, a communicative situation as depicted here departs from its canonical form as represented by a "face-to-face two-participant interaction" (Langacker 2009: 153). Instead, we deal with one speaker, i.e. a soprano singer who interacts with the collective hearer, viz. the audience (cf. Di Giovanni 2018). By assuming the role of Floria Tosca, a soprano singer-the speaker strives to portray the anguish the main heroine experiences by means of music and text at her disposal, while the audience-the hearer attempts to appropriately decode the message conveyed in the aria, in concord with the generally agreed-upon model of successful communication⁴ and according to culturally shared patterns and schemas for expressing despair, activated in the reception of both the verbal and musical layer of *Vissi d'Arte* (cf. Zbikowski 2015, Machin & Richardson 2012).

It has to be noticed that the act of *semiosis*, though it depicts the here-and-now moment of Tosca lamenting her fate, does not exist *per se*. Put dif-

4 As pointed out by Heylen (2009: 2151), "a typical communicative action is normally produced with the intention that one or more other participants (the addressees, the audience, the 'listeners') attend to them, are able to perceive them, recognize the behaviour as an instance of a communicative action, try to understand them and possibly act upon them in one way or another; preferably with the effect that the producer of the communicative action had intended to achieve."

ferently, it cannot be detached from the *situation*, i.e. the background which provides relevant aspects for the act of *semiosis*. In the case of Puccini's *Tosca*, the whole plot, with both preceding and forthcoming events, constitutes the background for the analyzed aria. *Situation* in turn is included in the so-called *pheno-world*, the third sphere indispensable for an appropriate understanding of the conceptual mechanisms that govern the semiotic space. In this sphere we find everything that is accessible to human thought "including the physical world with all its features and regularities and constrains on human action as well as beliefs and counterfactual activities" (Brandt & Brandt 2005: 226). For Puccini's opera, the *pheno-world* is not limited to the plot, but it transgresses its boundaries pointing to more universal values, attitudes and 'realia' generally understood and accepted in the human world.

Establishing the semiotic space is merely a starting point for the reconstruction of the ultimate message conveyed in the aria. Drawing on the insights made by Brandt & Brandt (2005), meaning construction as well as its further reception requires activating two basic input spaces, the *Presentation Space* and the *Reference Space*. The *Reference Space*, which is always derived from the *Semiotic Space*, relates to the actual content which is the very event occurring in the aria, viz. the blackmail Floria Tosca experiences from Baron Scarpia, and its tragic consequences. It seems that the basis for the *Reference Space* is the text being the verbal mode responsible for the so-called propositional content of the aria (cf. Zbikowski 2009b). Its detailed analysis is presented below.

First, to fully account for the contribution of the text to an overall understanding of the main heroine's despair as depicted in the analyzed aria, a few elements have to be taken into consideration: the content of the text and its semiotic resources (e.g. syntax, punctuation, repetitions of words, cf. Bezemer & Kress 2008; see also Lerdahl & Jackendoff 1983) which additionally strengthen the message conveyed.

The lyrics of *Tosca*, written prior to Puccini's composition by two librettists, Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, are based on the original 1887 story *La Tosca* by the French playwright Victorien Sardou (www.britannica.com). Both the original version as well as English translation of the analyzed fragment is presented in the table below:

Vissi d'Arte in Italian	English translation of Vissi d'Arte
Vissi d'arte, vissi d'amore, non feci mai male ad anima viva! Con man furtilva quante miserie connobi aiutai.	I lived for my art, I lived for love, I never did harm to a living soul! With a secret hand I relieved as many misfortunes as I knew of.

Table 1.
The lyrics of
Vissi d'Arte
aria

Sempre con fè sincera la mia preghiera ai santi tabernacoli salì. Sempre con fè sincera diedi fiori ag laltar.	Always with true faith my prayer rose to the holy shrines. Always with true faith I gave flowers to the altar.
Nell'ora del dolore perchè, perchè, Signore, perchè me ne rimunerì così?	In the hour of grief why, why, o Lord, why do you reward me thus?
Diedi gioielli idella Madonna al manto, e diedi il canto agli astri, al ciel, che ne ridean più belli.	I gave jewels for the Madonna's mantle, and I gave my song to the stars, to heaven, which smiled with more beauty.
Nell'ora del dolore perchè, perchè, Signore, ah, perchè me ne rimunerì così?	In the hour of grief why, why, o Lord, ah, why do you reward me thus?

Vissi d'Arte in which the main heroine Floria Tosca laments over her undeserved predicament is considered one of the most moving female arias of all times. The content of the text is divided into four verses, arranged in three thematic blocks. In the first part Tosca's positive deeds as a person are presented (I never did harm to a living soul!; With a secret hand/ I relieved as many misfortunes as I knew of). The second part describes Tosca's spiritual dimension and portrays the heroine as a religious person (Always with true faith/ my prayer/ rose to the holy shrines./ Always with true faith/ I gave flowers to the altar; I gave jewels for the Madonna's mantle./ and I gave my song to the stars to heaven, /which smiled with more beauty). The third part is maintained in the form of religious rhetoric. It resembles a prayer to God recited by an anguished woman who cannot understand why she has to deserve the fate she experiences: if God is to reward according to human actions, as all those in Tosca's life, the main heroine should not experience the anguish she undergoes. Tosca's feeling of injustice and disbelief manifests itself in a recursive rhetoric question to God (In the hour of grief why, why, o Lord, /ah, why do you reward me thus?) and illustrates the inevitable fate she is to experience.

The primary objective of the verbal layer of *Vissi d'Arte* is to construct and communicate meaning by "directing the attention of another person to objects or concepts within the same referential frame" (Tomasello 1999, after Zbikowski 2009b: 363). The role of text in the examined aria is very much in line with the above mentioned statement since, in comparison with other modes of communication involved, it remains the most precise form of making meaning which allows us to plunge into the literary content of the aria and capture the predicament the main heroine experiences.

Much as it is possible to examine the content of the textual layer of *Vissi d'Arte* in detail, little is to be said about its metrics and the way it can contribute to the overall reception of the aria. Known for its uneven prosody (cf. McKee 1998), the aria is virtually bereft of elements responsible for

establishing rhythmic patterns that could additionally boost its final interpretation. Instead, *Vissi d'Arte* conforms to the style of the delivery where it is music rather than text that assumes the role of a prosodic factor. Maeder (2013: 280) makes a similar observation about arias in general:

[In an aria] (...) the whole orchestra participates at every level. Melody, not prosody, typifies the voice's utterances. An aria is characterized by repetition: the orchestra quotes the voice's melody; violins or any other instrument dialogue with the voice; in the opening section the orchestra announces the main themes and melodies; an aria consists of couplets; several sections are repeated; the musical constraints cause the voice to repeat certain words, sentences, and single vowels are prolonged. In an aria, voices tend to cover the whole range of notes, from the very low to the very high.

Still, the communication in opera should not be narrowed down to the semantics of every word or phrase sung, or their prosodic patterns. The audience (i.e. the hearer of the communicative act) craves for something that exceeds the boundaries of everyday communication, e.g. the emotional input involved. In this sense, as observed by Machin & Richardson (2012: 331), "our ears and brains are finely tuned not just to listen for the meanings of words and grammar, but also to the manner in which these are delivered – to voice quality and to rhythms of speech." The above-mentioned statement immediately directs us to music understood here as an indispensable component of the text in opera, music, without which an in-depth interpretation and understanding of any operatic performance remains incomplete and futile. Adopting the Brandt and Brandt model (2005), it seems that music can successfully serve as the *Presentation Space*: it becomes the "affective content" (Jackendoff 2008), also described as "music-as-felt" (Brandt 2009) that adds an emotional component to an already existing content expressed in the verbal mode.⁵ Let us briefly scrutinize its elements.

5 The notion of MUSIC-AS-FELT as proposed by P.A. Brandt (2009) is yet another stage in a complex process of conceptualizing music which manifests itself via conceptual integration. In Brandt's opinion, the first blending operation in music can be observed on a formal level and always results in the *auditive perception of music*, both while adopting the position of the listener as well as the performer (here we talk about the so-called MUSIC-AS-HEARD phenomenon which becomes the essence of the speaker-hearer interaction in the Semiotic Space). Adopting Brandt's line of thought, rhythmic patterns that form the presentation space (indicated by such elements as pulse, tempo, or meter and usually expressed as 'beats') are mentally mapped onto melodic patterns being the elements of the reference space (expressed by duration, pitch, intensity, or timbre and dubbed as 'tones'), thus giving rise to a blended melo-rhythmic phrase, or 'tonal beats' (Brandt 2009: 10), known more universally as the phrase pattern. To appropriately interpret the obtained 'tonal beats' expressed in the phrase pattern, it is essential that both players of music as well as its listeners activate the harmonic pattern as manifested by orchestration, allowing for such necessary elements as, e.g. gamut or chorus, thus giving rise to the ultimate stage of blend creation, in which the phrase pattern becomes a meaningful musical utterance. Due to the fact that the proposed paper is not musicology- but linguistics- oriented study, the deconstruction of the MUSIC-AS-HEARD stage will be omitted here.

The first two lines of *Vissi d'Arte* aria are maintained in a very rare key, E flat minor, considered to be the darkest and most somber key of all (Orawski 2014). Compositions written in this key usually evoke extreme feelings: majesty, openness and love on the one hand and grief, fatalism, hopelessness, and resignation on the other (Orawski 2014). This character of E flat minor key is also heard in the melodic line which accompanies the enumeration of Tosca's deeds as found in the text (*I lived for my art, I lived for love, I never did harm to a living soul! With a secret hand I relieved as many misfortunes as I knew of*). Tosca's image as a good and faithful person presented in the text corresponds with the way it is sung: the aria starts in time signature 2/4 as *pianissimo*, with the added markings: *dolcissimo* (very soft), *appassionato* (impassioned) and *con grande sentimento* (with great feeling). Therefore, the first bars of the aria must be sung very piano and very slowly, however with the intense feeling, not only to illustrate Tosca's honesty and love for life, but also to start marking her anguish which revolves throughout the whole aria. Next, starting with the word 'sempre', the key changes into E flat major to remain so till the end of the aria, with a new time signature 4/4. Still, the dynamics is maintained with *lento appassionato*, this time however, to indicate Tosca's slow intense sorrowful prayer. E flat major is considered to be the key of devotion as well as intimate conversation with God (www.wmich.edu), which very well corresponds with appropriate verses of the text (*In the hour of grief why, why, o Lord, ah, why do you reward me thus?*). The phrase, repeated twice in the aria, is also sung with the dynamicity changing into *crescendo molto* (growing louder) which is to imitate the cry of despair of the main heroine.⁶

The modes representing the *Presentation Space* and the *Reference Space* are "functionally distinct" (Brandt & Brandt 2005: 228), which means that they have the potential to structure our thought in two different ways. The simultaneous use of the two modes in operatic performances proves that the cognitive processing of both language (text) and music stems from the same cognitive resources (Zbikowski 2009b; Jackendoff 2008) and is bound up with activating similar cognitive capacities, one of which is the cognitive capacity "to integrate *combinatorially* stored representations in working memory" (Jackendoff 2008: 196, emphasis mine). Therefore, they undergo the blending process in the sense of Fauconnier & Turner (2002).

6 Communicating meaning via music is a complex task, mainly due to the fact that it is not explicitly stated whether this mode has the potential to communicate meaning in its broader sense, i.e. the one that, from a musicological standpoint, is not "relegated to the status of soundtrack" (Frith 1993: 4). For this reason, the notion of musical meaning is frequently recalled (Kühl 2007; also Laske 1973). Obviously, musical meaning may be interpreted in its simple form as "a consequence of formal interactions, e.g. of successions of fully intramusical structures" (Bernstein 1976, after Antović 2011) that consist in joining music-related phenomena (e.g. timbre, form, phrase) together. Upon scrutiny, however, we discover that there is much more to musical meaning than only technical decoding of the score, and that it is primarily humanistic meaning that remains a driving force behind the semantics of music (Kramer 2004).

The integration of two distinct modes in the analysed aria does take place and is based on one of the most fundamental vital relations of conceptual blending, analogy, which facilitates the perception of correlations between elements from two distinct domains in the process of human communication (cf. Zbikowski 2018).⁷ Thus, we arrive at the very first stage of blending, known as the *Virtual Space* in the Brandt & Brandt model, where the audio-verbal manifestation of meaning occurs for the first time (cf. Pérez-Sobrino 2014).⁸ This meaning, however, is “not inherent in music but neither is it in language” (McClary 1991: 21), being rather the “affective significance of the (...) event” (Brandt 2009: 12), as if subjectively felt by an individual recipient.⁹

Upon scrutiny, it seems that the first stage of blending process corresponds, to a great extent, with *text painting*, the term used by musicians and also successfully put forward in a music-cum-text cognitive analysis (Zbikowski 2008, 2009a, 2009b; also Górska 2018). *Text painting* consists in “writing music that reinforces the literal meaning” (Pérez-Sobrino 2014: 154). Allowing for the fact that many operas use extensively the libretto written prior to the instrumental version, as it happens in the case of Puccini’s *Tosca*, we can observe how music can “suggest or ‘paint’ an image that is referred to in the text itself” (Górska 2018: 15), which gives us a fascinating image of the contribution of the non-verbal to capture and elaborate on the meaning of the verbal.¹⁰

Obviously, the meaning of *Vissi d’Arte* aria understood as a multimodal blend cannot be successfully decoded at the stage of *Virtual Space* since offering music as if it were to ‘paint’ the text does not provide any satisfactory clue as to how the ultimate meaning of the aria should be properly decoded. Therefore, it is necessary to establish the *Relevance Space*, responsible for recalling appropriate schemas that frame the blend from the *Virtual Space* in a further elaboration process. The schemas pertain to both text and music, and are usually based on our “shared cultural conventions” (Machin & Richardson 2012: 330; also Tagg 1982; Cooke 1959). This allows us to recognize the text as a kind of lament due to mental ‘decoding’ of culturally shared conventions

7 Analogies between music and text are also stressed by Ludwig Wittgenstein. In his *Philosophical Investigations*, he makes the following observation: “Understanding a sentence is much more akin to understanding a theme in music than one may think” (2001: 527, after Zbikowski 2009b: 359).

8 On the importance of merging music and text for an operatic performance see, e.g. Campbell (1994) and Simonton (2000).

9 The notion of ‘as-if-ness’ for the Virtual Space is broadly discussed in Brandt & Brandt (2005: 230-232).

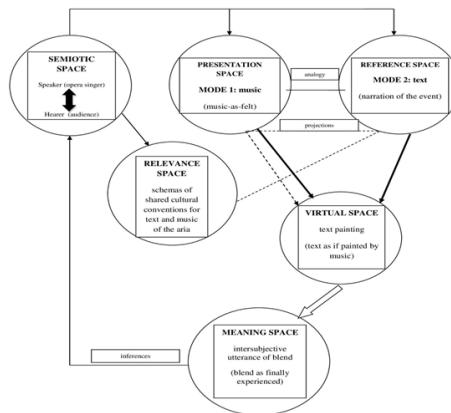
10 In one of his papers Zbikowski poses an intriguing question with reference to the notion of *text painting* (2018: 4). How, he asks, “a sequence of musical sounds can represent a non-musical phenomenon, especially when that phenomenon has no significant sonic component?” And he makes the following concluding statement: “My argument has been that such representations rely on humans’ ability to make analogical connections between disparate domains.” What is also vital to know about analogies found between music in text is that they are “always framed by context” (Zbikowski 2018: 4). This means that every time we deal with the phenomenon of text painting, “a larger interpretive framework” (Zbikowski 2018: 4) has to be recalled.

(e.g. the presence of repetitions, rhetoric questions directed to God, intimate conversation with the Almighty, all components being associated with such a genre). Music is also embedded in cultural conventions: we may not possess the ability to read musical notation, but we perfectly recognize the mood in which music is written since we subconsciously activate culturally agreed-upon patterns for music that evoke sadness, emotional pain, or despair (e.g. the composition written in minor key, slow tempo, appropriately chosen pitch ranges, articulation, or the dynamics of the melodic line).

At this point we arrive at the *Meaning Space*, the last stage of blend elaboration where a properly framed representation of music-cum-text from the *Virtual Space* becomes the meaning which emerges “in the interpretive process” (Brandt & Brandt 2005: 238). Thus we obtain the utterance of *Vissi d’Arte* which not only illustrates Tosca’s despair, feeling of injustice and helplessness as expressed by the two modes but also allows the integration of music and text to be experienced intersubjectively (cf. Brandt 2009), by each and every potential hearer. This multimodal blend as “finally experienced” (Brandt 2009: 12) is what makes Puccini’s aria so moving and, at the same time, so successful whenever heard by the audience.

A schematic illustration of the cognitive processes responsible for the conceptualization and appropriate meaning decoding of *Vissi d’Arte* aria is presented in the form of Brandt and Brandt’s six-space model below:

Figure 2.
Analysis of
Vissi d’Arte
using Brandt &
Brandt’s model



CONCLUSIONS

The proposed analysis is a modest contribution to a broad discussion upon operatic performances viewed as meaning-making events from the perspective of multimodal as well as cognitive linguistic studies. A multimodal character of operatic performances is undisputable since, as observed by Rossi & Sindoni “(...) meanings in opera can only be understood by reintegrating all the systems, resources, and components that work in combination” (2017:

81). Given that a pivotal assumption of multimodality is the efficiency of communication obtained by integrating various modes, and, what follows, successful meaning decoding in the speaker-hearer interaction, it seems that the revised six-space model of conceptual integration as delineated by Brandt & Brandt (2005) proves a useful tool here as it conveniently captures the essence of one of the basic mental operations – blending – and successfully frames it within a communicative context.

Two basic modes used in *Vissi d'Arte* co-create a multimodal message of the aria, each however is to portray the predicament of the main heroine, Floria Tosca, in a different way. The objective of text is mainly limited to factual data referring to Tosca's life (*i.a.* her readiness to help the needy, her piety, and, finally her disagreement with the fate she is to endure), the emotional component being reduced here to only a few minor semiotic elements (e.g. a recurrent rhetoric question *perchè?/why?*). The element responsible for the 'affective' content of the message (cf. Jackendoff 2008: 197) is the second mode, *viz.* music with all the breadth of shared schemas of melodic patterns used in the Western culture to account for sadness and despair (cf. Zbikowski 2009b, Lerdahl 2003, Machin & Richardson 2012).

Lastly, the question arises what makes *Vissi d'Arte* one of the most successful and moving arias. It seems that the answer lies in its intersubjective reception by the audience which, as pointed out by Zlatev *et al.* (2008: 1), inheres in "sharing of experiential content (e.g., feelings, perceptions, thoughts, and linguistic meanings) among a plurality of subjects." This seems to confirm the observation that when properly framed as a multimodal message, the meaning of the aria gradually develops in the course of interpretation, being simultaneously 'guided' by relevant schemas of shared cultural conventions.

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STRESZCZENIE

GDZIE TEKST ŁĄCZY SIĘ Z MUZYKĄ: ANALIZA MULTIMODALNA ARII VISSI D'ARTE

Artykuł ten prezentuje studium przypadku – multimodalną analizę arii sopranowej *Vissi d'Arte* z II. aktu opery Giacomo Pucciniego pt. *Tosca*. Odwołując się do głównych założeń teorii integracji pojęciowej w ujęciu Gillesa Fauconniera i Marka Turnera (2002), w szczególności zaś do zrewidowanego sześcioprzestrzennego modelu zaproponowanego przez duńskich badaczy, Line Brandt i Per Aage Brandta (2005), autorka pragnie ukazać, do jakiego stopnia łączenie dwóch głównych kanałów komunikacyjnych, muzyki oraz tekstu, może być postrzegane jako operacja integracji pojęciowej, będąca odbiciem „zdolności kognitywnych człowieka” (Zbikowski 2009a: 448, tłum. AMH, zob. także Kühl 2007), a także w jaki sposób integracja różnych modalności może kształtować ostateczną recepcję przedstawienia operowego, biorąc pod uwagę interakcję zachodzącą pomiędzy nadawcą – wykonawcą arii i odbiorcą – publicznością.

Opera, wraz z całym swym bogactwem i różnorodnością elementów, takich jak muzyka, libretto, gesty, scenografia, kostiumy czy taniec, uznawana jest za jeden z najbardziej złożonych i jednocześnie najbardziej wymagających przykładów komunikowania określonej treści (zob. Rossi i Sindoni 2017). Choć stanowi ona interesujący obiekt badań dla językoznawców, pozostaje wciąż materiałem analizowanym głównie z muzykologicznego punktu widzenia. Niewielkie zainteresowanie operą w badaniach językoznawczych (także kognitywnych), jak również wśród badaczy zajmujących się komunikacją multimodalną wynika z dwóch powodów. Po pierwsze, opera, ze względu na swoją złożoną i różnorodną strukturę, stanowi zbyt wielkie wyzwanie dla analizy językoznawczej. Drugim powodem, dla którego językoznawcy rezygnują z uznania jej za wartościowy materiał empiryczny, jest fakt, iż będąc „niestabilnym medium” (Drabkin 2014: 245, tłum. AMH), posiadającym zbyt wiele zmiennych, opera postrzegana jest jako mało wiarygodne, a tym samym mało reprezentatywne źródło badawcze.

Będąc dziełem złożonym, opera pozostaje interesującym materiałem do badań nad multimodalnością, wpisuje się bowiem w jej trzy zasadnicze kryteria. Po pierwsze, znaczenie danego dzieła operowego konstruowane jest przy udziale użytych w niej różnych filtrów komunikacyjnych, z których każdy ma nie tylko „różnorodne możliwości, ale także ograniczenia” (Jewitt, Bezemeer & O'Halloran 2016: 3, tłum. AMH). Po drugie, proces powstawania określonych znaczeń w operze skutkuje powstaniem tzw. multimodalnych całości, których odkodowywanie ściśle łączy się z trzecim założeniem,

a mianowicie skrupulatnym badaniem wszystkich modalności biorących udział w kształtowaniu się ostatecznego znaczenia (zob. Jewitt, Bezemer i O'Halloran 2016: 3).

Dokonując analizy multimodalnej przedstawienia operowego, należy pamiętać, że nie istnieje „jeden zdefiniowany model mogący posłużyć badaniu złożonej multimodalnie struktury” (Rossi i Sindoni 2017: 65, tłum. AMH). Stąd też świadome przywoływanie pojęć i teorii rozwijanych również w innych dyscyplinach (np. na gruncie językoznawstwa kognitywnego), które mogą okazać się przydatne w analizie dzieła multimodalnego.

Istotą wszelkich badań multimodalnych pozostają niezmiennie dwa kryteria. Są to: (i) *komunikacja multimodalna* oraz (ii) *integracja multimodalna* (Jewitt, Bezemer i O'Halloran 2016). Poprzez *komunikację multimodalną* rozumiemy sposób, w jaki dana wiadomość zostaje przekazana przez nadawcę komunikatu jego odbiorcy (wraz z uwzględnieniem wszelkich modalności biorących udział w tym komunikacie), oraz umiejętność poprawnego odcodowania przez odbiorcę zawartej w komunikacie multimodalnej treści. *Integracja multimodalna* bada z kolei proces stapiania różnych modalności, mający na celu uzyskanie pełniejszego i, niejednokrotnie, bardziej intrygującego znaczenia. Obydwa wyżej wymienione kryteria, *multimodalna komunikacja* i *multimodalna integracja*, mają wiele punktów stycznych z postulatami, które odnajdujemy w założeniach językoznawstwa kognitywnego, głównie w odniesieniu do uwarunkowanego kontekstowo dynamicznego konstruowania znaczenia, jakie zachodzi podczas interakcji między nadawcą i odbiorcą. Z tego też powodu przywołanie teorii integracji pojęciowej, a ściślej modelu integracji pojęciowej w jego zrewidowanej formie proponowanej przez Brandt i Brandta (2005), i zastosowanie go w proponowanym w artykule studium przypadku wydaje się uzasadnione.

Kognitywno-multimodalna analiza słynnej arii *Vissi d'Arte* z opery *Tosca* Pucciniego koncentruje się wokół dwóch kluczowych dla opery modalności, tzn. tekstu oraz muzyki. Analiza nie ma zatem charakteru holistycznego, a jedynie cząstkowy, ukazujący procesy konstruowania znaczenia, zawężone do działania dwóch wyżej wymienionych modalności.

W toku rozważań nad wybranym materiałem empirycznym poruszono dwa istotne problemy: (i) roli, jaką odgrywają muzyka i tekst w procesie kształtowania znaczenia, oraz (ii) zjawiska integracji na poziomie konceptualnym, obejmującego wybrane elementy wspomnianych powyżej modalności, często postrzeganych jako dwa odrębne choć kognitywnie powiązane ze sobą kanały komunikacyjne (zob. Jackendoff 2008).

W schemacie Brandtów odnajdujemy sześć przestrzeni niezbędnych, zdaniem jego autorów, do prawidłowego rozumienia wyłaniającego się w komunikacie znaczenia. Są to kolejno: przestrzeń semiotyczna (ang. *semiotic base space*), przestrzeń referencyjna (ang. *reference space*), przestrzeń

prezentacyjna (ang. *presentation space*), przestrzeń relewancyjna (ang. *relevance space*), a także przestrzeń amalgamatu o charakterze dwuetapowym, w którym wyróżniamy przestrzeń wirtualną (ang. *virtual space*) oraz przestrzeń znaczeniową (ang. *meaning space*). Istotą modelu pozostaje bazowa przestrzeń semiotyczna, kluczowa dla samego aktu komunikacji, zarówno z perspektywy nadawcy komunikatu (tu: sopranistki, która wciela się w postać głównej bohaterki, Florii Toski), jak i jego odbiorcy, będącego w analizowanym przypadku tzw. odbiorcą zbiorowym, czyli publicznością (zob. Di Giovanni 2018).

Nie mniej znaczący wpływ na kształtowanie komunikatu zawartego w arii *Vissi d'Arte* oraz jego recepcję mają dwie inne przestrzenie: przestrzeń referencyjna, której podstawę stanowi tekst arii, oraz przestrzeń prezentacyjna, gdzie odnajdujemy warstwę muzyczną. Łatwo zauważyć, iż obydwie modalności są zasadniczo odmienne, co oznacza również, że są one w stanie strukturyzować nasze myśli na dwa odrębne sposoby. Dzięki warstwie werbalnej, zawartej w przestrzeni referencyjnej, dowiadujemy się o losach głównej bohaterki, Florii Toski, która pada ofiarą przewrotnego szantażu zainicjowanego przed barona Scarpię, prefekta rzymskiej policji, Aby uchronić swojego ukochanego przed egzekucją, Tosca zgadza się spędzić noc z baronem. Poczucie wstydu, rozpacz i udręczenia manifestuje się w warstwie werbalnej, m.in. za pomocą licznych pytań retorycznych stawianych Bogu przez Toskę, oraz powtórzeń mających na celu mocniejsze wyrażenie niesprawiedliwości, jakie odczuwa główna bohaterka. Wydaje się jednak, iż tekst informuje odbiorcę głównie o faktach dotyczących rozpaczliwej sytuacji Toski, natomiast nie wykazuje już takiego potencjału, jeśli chodzi o komunikowanie emocji. Dlatego też modalnością odpowiedzialną za tzw. „treść afektywną” (ang. *affective content*, Jackendoff 2008) analizowanej arii, określaną również terminem „muzyka odczuwana” (ang. *music-as-felt*, Brandt 2009), jest właśnie warstwa muzyczna, pełniąca funkcję przestrzeni prezentacyjnej. Aria *Vissi d'Arte*, utrzymana na początku w tonacji es-moll, uważanej za jedną z rzadziej używanych w muzyce ze względu na ewokowanie mrocznego i posępnego nastroju (Orawski 2014), ilustruje skrajne uczucia: od otwartości, podniosłego nastroju i miłości do świata i ludzi, po rozpacz, fatalizm, poczucie beznadziei i ostatecznej rezygnacji. Warstwa muzyczna arii doskonale koresponduje z nastrojem głównej bohaterki ukazany w tekście, o czym mogą świadczyć zawarte w partyturze dodatkowe informacje, takie jak np. sposób, w jaki w danym momencie powinna zostać zaśpiewana aria, zmiana tempa utworu czy wreszcie zmiana tonacji z es-moll na Es-dur.

Jednoczesne użycie dwóch modalności w analizowanej arii wskazuje, iż mentalne przetwarzanie treści werbalnej oraz warstwy muzycznej wyrasta z tych samych źródeł kognitywnych (Zbikowski 2009b; Jackendoff 2008) i wiąże się bezpośrednio z uruchamianiem podobnych zdolności kognityw-

nych, jedną z których jest „integrowanie w sposób ‘kombinatoryczny’ reprezentacji przechowywanych w pamięci roboczej” (Jackendoff 2008: 196, tłum. AMH). Daje to nam podstawę sądzić, iż obie modalności podlegają procesowi amalgamacji w rozumieniu Fauconniera i Turnera (2002).

Integracja tekstu oraz warstwy muzycznej arii opiera się na jednej z istotnych relacji obserwowanych w procesie integracji pojęciowej, analogii, dzięki której możemy obserwować korelacje występujące pomiędzy elementami należącymi do dwóch różnych domen (zob. Zbikowski 2018). Jest to pierwsze stadium amalgamatu w rozumieniu Brandt i Brandta (2005), czyli przestrzeń wirtualna, w której po raz pierwszy mamy do czynienia z audio-werbalną manifestacją znaczenia zakodowanego w arii. Znaczenie to jednak nie tkwi na tym etapie ani w muzyce, ani w tekście, pozostając „sensem afektywnym arii, odczuwanym jedynie pozornie przez indywidualnego odbiorcę komunikatu” (Brandt 2009: 12).

Nie sposób nie zauważyć, iż integracja tekstu i muzyki opisana powyżej w dużej mierze pokrywa się z terminem „malowanie tekstu” (ang. *text painting*), używanym głównie przez muzyków i muzykologów, a ostatnio zapożyczonym także na potrzeby analizy kognitywnej (Zbikowski 2008, 2009a, 2009b; Pérez-Sobrino 2014; Górska 2018). Analizując arię *Vissi d'Arte*, możemy bowiem zaobserwować, w jaki sposób muzyka dodatkowo ozdabia obraz, jaki widzimy w samym tekście, co daje oczywiście możliwość głębszej interpretacji, a tym samym pełniejszego odczytania ostatecznego znaczenia arii.

Oczywistym pozostaje fakt, iż znaczenie analizowanej *Vissi d'Arte*, rozumianej od tego momentu jako amalgamat multimodalny, nie może zostać skutecznie odkodowane na etapie pierwszego stadium amalgamatu w rozumieniu Brandt i Brandta (2005). W tym celu konieczne jest utworzenie przestrzeni relewancyjnej, dzięki której przywołane zostaną odpowiednie schematy powstałe w oparciu o „wspólne konwencje kulturowe” (Machin i Richardson 2012: 330; także Tagg 1982; Cooke 1959), odnoszące się zarówno do warstwy werbalnej, jak i muzycznej arii. To dzięki owym wspólnie postrzeganym konwencjom, typowym dla określonego kręgu kulturowego (w badanym przypadku: kultury europejskiej), odbiorca komunikatu jest w stanie rozpoznać tekst jako lament, z uwagi na pojawiające się w nim typowe cechy tego gatunku (np. intymna rozmowa Toski z Bogiem, pytania retoryczne kierowane przez nią do Najwyższego, powtórzenia). Warstwa muzyczna arii również podporządkowuje się konwencjom przyjętym w muzyce. Dzięki temu odbiorca jest w stanie rozpoznać nastrój utworu, ponieważ mentalnie przywołuje uzgodnione wzorce odpowiedzialne w muzyce za odczuwanie smutku, bólu emocjonalnego czy rozpaczy (objawiające się np. obecnością tonacji molowych, powolnym tempem, odpowiednią dynamiką i artykulacją), nie musząc jednocześnie być biegłym w notacji czy też jej odczytywaniu.

Kulminacyjny punkt wyłaniania się znaczenia w arii ma miejsce w ostatnim stadium amalgamatu, w przestrzeni znaczeniowej. To właśnie tutaj odpowiednio sformułowany w przestrzeni wirtualnej amalgamat, na który składają się muzyka i tekst, urasta do rangi znaczenia dynamicznie wyłaniającego się podczas interpretacji. Dzięki uruchomieniu przestrzeni znaczeniowej oraz odwołaniu do wcześniejszych przestrzeni, zwłaszcza przestrzeni semiotycznej i relewancyjnej, aria *Vissi d'Arte* ukazuje nie tylko rozpacz głównej bohaterki, jej poczucie krzywdy czy bezradności, wyrażonych za pomocą tekstu i muzyki, ale przede wszystkim ewokuje intersubiektywne odczucie rozpaczycy. Tak skonstruowany amalgamat multimodalny, określanym mianem „ostatecznie doświadczanego” (ang. *finally experienced*, Brandt 2009: 12), jest tym, co czyni *Vissi d'Arte* jedną z bardziej poruszających i jednocześnie jedną z popularniejszych arii.

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