A Study of Visual Design and Color Attributes of POP Album

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Abstract: - Based on the color attributes of pop album cover, a diachronic study was conducted. It was argued that the denotation is significant related to the color attributes and the connotation is not necessary significant related to the color attributes. The population of this study was those pop albums published from 1980 to 1989. In those years, this country was gradual opening up of political and economic stability. The sampled representative pop album covers were collected and put on the computer screen for conducting content analysis. The denotation and color attributes of each sampled album cover were also identified for statistical test.

Key-Words: - POP album cover, diachronic study, color attribute, denotation

1. Introduction
The development of information and communication technology enables the society to enter the era of global communication. The advertising business already becomes part of the society lifestyle. It can be concluded that in the modern society, advertisement always shows the messages and the ideology of what it told to the society. Advertising then, is used as the mass media communication that has its symbols, meaning and messages to the readers. The album cover also is a form of advertisement. It is not only as the promotion of one product but also has become the idea of a system with its own value. One pop album cover represents some messages for the readers, in which the message
is created by using signs and codes and for purpose that the readers can understand the messages that are sent. People use technology to support information exchange. Visualization enhances communication functions. In this mobile technology world where all things communicate, it is important that we determine what precisely we are trying to say. Packaging pop album with a cover is not only providing protection to the black vinyl music disc, but also the information related to that album all about. By printing sign on the cover, the visual communication could be established upon the text and image around the cover. A public publication, such as a pop album cover, should be design and layout according the designer’s idea and the public perception[1].

Codes are symbols with systematic meaning and signs are important elements in languages and communication. By Barthes’ definition, a sign is the combination of a signifier and signified. In this perspective, a sign cannot stand alone[2].

2. Conceptual Framework
Based upon the semiotics theories, the research foundations would be constructed.

With the gradual opening up of Taiwan's political and economic stability, the changing was mainly between 1980 and 1992. Especially in 1987, martial law before and after the performance style of album covers have a very obvious change in Taiwan's pop music on album covers. Several focuses were founded, such as “how to explore their roots”, “returning” as well as the mirror image of the role of self-identity. The formation of "subjectivity", and the integration with the International Federation of Phonographic Industry as a post-modern brewing out of graphic design clues, it also illustrates that pop music album cover design in the 1980s was a prelude to open a turning point in post-modern for the 1990s.

3. Methodology
The development of both popular music and recording media are in parallel. Through the records publishing, pop music could be circulated in the general public. For this reason, this study assumes that the social phenomenon reflexes to music literature and art as well as the design of album cover.
The albums cover is designed as a carrier to load pop music upon popular music culture. It was hoped that the design of the album cover could be applied to explore the contrast historical backgrounds and to distinguish the relationship between design and color attributes.

3.1 Research Questions
The purpose of this study was to identify the relation between the denotation of a pop album cover and its color attributes. It was hypothesized that there existed a significant relation between denotation and color attributes.

3.2 Sampling
For fulfilling the goal of this study, the time period would be those years from 1980 till 1992. Although there were vast numbers of pop music albums in Taiwan during research targeted time, the sampling procedure would follow "Taiwan's pop music, one hundred best album," and "Past Golden Melody Award for best album." to collect data for analysis. Based on these two awards, each year select a representative album.

The aim was to choose representative design of album cover for each year.

3.3 Hypothesis and Models
Color attributes considered were RGB color channel, R channel, G channel, B channel, and luminosity channel. The mean, standard deviation, and median values of each attribute were used for conducting statistical analysis.

For identifying the proposed relationship, several hypotheses were claimed for empirical data evaluation.

H$_{01}$: There is no significant relationship between the chosen color channels of distribution with effectiveness of logistics and denotation of pop music cover

H$_{02}$: There exists no C5.0 model that could predict denotation of pop album covers from their color attributes.

3.4 Content Analysis and Coding System
In this study, content analysis was conducted according following steps.
1. Theory and rationale.
2. Conceptualization decisions
3. Operational measures
4. Coding schemes
5. Sampling
6. Coding

Upon reviewing literature, the denotation codes were claimed as following:
1. Fresh and the continuation of folk music: 1980-1982
2. Young rebellious "new breed": 1982-1989
3. Confinement after the liberation and freedom: 1986-1989
4. Other than previous style “New Age”: 1990-1992

Table 1 the denotation codes of fresh, new breed, and confinement listings by the year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fresh</th>
<th>New Breed</th>
<th>Confinement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
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4. Findings
4.1. Sampled Pop Album Covers

The aim was to choose representative design of album cover for each year. The sampling procedure followed "Taiwan's pop music, one hundred best album," and "Past Golden Melody Award for best album." to collect data for analysis. Based on these two awards, each year select one representative album.


