



The Synesthesia in John Keats' Ode

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Abstract

This article explores the role of synesthesia in Baudelaire's poetry, focusing on its rarity and exceptionality compared to other literary works of the 19th century. Through a descriptive qualitative research method, the study examines John Keats' "Ode" as a means to define synesthesia from a cognitive standpoint and demonstrate its significant impact on emotional expression in writing. The data collection technique employed is library research, gathering relevant information about figurative language from various sources. The qualitative analysis employs content analysis to identify and analyze synesthesia metaphors in Keats' odes. The discussion highlights Keats' poetic brilliance and his pursuit of truth and beauty in his works. synesthesia emerges as a prominent feature in his poetry, with the poet employing unique creative techniques and forms of expression. The cognitive analysis of synesthesia metaphors reveals their profound influence on the thematic depth and artistic conception of Keats' odes. The study delves into specific examples, such as visual and auditory synesthesia, synesthesia of taste and hearing, synesthesia of vision, smell, and taste, as well as visual and olfactory synesthesia. This research contributes to the broader understanding of synesthesia in literature, shedding light on its significance in Baudelaire's poetry and its impact on emotional and aesthetic experiences. It invites further exploration of synesthesia as a powerful tool for artistic expression and its implications across different literary works and genres.

Keywords: *Cognition; John Keats; Ode; Poetry; synesthesia*

Introduction

Synesthesia comes from Greek: *syn-* means "together", "and" and "fusion"; *-aesthesia* means "feeling", meaning "together perception" (feeling together or at the same time). Cytowic (1997) interprets it as: synesthesia, also called telepathy, is one of the rhetorical techniques. In people's daily life, various senses such as vision, hearing, touch, smell, and taste can often have psychological experiences intertwined with each other. Therefore, when expressing the impression of things that belong to the scope of the first sense, it can be described as comprehending beyond its scope. Impressions of the second sensory range to create novel and unique expressive effects. Qian Zhongshu, the "Cultural Kunlun" who a lot of people called "the great Confucian of China and the master of today's people", wrote a special chapter on synesthesia: "In daily experience, vision, Hearing, touch, smell, and taste can often be connected with each other, and the fields of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body can be separated. Colors seem to have temperature, sounds seem to have images, cold and warm seem to have weight, and smells seem to have sharpness. This short-lived intercommunication between different senses must have its presentation form in language symbols, and then the phenomenon of synesthesia in language appears. In daily vocabulary, many of them are formed under the effect of synesthesia, such as: sneer, wry smile, excitement, enthusiasm and so on."

Although it is a sensory phenomenon of neurological origin which effectively concerns physiological science, synesthesia is becoming more and more a very frequent subject in several fields, such as: in theatre, in music, in painting and it does not stop not there but it goes beyond the literary field. In fact, synesthesia has attracted the attention of men of letters for a long time, and more particularly, since the 19th century, considered the century of modernity, oddity and revolution in literature. Thus our goal in this article is to analyze the role of synesthesia in Baudelaire's poetry and to better understand the reasons behind its rarity and its exception compared to other literary works of the 19th century.

First of all, the word "synesthesia" originates from the Greek word "syn," which means "whole" and "unity." The word "aesthesis," on the other hand, refers to the act of perceiving something. Hermann Parret defines synesthesia by asking, "What about synesthesia?" Synesthesia can be understood in its most straightforward form as a phenomenon characterized by the ongoing association, in the same subject, of perceptions originating from various sensory domains. "the action of perceiving one thing at the same time as another; simultaneous sensation or perception" was already the meaning of the word "sunaisthèsis" when it was first used in the Greek philosophical language. Many people believe that synesthesia has a pathological origin, as it is defined as a disturbance of sensory perception in which a normal sensation is automatically accompanied by a simultaneous complementary sensation in a region of the body that is different from that where the excitation occurs or in a different sensory domain. Synesthesia is a term that has been used to refer to this phenomenon (Parret, 2006, p. 62).

However, synesthesia is the arbitrary association of two or more senses. It is an obligatory and automatic stimulation that occurs simultaneously between two or more sensations, one superimposes the other. Admittedly, this alliance of sensations takes many forms, such as: "grapheme-color" synesthesia which is considered the most famous type of synesthesia and which is also based on the fact that numbers and letters evoke colors. Moreover, there is "synoptic" synesthesia by which synesthesia see colors while listening to music, seeing an image and even breathing in odors. In addition, there is synesthesia of personification which crystallizes around the establishment of logical relationships between colors and characters. However, this phenomenon is a result of the arrival of white substances in the brain which is, on its part, responsible for making the connections between the areas of the Cortex and the transfer of information.

Previous studies on synesthesia mainly analyzed the aesthetic effects and rhetorical functions of synesthesia, but seldom interpreted the meaning of synesthesia from the cognitive level. With the vigorous development of cognitive linguistics, especially since Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory came out, metaphor has gradually been included in the category of cognition. From the perspective of cognition, synesthesia is also a special kind of metaphor. Like other metaphors, synesthesia metaphor also contains metaphorical cognition and thinking processes, and is an important means and tool for human beings to perceive the world. Taking Keats's poetry as an example, this paper aims to study synesthesia metaphor from the cognitive level, in order to analyze and interpret the function of synesthesia metaphor in poetry.

The purpose of this research is twofold: to investigate the nature of synesthesia in John Keats' "Ode" and to explore its impact on the author's emotional expression. The research aims to achieve these objectives through a meticulous analysis of the poem's text. By closely examining the work, the study seeks to identify and analyze the instances of synesthesia employed by Keats, unveiling the specific sensory combinations and metaphorical associations that contribute to the synesthetic experiences within the poem. This analysis will provide valuable insights into the presence and function of synesthesia in Keats' literary oeuvre, enhancing our understanding of how this rhetorical technique enriches the emotional expression of the author. Furthermore, by exploring the impact of synesthesia on Keats' emotional expression, the research aims to illuminate the profound connection between sensory perception and the evocation of deep emotional responses in readers. Overall, this research contributes to the broader scholarly discourse on synesthesia and its significance in literature, shedding light on its role as a potent tool for authors to create immersive and emotionally resonant literary experiences.

Conceptual Metaphor and Poetic Synesthesia

(1) Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Words can serve as heuristics, with the help of which we can quickly classify information. Their strength lies in the associations that arouse them. This is

especially true for metaphors. They transfer a concrete experience to an abstract concept. An idea must be digested, a theory underpinned, an argument sharpened. Metaphors are at the interface between perception and action on the one hand and thinking on the other.

What is metaphor in cognitive linguistics? It is certainly no longer a figure of style that we encounter in poetry. In his work, Lakoff calls for the rectification of the status of metaphor: it should no longer be considered as a simple instrument of rhetoric that serves to decorate our discourse but as a cognitive process that organizes our faculty of thought, forms our judgments and structures our language. According to this author, the empirical evidence of this cognitive role of the metaphor is the immense systematicity of this phenomenon: the individual systems of the metaphor (like time = money, love = travel) have a great generative capacity and these systems manifest themselves under a wide variety of appearances (Lakoff & Johnson 1980). To prove it, it is necessary to show how the metaphor facilitates thought. Lakoff explains that it is by providing an experiential framework in which new abstract concepts can be grasped. In this way, the networks of metaphors that are at the basis of thought form a kind of cognitive map: its function is to link abstract concepts to the physical experience of the cognitive agent. As for experience, it comes from its relationship with the external world. So the metaphor links the conceptual representation to its sensory and experiential basis.

The metaphors project the cognitive map of the domain, in this way, the objective is " " lived" in the physico-spatial experience thanks to the source. The result is that the patterns that are mediators between the conceptual and sensory levels in the source also become active in the objective. The notion of pairing between mental spaces is the central component of the theory of mental spaces (Fauconnier, 1984). Lakoff says that it is extremely common for metaphors to have image-schemes for input. A large number of metaphors use the space domain as their source domain. Here is an example of Lakoff (1987, 435): The play is over. Here we use the spatial preposition over to express a non-spatial meaning: an event is over. Lakoff explains that in general activities with a predefined structure (such as the play or concert) are understood as extended sites and that performing such an activity is metaphorically understood as a journey along the way. When the actor reaches the end, the activity is over.

Lakoff's conceptual metaphor theory is an important part of cognitive linguistics. This theory points out that people's thinking process is largely metaphorical, and the essence of metaphor is to use one kind of thing to understand and experience another kind of thing, that is, use familiarity, specific concepts to understand unfamiliar and abstract concepts. Wu Jingfang and others believe that this is Functional definition of metaphors. Lakoff uses source and target domains. Mapping and image schema explain the phenomenon of metaphor, pointing out that metaphor is a mapping between two conceptual domains, and its psychological basis is abstract image schema, which is the structural definition of metaphor.

According to this theory, when understanding more abstract concepts such as

love, use the concrete and familiar field of journey. Love is journey is the same mapping behind different expressions like Our relationship had a dead-end street to describe a crisis in a relationship or marriage. Lakoff pointed out that metaphor is not based on similarity, but metaphor creates similarity between two fields. Although metaphor is embodied through language structure, it is a conceptual structure rather than a language structure. Metaphor is the mapping of metaphorical relations between the whole conceptual domain, and the conceptual mapping between the two domains, but the mapping is unbalanced. Conceptual metaphor is complex, systematic, multi-layered and experiential.

(2) Conceptual Metaphor and Poetic Synesthesia

Ulmann studied 2,000 examples of synesthesia in poetry, and found that the main law of synesthesia is: more than 80% of the examples of synesthesia are distributed upwards, that is, the law of the direction of sensory movement is generally from lower to higher, from simpler to higher. to more complex. Ulmann arranged the sequence of synesthesia sensory transfer as: touch-warm-taste-smell-hear-visual; William's research also came to a similar conclusion, and William also mentioned the sense of dimension. Classen summarizes the order of the synesthesia senses: senses of having to hear, sight, smell, taste, and touch. German also confirmed this rule, researchers also mentioned the concept of temperature sensation, and conducted a study on English and German literary works. The analysis shows that the order of sight and smell in German is just opposite to that in English. The two domains (source domain and target domain) of poetic synesthesia metaphor represent concepts that belong to different senses respectively. According to conceptual metaphor theory, metaphor is the mapping between two conceptual domains, and poetic synesthesia metaphor is the mapping between two senses. In short, it is to use the concepts belonging to the second sense to describe the concepts belonging to the first sense. As a type of conceptual metaphor, is there any rule to follow in the mapping direction of poetic synesthesia metaphor? The researcher uses examples to analyze:

(1) *"Let my deep silence speak for me,*

More than for them their sweetest notes"

By William H. Davies

The poem "The Moon" is pure and natural, describing what the author sees, hears and feels under the moonlight. From witnessing the brightness of the moonlight, the innocence of children, to hearing the melodious singing of birds, all these are drawn into a fascinating and beautiful picture scroll. What's even better is that the author has incorporated his own unique feelings: under the radiance of the moon, silence is the best good expression. The author uses sweetest notes to describe the auditory experience with the sense of taste.

(2) *"Soft music like a perfume and sweet ligh,*

Golden with audible odours exquisite,

Swathe me with cereents for eternity."

By A. Symons

The poet combined the senses of hearing, touch (soft), smell (perfume, odours), and taste (sweet) together, wonderfully expressing the feelings after listening to Chopin's music, making readers seem to be able to directly experience Chopin's music from all directions and from multiple angles, which is hard to describe an indescribable musical beauty.

(3) *"Cold candle smokeless green wax dry,
The heart is still shy of spring cold."*

By Tang Qianxu

The newly grown plantain heart leaves, which have not yet unfolded, are shaped like a green candle. The green candle is a visual image, but the poet said it is a cold candle, and cold is a sense of touch, which is synesthesia. Because seeing the green is affected, there is a feeling of coldness. The Stillness of the Heart is also an anthropomorphic visual image, while the fear of spring and cold is invisible, and the cold is the sense of touch, which is also synesthesia.

(4) *"The autumn moon is like a wine talk
In the evening, it was hung on the tree by the second uncle
Some sour, some sweet."*

By Tang Qianxu

The autumn moon turns into sweet and sour wine, which is coveted and enviable. Such pear is drunk and hazy just by looking at it with eyes. This is the transformation of visual imagery to taste, challenging readers' taste buds.

Example (1) shows that sensory features are mapped from taste to hearing. The sensory features shown in example (2) are mainly mapped from touch, smell, and taste to hearing. Example (3) is the mapping from touch to vision. Example (4) is mapped from taste to vision. The analysis of these ancient and modern poetry examples shows that poetic synesthesia is a mapping process between senses, that is, mapping from one sense to another, and the mapping generally follows the mapping from low-level sensory forms (touch, temperature, taste, smell) to high-level, and the law of sensory forms (hearing, seeing). Metaphor is the normal way for human beings to perceive the world. It would seem to make sense, according to fundamental principles of cognition, to map from concepts that are easier to understand to those that are more difficult. In general, metaphors employ well-known and straightforward concrete examples to help understand unfamiliar and difficult abstract concepts. For instance, the spatial metaphor is an extension of the spatial concept of the material world, which originates from the personal experiences that people have had throughout their lives. People are able to carry out spatial metaphorical cognition by projecting the image schema of surface space, such as up, down, inside, and outside, that they have experienced personally onto abstract things, such as emotion and state. During the process of projection, the internal logic among things functions as the soul that bridges the gap between the original domain and the target domain.

Poetic synesthesia is a type of poetic metaphor, which means that poets use one sensory experience to express another sensory experience when they write, and

it is the communication between the senses. The author believes that poetic synesthesia also follows the above cognitive principles. In poetic synesthesia, the concepts formed by the lower senses are easy to understand, while the concepts formed by the higher senses are difficult to understand, for example, *Oh, Sweet Silence: nectar of your kiss*. (Vijali), *I loved the sweet silence of hay as it cured* (Fred Marchant). Poets use sweet silence instead of silent sweetness, because sweet belongs to the sense of taste, and silence belongs to the sense of hearing, mapping from the lower sense of taste to the higher sense of hearing. More natural and easier to understand. It can be seen that the meaning construction and interpretation process of poetic synesthesia is constrained by another law, that is, from the perception that embodies more bodily features to express the perception that embodies less bodily features, and from the concept of more accessible senses.

In synesthesia metaphor, projection and correspondence between the target domain and the source domain primarily follow two laws: mapping from low-level sensory forms to high-level sensory forms, and from the perspective of accessibility strong concepts map to less accessible concepts. The analysis of the examples presented above confirms the research results obtained by previous researchers; specifically, that the projection and correspondence between the target domain and the source domain in synesthesia metaphor follow these laws.

Method

Descriptive qualitative research was used for this research. Descriptive qualitative research, as stated clearly by Gay (1996), necessitates collecting copious amounts of data on numerous variables over a lengthy time frame in a naturalistic setting. A concise and understandable description of the analysis's findings was provided by the author. The research focused on John Keats' "Ode". Through an examination of Keats' ode, this article uses a qualitative approach to define synesthesia from a cognitive standpoint, as well as to demonstrate the significant impact synesthesia can have on the emotional expression of writers. The information was characterized using a synesthetic approach. Qualitative methods were used for analysis, and the results were presented in a descriptively.

In this study, researchers employed a systematic approach to gather data in order to address a specific question or problem. The chosen research method was library research, focused on collecting data about figurative language in William's poems. This involved utilizing relevant books and resources to support the analysis of the poems, followed by thorough reading, comprehension, and note-taking to draw conclusions. The qualitative research methods were applied, with data classified and analyzed descriptively, presented through words and sentences. Two aspects were considered: figurative language analysis and poems analysis. Content analysis was utilized as the technique for analyzing the data, where the researcher repeatedly read John Keats' poem "Ode" to extract information about its context. synesthesia instances within the poem were identified through underlining specific words, and subsequent analysis and coding were conducted using a data sheet. This approach facilitated the examination of synesthesia in the poem.

Result and Discussion

Keats was brilliant, as famous as Shelley and Byron. His short life has left many brilliant and magnificent poems for people. He successively created a series of carols, including "Ode to Laziness", "Ode to the Soul", "Ode to the Nightingale",

Famous works such as "Ode on a Grecian Urn", "Ode to Melancholy" and "Ode to Autumn" are the most popular. Keats advocated that beauty is truth and truth is beauty. Therefore, his poems are known for their beautiful language and profound thoughts, and they are persistent in the pursuit of truth and beauty. They not only have serious thinking about life, but also reflect the truth and beauty of life. Existing researches on Keats's poetry mostly focus on its theme and content, and the expression of his poetic emotion is also an important reason why his poetry is unique, so it is worthy of our discussion. In the ode, the use of synesthesia metaphor became an important means for Keats to express his feelings. By using synesthesia metaphors, Keats formed his own unique creative techniques and forms of expression. Keats's poems are rich in sensory imagery, and the poet uses extraordinary imagination to express complex themes vividly with direct and concrete images. Analyzing the synesthesia metaphors in Keats's odes from the perspective of cognition can make readers understand the theme of his poems more deeply and deeply perceive the artistic conception of the poems. The following is a cognitive analysis of the typical phenomena and types of synesthesia metaphors in Keats' odes.

(1) Visual and auditory synesthesia

Among the phenomena of synesthesia, the combination of audiovisual senses is the most common, because among the various senses of human beings, hearing and vision are the most soulful, the most detailed, the richest and the most closely combined. Psychological basis, as Cytowic said: Sound moves people, making people think that its shape is like this. The shape is silent, and the sound is invisible. The sense of hearing expresses vision, giving things a sense of dynamism, and the sense of hearing is expressed with visual images, it makes the virtual things real, and the combination of virtual and real sublimates the sensibility of beauty, so that people can have a deeper understanding of the unique experience brought by aesthetic objects.

(5) *flowery tale* (Ode on a Grecian Urn, L.4)

flowery story

leaf-fring's legend (Ode on a Grecian Urn, L.5)

A legend bordered by green leaves

silent form (Ode on a Grecian Urn, L.44)

silent form

whispering roof of leaves (Ode to Psyche, L.10)

whispering leaves

pinus shall murmur in the wind(Ode to Psyche, L.53)

Pine trees rustling in the wind
wide quietness (Ode to Psyche, L.58)
murmuurous haunt of flies(Ode to Nightingale, L.50)
weeping cloud(Ode on Melancholy, L.12)

"Stories like flowers" and "Legends surrounded by green leaves" are visual and auditory connections, making readers feel as if they are in a flowery story. Telling that beautiful story. Silent form, visible form, silent, what kind of wisdom and precipitation is this? It symbolizes eternity, transcends thought, and trees seem to have souls, singing in the wind, and leaves tell their own stories. What kind of emptiness and solitude is shown in the "vast silence", contrasting with the noise of the harbor where mosquitoes and gnats are camping in the summer night. "The Weeping Cloud" brings melancholy emotions, what kind of sadness does that depression and depression come from! Visual and auditory synesthesia endows still pictures with vitality, making people seem to be able to hear colors and see sounds. The auditory effect turns into a vivid picture, and the still picture has more connotation and tension because of the integration of the auditory effect.

(2) synesthesia of taste and hearing

Taste and hearing can be connected, food can be tasted, and music can also be tasted. In the food, you can taste the taste, ups and downs; in the music, you can also taste the emotions, the various aspects of life.

(6) *A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme* (Ode on a Grecian Urn, L.4)

Flowery stories are sweeter than our poems

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter (Ode on a Grecian Urn, L.11)

Delicious moan (Ode on a Grecian Urn, L.4)

The sweet rhythm and beautiful music are silent music for the soul. The perfect combination of taste and hearing senses can express the sweetness of the elegant melody, while the mournful chant expresses the mixed flavors. Resentment. The combination of taste and hearing makes rhythm, singing and sighing seem to have a sweet taste. The taste of beauty and bitterness is projected to the auditory field, which can better reflect the taste and express the emotion.

(3) synesthesia of vision, smell and taste

The food culture pays attention to all kinds of colors, fragrances, and the word "color" is the first, which is enough to prove the importance of visual experience. Its influence on the sense of smell and taste cannot be underestimated. As the saying goes, beautiful colors can be eaten, and beautiful visual experience brings joy to the mood. Will greatly enhance the sense of smell and taste.

(7) *tasting of Flora and the country green* (Ode to Nightingale, L.13)

Once you taste it, you will think of the God of Flowers and the land of green
musk-rose full of dewy wine (Ode to Nightingale, L.49)

This musk rose full of dew

Mellow fruitfulness season (To Autumn, L.8)

sweet wrapped in nuts

There are too many stories in the delicious wine. After a sip, it seems that you can be intoxicated in the land of green, see the flower god dancing, hear the love song and the warm laughter of the sun, and all kinds of beautiful musk and roses full of dew. Its attractive fragrance and charming posture have become the favorite in mid-May, and autumn shows a picture of mellow and ripe fruits. This colorful and fragrant autumn landscape picture. The comprehensive use of vision, taste and smell perfectly integrates various sensory images and enhances visual receptivity.

(4) Visual and olfactory synesthesia

The close relationship between vision and smell is self-evident. Olfactory perception often affects visual perception. Pleasant smells usually remind people of beautiful pictures, while unpleasant smells greatly reduce visual perception. At the same time, the beautiful visual experience has a positive effect on the sense of smell; correspondingly, the less beautiful picture brings a relatively negative feeling.

(8) *fragrant-eyed flowers* (Ode to Psyche, L.13)

fragrant pistil

Embalmed darkness (Ode to Nightingale, L.43)

Fragrant Darkness

"Fragrant pistils" shows the fragrance and tenderness of flowers, they bring a lot of beauty to this world, even the darkness seems to have a sweet fragrance. The sense of fragrance and fragrance is projected on the vision, showing a beautiful picture with color and fragrance, adding to the beauty of enjoyment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, John Keats, a brilliant poet of the Romantic era, left a remarkable legacy through his short but impactful life. His poems, including famous works such as "Ode to a Nightingale," "Ode on a Grecian Urn," and "Ode to Autumn," showcase his deep exploration of truth and beauty. Keats believed that beauty is truth and truth is beauty, and his poetry reflects this belief with its profound thoughts and beautiful language. Keats employs synesthesia to connect taste and hearing, adding another layer of richness to his poetry. The combination of these senses allows him to express the sweetness and mixed flavors of different experiences, be it in the form of flowery stories, delicious melodies, or the taste of musk roses. Through this blending, Keats enhances the emotional impact of his poems and brings a unique sensory depth to his expressions.

Keats utilizes synesthesia to intertwine vision, smell, and taste, creating a multisensory experience for the readers. The incorporation of these sensory images enhances the aesthetic appeal of his poems, evoking a heightened sense of pleasure and appreciation. By engaging multiple senses simultaneously, Keats captivates his audience and elevates the sensory experience of his poetry. Keats also employs the combination of visual and olfactory senses to create a profound impact. The connection between vision and smell allows him to evoke powerful emotions and associations. Fragrant pistils and embalmed darkness, for example, illustrate how scent influences visual perception, creating a rich tapestry of images that enhance the overall sensory experience of his poems.

The use of synesthesia in Keats' poetry enables the intangible to be expressed through the tangible, the imaginary through the real, and the infinite through the finite. This artistic technique expands the poetic realm, immersing readers in the beauty and complexity of his work. By analyzing the cognitive aspects of synesthesia, readers can delve deeper into the profound themes and emotions conveyed in Keats' poems, appreciating the artistry of his language and exploring the philosophical reflections on life encapsulated within his verses. Overall, John Keats' masterful use of synesthesia metaphors, along with his profound insights and beautiful language, make his poetry a treasure trove of aesthetic and intellectual exploration. His poems continue to inspire and captivate readers, inviting them to delve into the depths of truth, beauty, and the human experience.

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