4.2 Denotation of sampled album cover

In the early 1980s, album covers are still continued the campus folk music style, keep fresh, clean, simple layout in 1970s. In the Table 1, Mr. Hou presented his album "Descendants of the Dragon" with the calligraphy of running script font and picture wearing traditional long robe and holding a classical reed bamboo pipe wind instrument instruments. The background of the cover is a traditional architecture dragon column and traditional ink painting landscape of the rising sun, symbolizing the combination of explicit and stressed that China's modern simplicity inherent in the traditional elements of formal design.

It was intended to create the international identity of the Republic of China at that time on the "legitimacy" and "legitimacy". It also reflected the no formal diplomatic relation between Taiwan and the United States. The cover was also intended to echo to the highlighting of the legal status of the Republic of China in the United Nations before 1978.
Because of the enthusiastic response to the publishing of the "Descendants of the Dragon", the commercial folk music continued to extend into the early 1980s. It also provided a vent for the pressure of the international isolation in the martial law era and appeases the tense atmospheres during the late 1970s and the early 1980s.

In 1981, the design of Sylvia Chang’s "childhood" album cover presented in a way of using illustrations. By drawing a picture of Sylvia with her childhood memories, this album represents the singer's imagination and memories of childhood. In the font used on the application, it used particularly the emotional handwriting rather the rational printing font. In fact, album cover design with illustration style had been applied at early folk songs period. With a children looking like Sylvia Chang holding a picture of a now Sylvia Chang in the hands, the "childhood" album presented a kind of design thinking than reality. The background of gold leaf connected both the past and the present era. The conceptual album in such a form as the starting point is a unique example in the year. The included songs were easy to sing and not tend to be abstruse and convoluted for the highbrow.

Su’ album, "the same moonlight" did not show "Moonlight" on the cover. The screen is only a young rebellious close-up side face. With Su’s unruly temperament coupled with a short hair and the black and white combination, it did show a kind of gender unrecognizing visual effects. This made "the same moonlight" becoming much more distinctive, which was representative works in year 1983.

Zongsheng Lee "Life in the Wizard," 1986 show a rope tied to the mailing package with the title of "Mr. Lee Zongsheng revenue". While the sender is also the receiver Zongsheng Lee, the wrinkling of the leather with Lee’s picture. The leather with a few holes on seems to imply that leaking some information.
It is appropriate to illustrate mirror effect of this album cover form Lacan’s mirror theory. It did show how "original I" "selfhood" and "superego" could be integrated on an album covers.

While watching the "subjectivity" is produced by the autonomy of the viewer, but the concept of psychoanalysis is the interpretation of visual images of the face, especially the impact of the viewer, through a specific interpretation of the image articulation or re-interpretation of watch concept.

4.3 Color attributes of album covers

In Table 3, the RGB color distribution histogram of year 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983 and 1984 album covers were presented. The horizontal value is the level and the vertical value is the count.

4.4 Classification model

For verifying the model for predicting denotation from color attributes, the logistic model was reported in the following table. The target was denotation. The inputs were mean values of R channel, G channel, and B channel mean. The algorithm applied was Logistic regression with classification model type.

The model fitting information was listed in table 11. Since the significant level is less than 0.05, we could proceed as if the model is reasonable. According to the pseudo r-square, the denotations could be explained bye the model at 95.3 percent. The equations for predicting denotations were listed in table 4.

5. Conclusion

The development of both popular music and recording media are in parallel. Through the records publishing, pop music could be circulated in the general public.
The albums cover is design as a carrier to load pop music upon popular music culture. It was hoped that the design of album cover could be applied to explore the contrast historical backgrounds and to distinguish the relationship between design and color attributes.

In this study, first we find out the denotation of those represented pop-album covers by applying content analysis procedure. Than we verified the relation between denotation and cooler attribute. Based upon the review literacy and content analysis of pop-album published in Taiwan from 1980 to 1992, it was found three categories of denotation.

Upon statistic test results supported, it was concluded that color attributes are significant contribute to predict denotation. The logistic model was established for verifying the predicting relation between color attributes and denotation of pop album covers. The mean values of Red, Green, Black, and Luminosity channels are significantly contributing to foresee the denotation of pop album covers. This evidence

Reference:
