

Intermedial Adaptation Strategies when Setting Poems to Music

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Abstract

There are several ways to adapt a poem to a new medium and create a song based on it, such as a simple reference, narrative continuation of the poem, parody or other reflection on its content or form. One of the most common methods is, undoubtedly, setting poetic texts to music with minimal intervention, such as transferring verses, repeating them, or even eliminating them. It is commonly thought that this kind of musical adaptation preserves the poem and gives it a new life in another medium, but studies of which textual mechanisms come into play and why are scarce.

This work presents an analysis through textual collation of 65 poem–song pairs, to analyse the types of modification that occur most frequently and, within them, to examine critically which are the criteria that determine the choice to add, delete, or repeat verses or other sequences. To this end, we worked with the corpus provided by the PoeMAS project, which collects, in a comprehensive, publicly available database, a wide variety of Spanish lyrics (from 1975 onward) based on poems. Using this corpus, a pairwise collation of the poems and their song adaptations was carried out in order to examine the textual differences between a poem and each of its adaptations. We have drawn from the theories of intersemiotic translation (Jakobson 1959; Romano 1994, 1999) and intermediality (Rajewsky 2005; Wolf 1999) to propose a formal classification for the types of change that occur most frequently and analyse them in our digital corpus. The pairwise collation of song–poem texts and the classification of changes using this taxonomy allowed us to reach conclusions about text modifications and about the criteria underlying them in lyrics, explaining therefore why and when some lines or sequences are repeated, suppressed, added or changed.

1 Introduction

Studies on the adaptation of poetic texts into commercial songs are abundant and very diverse in their theoretical and methodological approaches (Martínez

Cantón 2022). There are many different ways in which a poem can be present in a song, since it is, essentially, a relation between two artistic objects, something that has been widely investigated and typified by studies of intermediality and adaptation. Some of the most common ways of relating poem and song are to include quotes from the poetic text in the lyrics of a song, to parody it, to continue its story or to recreate its text musically. Perhaps the most common one is to set the text to music, trying to preserve it as respectfully as possible, without introducing major changes. The usual term to describe these cases is musical adaptation (Albrecht 2010; Hopkins and O’Leary 2005; Ingham 2013) or musical setting (Da Silva 2004; Ingham 2013), although the latter term is more restrictive, and usually refers to using the text of the poem as the song text with only minimal intervention, such as transferring the text, repeating verses or words, or even eliminating some of them.

This second type of musical adaptation, musical setting, has attracted less attention from researchers, since from a purely textual point of view it is typically accepted that they entail less originality than other types of musical adaptations. However, setting a text to music, musicalising it, is a common tool within some musical genres, such as singer-songwriting traditions, and is also used in other genres. As confirmed by browsing and analysing the PoeMAS project database,¹ which collects songs that adapt previously existing poems in different ways, the musical setting adaptation strategy is the most common way of setting a poetic text to music.²

Given that studies on the textual mechanisms that come into play when setting a poem to music and their rationale are scarce, we propose to make a systematic comparison of the changes between the text of poems and the songs that set them to music, supported by Digital Humanities techniques such as automatic collation and annotation. We will try to classify different procedures that are carried out with the text of the poem to convert it to song lyrics.

We will try to answer questions such as which are the most frequent changes at the textual level when setting a poem to music. Likewise, we will verify whether it is more common for the changes to have a more structural, semantic or phonic dimension, and we will see whether these changes are determined by needs of the song medium.

These questions will be answered by means of critical collation analysis, in which we will systematically compare the poetic text with its musical adaptation. In this manner, we intend to better understand the changes that occur at the textual level in musical settings.

¹ Accessible from: <https://poemas.uned.es/>

² Throughout this study, we will be working with the so-called musical settings. However, it is important to note that this term will be used interchangeably with “musical adaptations”, in order to maintain linguistic fluidity in the text and reflect the diversity of approaches present in the field of study.

Type of change	Affected element	Linguistic level	Relevance
Transposition	Word	Phonic	Major
Repetition	Verse	Structural	Minor
Omission	Fragment	Semantic	
Addition			
Substitution			

Table 1: Criteria used to categorise each textual alteration between a musical adaptation and its source poem

2 The Codification of Variants in Musical Adaptations of Poems

In order to compare them systematically we need to first create a typology of variations that we find in a musical setting with respect to the original poetic text. That is, we need to categorise these changes, which is not an easy task. This section will present our categorisation scheme after discussing the related literature.

An adaptation of the poem to music can be taken as an intermedial product. Rocío Badía, following the intermediality classification by Gil González and Pardo García (2018), classifies the musical setting of a poem as an example of extrinsic intermediality, since it is the “effective presence of a previous poem in a song” (Badía Fumaz 2022, p. 339). She also classifies this kind of setting to music, very respectful to the original poem, as a type of imitative transmediality, that is, the transfer of a work to a different artistic medium in such a way that it attempts to imitate, using the new medium, the original object (in this case the poem). This researcher points out that musical settings are usually based on poetic texts and rarely ever on other genres, although exceptions exist, and that there are few changes to the text in the lyrics, the minimum needed to achieve a successful song, such as the creation of refrains, repetitions of words, modernisation of words, among others (Badía Fumaz 2022, p. 349).

In order to describe how text is reorganised in these intermedial products, it is then necessary to be able to categorise the possible changes between poem text and song text. We developed a categorisation scheme (Table 1) and applied it to our corpus (Section 4). Let us first present the theoretical framework upon which our categorisation is based.

Rossana Dalmonte proposed applying André Martinet’s concept of expansion (Martinet 1980, p. 128) to address in what different ways music can expand the meaning of a poetic text (Dalmonte 2002). She referred to expansion as the possibility of adding elements to a work, in this case a poetic text, without changing the relationships and functions of its previous elements. She distinguished three fundamental types of expansion: phonological, grammatical and semantic. Although her proposal referred to how music expanded the original text, we will use these divisions, well established for classifying linguistic phenomena, for our classification of textual variants that we will see below.

According to Marcela Romano, who draws on Jakobson’s theories of inter-semiotic translation (Jakobson 1959), a poem is transcoded for entering into a

more complex sign system. In this system we find, on a virtual level of existence, the original verbal text, be it in its initial form, or, most frequently, transformed and reoriented. In this way, as Romano further explains, the initial text can be abbreviated, its verses turned into a refrain, its stanzas relocated, or combined with others by other poets or by the singer-songwriters themselves. The verbal text thus coexists with a musical text, created by the composer, adapted to the musical-rhythmic patterns of the verbal one (Romano 1994, p. 61).

Based on these studies and the textual comparison of poems and lyrics, we have created a classification scheme (Table 1) that includes different criteria for the analysis of textual variation in songs set to music.

The “type of change” column includes all types proposed by Romano except the combination of lines from the original poem with lines by a different author. In our analyses, we have considered this type of change to belong to the “addition” category when contents are added to the original poem, or to the “substitution” category when one element is replaced with another.

We have considered three discourse units at which a change can occur: at the word level, at the verse (i.e. poetry line) level, and at the fragment level. The word change type encompasses alterations involving individual words. Verse changes refer to alterations occurring at the level of a complete verse line in the source poem. Fragment changes address modifications at a broader level, potentially involving one or more sentences, and it is used here as a unit larger than a verse line from the source poem. It can manifest as a cluster of verses containing a single sentence or even several sentences.

We have not considered lower levels, such as morphological changes within the same word, but this may be relevant to future work.

At the linguistic level, we have taken into account the dimensions considered for the expansion operation (see above) by Dalmonte (2002).

We have also classified the changes according to their level of relevance.

It should be noted that for classifying changes according to the above scheme, we have relied on different studies on the structure of pop and rock songs (Watson 2003; Sloan et al. 2020; Rothman 2015; Binder 2017). These studies consider that the most common structural elements in pop and rock are the introduction, verse, chorus, bridge and conclusion, with variations in their organisation and also possible additional elements. Thus, a change is structural if an element happens to develop a function different from the one it had in the poem. The most frequent example is the case where two lines that appeared only once in the poem are repeated several times in the song in order to create a refrain or a chorus.

We are aware that, when studying adaptations, even if we do not find textual changes, we might consider that changes exist in the structural function of a verse or group of verses depending on the music that accompanies it. We want to clarify that what we document in this study are changes in the text that occur when adapting the poem to the structure of the new medium.

It will always be challenging to establish whether a change occurs solely to adapt the structural function of certain elements of the poem or if it is done for stylistic reasons. The most common scenario is that both reasons play a role. Finally, besides the classification scheme in Table 1, our annotation template

Relationship with poem	Number of songs
Similar musicalisation	585
Identical musicalisation	269
Quotation	24
Allusion	16
Intertextuality	7
Continuation	5
Influence	4
Transposition	3
Parody	2

Table 2: Overview of the types of musical adaptation collected in PoeMAS by December 2021

also included a column for comments. There we described some of the functions that the changes carried out have in the song. We have not followed a controlled vocabulary in these comments, since it was not practically possible to restrict the functions played by these changes to a predefined set, although we have tried to be systematic in recording the functions.

3 Corpus and Methods

To our knowledge, this is the first systematic analysis of textual variations that occur in musical adaptations based on a corpus study. The corpus used is the one provided by the PoeMAS project, which collects, in a publicly accessible database, a wide variety of Spanish song lyrics (from 1975 onward) based on poems. Each corpus entry provides valuable metadata (date of publication, performer or author, genre, etc.) and the texts of the poem and the song. In the corpus, the relationship between poem and song is classified according to a set of categories based on Genette (1997), as can be seen in Table 2.³

Table 2 reflects the distribution of poem–song relationships in the entire PoeMAS database (of which our corpus is a subset) as of December 2021, with almost a thousand records.

A total of 93.2% of the recordings have identical or similar musicalisations and only a handful constitute other types of approach to adapting the poem to the song. This suggests the relevance of focusing on the musical setting adaptation strategy, as we did in the present study.

Based on the PoeMAS database, we developed a corpus of poems and lyrics compliant with the Text Encoding Initiative guidelines (TEI Consortium 2022). The corpus name is ANVERSO.⁴

Our work draws from the 585-song subcorpus belonging to the “similar musicalisation” category in Table 2; “identical musicalisations” could obviously not be taken into account, since no textual changes are found in them. From

³ The vocabulary underlying the related database field was modified in 2023, but at the end of 2021, when the corpus study carried out here was developed, the categories were the nine ones mentioned above.

⁴ Accessible from: <https://github.com/claraimc/ANVERSO>

this subcorpus, a further selection was made by choosing the authors with the highest number of adaptations, in order to have a representative sample that allowed us to carry out two types of comparison. First, comparing each poem with each of its adaptations in a pairwise manner. Second, comparing the same poem's adaptations with each other. We have closely examined 65 song–adaptation pairs.

Once the selection was made, we first converted the TEI encoded files into plain text to then carry out the automatic collation. Collation is the practice of comparing texts in order to identify the differences between them. Usually, the common contents in the texts are aligned and the results of the comparison are presented as an alignment table, which allows us to easily see where the texts diverge. One of the disadvantages of the alignment table is its inability to handle the visualisation of transpositions (which are represented as unrelated omissions and additions).

We carried out a pairwise automatic comparison of the poem and its adaptations using the CollateX Python library (Dekker and Middell 2011). Thus, instead of comparing each poem with all its adaptations at the same time, we created an alignment table for each adaptation. Then, we examined each textual divergence, classifying it according to the four dimensions presented above (see Table 1 and process in Figure 1 named “Analysis”): type of change, affected element, linguistic level, relevance. It must be noted that each dimension was annotated with a single value. A dataframe presenting each variation, its annotated type and corresponding metadata was then created to facilitate quantitative analysis (Figure 1).

4 Results

The collation of this representative corpus has given us relevant data to shed light on the textual changes appearing when a poem is set to music, even when minor changes occur, providing valuable insights into the intricate relationship between text and musical adaptation.

Figure 2 shows the most common type of textual variation across adaptations, which turns out to be repetition at the level of words, verses (i.e. poetry lines) or fragments. It occurs in more than 80% of the adaptations. A more striking fact is the high frequency of substitution (i.e., the change of one word, verse, or fragment for another), which occurs in more than 50% of the musical settings studied.

Most of the changes, according to the corpus analysed, have a structural value (Figure 3), that is, they are variations in the text of the original poem that cause the new text to have a different structure. Accordingly, the changed elements have different functions from those they had in the original poem. This type of structural change includes repetitions of fragments or lines that acquire a new value in the song with respect to the rest of the text (refrain function, or conclusive function), when such a value was not present in the poem. Most of the adaptations present this type of change.

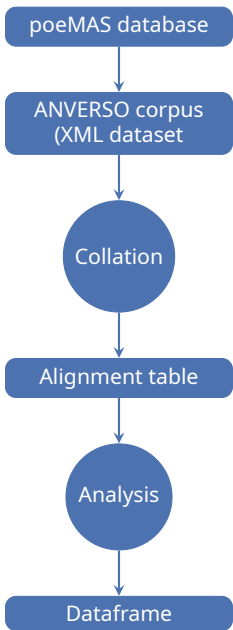


Figure 1: Data flow diagram with the stages we followed to develop the dataframe used in the current study

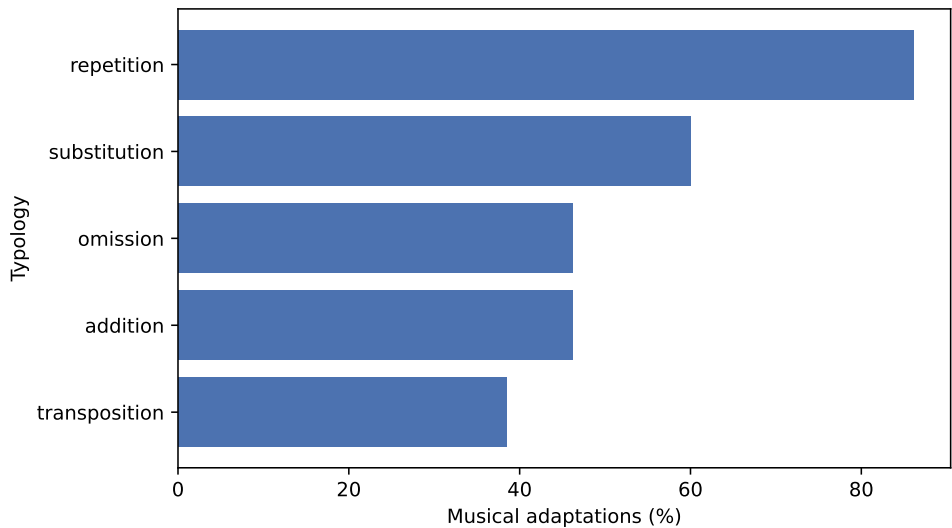


Figure 2: Frequency of textual changes. Proportion of adaptations showing each type of change

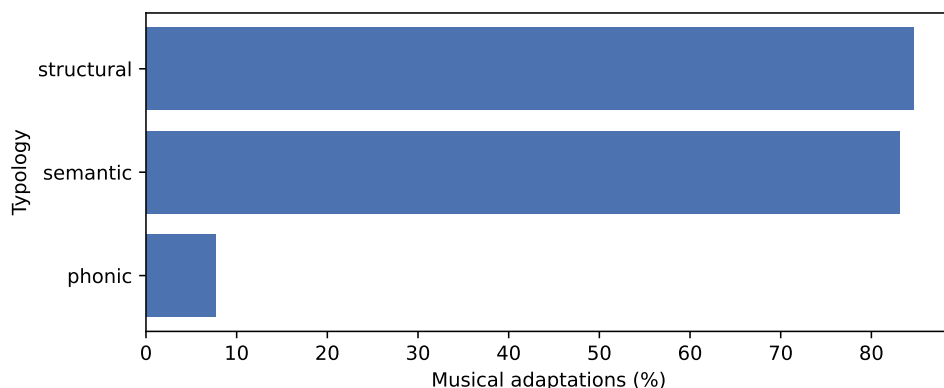


Figure 3: Change by level of analysis. Proportion of adaptations showing each type of change at the linguistic level

As can be seen in Figure 3, changes at the semantic level are almost as frequent as the structural ones. It should be noted that it was not possible to consider the omission of words or fragments of the poem that function as a hypotext as simultaneously structural and semantic, since we only allow one value per dimension (cf. Table 2). We chose to label such cases as semantic changes only. The same happens with the repetition of a word in an insistent manner, which changes the meaning of the base text. Such cases have been labelled either as a structural change or as a semantic change: If the change does not fulfil a very clear structural function within the song (bridge or refrain), it was labelled as a semantic change only.

As we can see in Figure 4, a very high number of adaptations include the modification of fragments, but there are changes at all levels. Nevertheless, it is initially surprising that more adaptations show modifications at the word level than at the line level.

Further investigation of the data reveals new information. Looking at the total number of modifications, instead of counting like in Figure 2–4 the number of adaptations (i.e. of songs) showing each modification type, we observe other trends. Figure 5 shows the percentage of each of the changes (substitution, addition, omission, repetition, or transposition) for each of the element types considered (fragment, line, or word). Thus analysed, although most of the songs studied present some type of repetition, at the fragment level, omission is even more common: It is more common for poem fragments to be omitted than it is for them to be repeated. At the line level, however, repetition is by far the most frequent. At the word level, substitution is the most frequent.

This significant difference between the type of changes that occur at each level is very relevant, because it can be related to different types of procedures when adapting the poem to the new medium. The frequent omission of fragments could be related to the temporal limitation of the new medium. To explore this hypothesis we calculated we examined the frequency of relevant

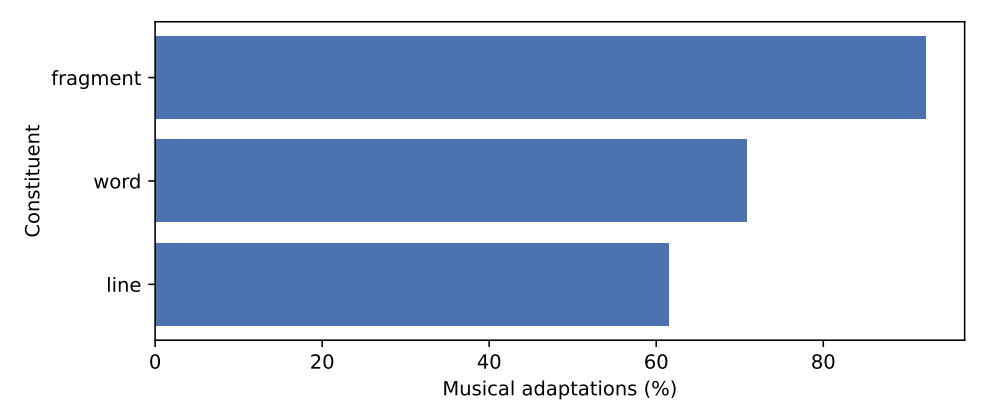


Figure 4: Sequence types modified in musical adaptations. Proportion of adaptations showing changes at the affected level category

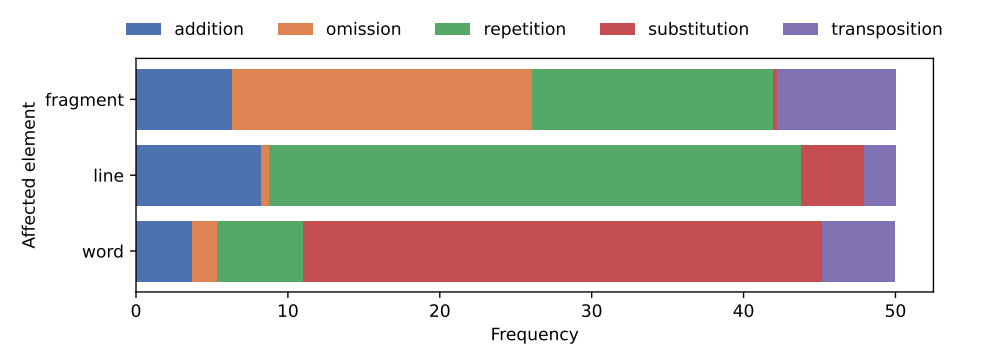


Figure 5: Type of change by affected element. Most frequent type of change per affected element. Percentage of each type of change per affected element

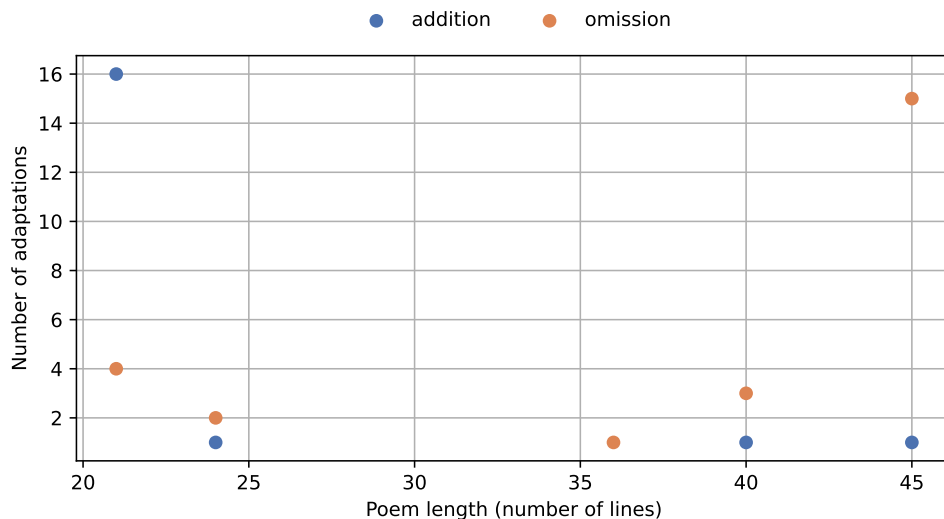


Figure 6: Frequency of relevant additions and omissions by poem length. Adaptations that present major additions and omissions by poem length

additions and omissions in relation to the length of the original poem evaluated by its line number (Figure 6).⁵

As anticipated, shorter poems tend to feature more additions, while longer poems are more prone to omissions. Although we can see that some long poems (with 40 and 45 verses) may present major additions, in all cases the same adaptation had major omissions as well. Pop and rock songs last, in general and quite homogeneously, “between three and five minutes” (Bennett et al. 2005, p. 135), and follow similar structures. The so-called AABA or 32-bar structure (Appen and Frei-Hauenschild 2015) or one of its variations, such as the very typical ABABCB (verse, chorus, verse, chorus, bridge, chorus), is often emphasised (Swindali 2020). When setting a song to music, these structures are typically achieved through repetition and omission of fragments.

If we filter the data to see the type of changes that have structural value (they might also have semantic or phonic value, but to a lesser extent and were thus labelled as structural) we find what we see in Figure 7.

The most frequent changes with structural function are the repetition of fragments and the repetition of whole lines of verse. Transposition is also relevant for all elements. This makes us think of fragments, lines or even isolated words that are repeated and carried from one place to another in the poem precisely to act as refrains. The examples are abundant. Here is one from *Romance del desterrado* by Emilio Prados, set to music by Paco Ibáñez. Repetitions are in italics and omissions are underlined>. We have marked substitutions, such as

⁵ This chart does not include the adaptations of “*Proverbios y cantares*” by Machado, a very long composition (306 lines).

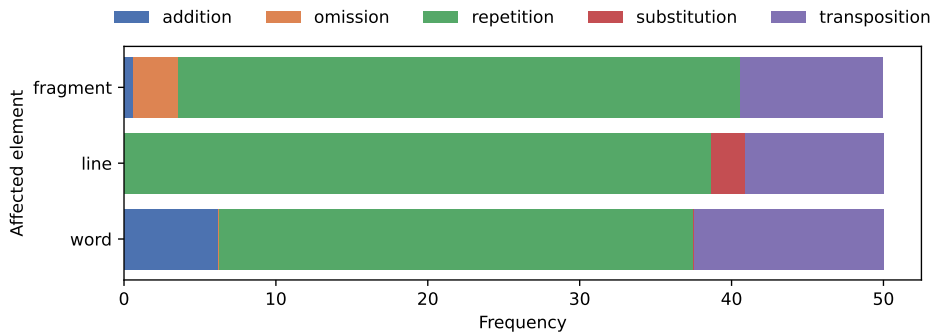


Figure 7: Type of change by affected element with structural value. The most frequent types of change with structural value at the level of affected element

substitutions of a word in the singular for a word in the plural, or vice versa, in bold:

¡Ay, nuevos campos perdidos,
campos de mi mala suerte!
Ahí se quedan tus olivos
y tus naranjos nacientes;

¡Ay, nuevos campos perdidos,
campos de mi mala suerte!
Allí se quedan tus olivos
y tus naranjos nacientes.

brilla el agua en tus acequias,
surcan la tierra tus bueyes
y yo cruzo tus caminos
y jamás volveré a verte.

Brilla el agua en tus acequias,
surcan la tierra tus bueyes
y yo cruzo tus caminos
y *jamás volveré a verte,*
y *jamás volveré a verte,*
y *jamás volveré a verte.*

Los tiernos brazos del trigo
entre tus vientos se mueren.
¡Ay, los brazos de mi sangre
son molinos de mi muerte!
No tengo casa ni **amigo**,
ni tengo un lecho caliente,
ni pan que calme **mis hambres**,
ni palabra que me aliente.

No tengo casa ni **amigos**,
ni tengo un lecho caliente,
ni pan que calme mi **hambre**,
ni palabra que me aliente.

¡Ay, cuerpos desheredados!
¿Cómo tu tronco sostienes,
si al que corta tus raíces
tu fresca sombra le ofreces?
Mal cuerpo me ha dado el mundo;
mal árbol que ni florece,

Brilla el agua en tus acequias,
surcan la tierra tus bueyes
y yo cruzo tus caminos
y jamás volveré a verte,
y jamás volveré a verte,
y jamás volveré a verte.

ni puede tener seguro
 fruto que en su rama crece.
 ¡Ay, el valor de mis manos!
 ¡Ay, los ojos de mi frente!
 ¡Ay, bajo la luz del alba!
 ¡Ay, bajo la sombra fuerte!
 Ya siempre andarán despiertos,
 despiertos sin conocerme,
 que sólo miran al viento
 por donde sus penas vienen.
 ¡Ay campo, campo lejano,
 donde mi color se muere;
 nunca encontrarás mi olvido
 si he de olvidar el perderte!

It is important to note that in our categorisation of the changes, as said above, we only annotated one value per criterion. We chose to label major omissions as operating at the semantic level, although they clearly also have a structural dimension. Thus, it would be desirable to review the data in this regard and enable multi-value fields.

Repetitions, omissions and transpositions of contents always entail some degree of semantic change, so we have also described the changes according to their greater or lesser relevance. We considered cases such as those seen in the previous example, in which modifications are made from “*amigo*” to “*amigos*” (from singular to plural) or from “*mis hambres*” to “*mi hambre*” (from plural to singular), to be of low relevance. We consider that stylistic factors are at work, but without a major semantic change.

What changes are made in the setting to music of a poem that entail major semantic changes? At this level, as shown in Figure 8, we mainly find substitutions of some words for others, omissions of whole fragments and repetitions and additions of lines.

Semantic change is the most frequent type of linguistic change (Figure 9). It should be noted that this category was used whenever fragments of considerable length are omitted, or verses are added. The omissions have been marked as semantic changes, because they usually eliminate a key part of the poem. Figure 7 also shows the importance of the addition of lines or fragments, an operation which also clearly has semantic value. However, the passage to the musical medium also weighs on the structure, as we can see in Figure 9, where we can see that there are many structural changes at the fragment level.

At the word level we also find certain changes of great semantic relevance, as the examples in Table 3 illustrate. The sentence “*Y guardan toneladas de asco por cada milímetro de dicha*” can be translated as “And you all harbour tons of disgust for every millimetre of joy”.

We find here several examples of changes classified as Type of change = substitution, Affected element = word, Linguistic level = semantic, Relevance = major. In the musicalisation, it seems that the sense of what is said in the poem

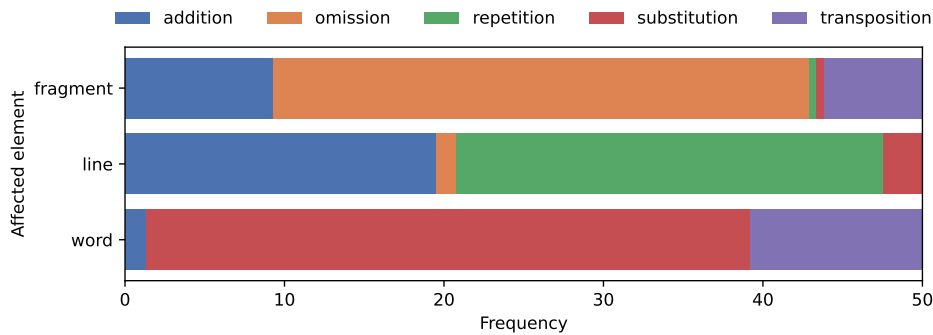


Figure 8: Type of change by affected element with semantic value and major relevance. Changes within the semantic dimension and major relevance

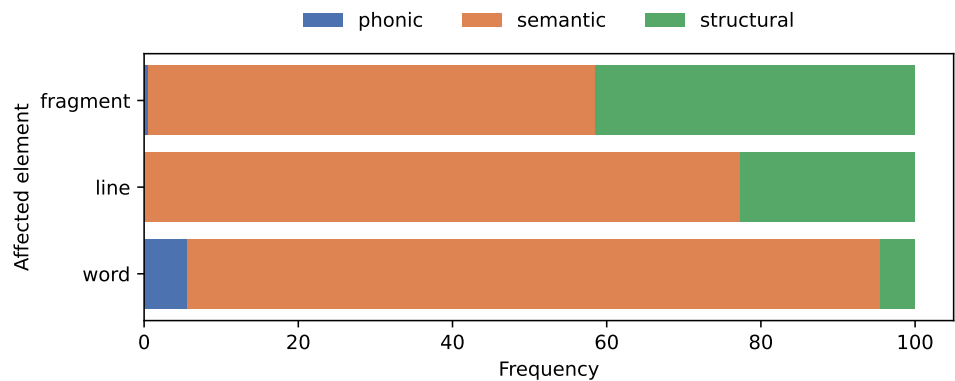


Figure 9: Type of change at the linguistic level. Most frequent type of change at the linguistic level

<i>Todos ustedes parecen felices</i> by Ángel González (1965)	<i>Todos ustedes parecen humanos</i> by Disidencia (2008)
y guardan toneladas de asco [disgust] por cada <i>milímetro</i> de <i>dicha</i>	y guardan toneladas de hostilidad [hostility] por cada <i>gramo</i> de <i>humanidad</i>

Table 3: Examples of semantic changes with major relevance

<i>[Yo voy soñando caminos]</i> by Antonio Machado (1907)	<i>Voy soñando caminos</i> by Carlos Cano (unknown)
“En el corazón tenía la espina de una pasión; logré arrancármela un día; ya no siento [I can’t feel my heart] el corazón”. Y todo el campo un mo- mento se queda, mudo y sombrío, medi- tando. ⁶	“En el corazón tenía la espina de una pasión; logré arrancármela un día; ya no tengo [I lost my heart] el corazón”. Y todo el campo un mo- mento se queda, mudo y sombrío, medi- tando.

Table 4: Example of semantic change that increases the intensity of the meaning

is softened through word substitutions that diminish the intensity of the base text.

Semantic change can also have the opposite function, i.e., increase the intensity of the song text as compared to the poem’s (example in [Table 4](#)).

5 Conclusion and Future Work

The analysis of the procedures that take place in such a mimetic form as the musical setting of a poem sheds light on some criteria guiding the choices carried out by authors in this artistic practice.

No matter how minimal the intervention in the text, there is always a process of appropriation by the song writer, who becomes in a way the “author” of this new text. The most frequent changes have semantic value, that is, they resemanticise. A clear resemanticisation occurs in the change to the new medium, but there are also semantic changes at the textual level itself.

The changes carried out involve a creative process, related to the variation we find in texts derived from the same poem text. As Pelegrín pointed out: “Variation is a process of creation: it involves the appropriation and recreation of oral literary procedures and structures in a daily experience” (our translation)⁷ ([Pelegrín 1984](#), p. 13).

In this sense, it is also relevant to investigate the different versions of musical settings that we find for the same poem. We have studied and analysed up to 26 versions of *La Saeta* by Antonio Machado. In them, there are significant variations with respect to the original poem, but we found very little variation among the musical versions. Many of them begin with the addition “Dijo una voz popular” (“A popular voice said”), which indicates that these adaptations are already made from another musical product, the song by Joan Manuel Serrat that first introduces that addition in 1969, and not from Machado’s poem directly. Zumthor said:

⁶ A gloss for these verses by Machado is: “In my heart I had / the thorn of a passion. / One day I pulled it out / now I feel no heart. / All the fields suddenly /are still, mute and somber: / meditating” (translated by Barnstone in [Machado 2013](#), p. 24).

⁷ In the original source: “*La variación es un proceso de creación: significa apropiación y recreación de procedimientos y estructuras literarias orales en una experiencia cotidiana y vivida*” ([Pelegrín 1984](#), p. 13).

Songs are, in fact, the least recognised subgroup of “popular poetry”. The criteria tend to slip away whenever a definition is attempted. Most frequently it is anonymity that may be construed dynamically. A song becomes “popular” when its source is forgotten. For this, however, we have to distinguish several degrees of “popularity”. It has been written that a song is “popular” when the public at a modern festival sings it in chorus, or when, as with protests songs, intense participation bespeaks a deep commitment to its message (Zumthor 1990, p. 15).

The example of La Saeta’s adaptations illustrates how the existence of this artistic object, the song, has achieved artistic success. While the memory of the original poem is preserved, it is the song itself that becomes popular and spreads through music. Laín Corona corroborates this, stating,

Consider “La saeta”, a poem by Machado that Joan Manuel Serrat set to music in “Dedicado a Antonio Machado, poeta” (1969). Of this song, 26 versions in Spanish have been accounted for in Spain, but they may not be the only ones. [...] Simply by listening to them, even without musical expertise, it is easy to determine that the 26 versions of “La saeta” derive from Serrat’s original melody (Laín Corona 2022, p. 436).

The lyrics of Serrat’s version, with all its additions, are passed on to subsequent adaptations, which naturally stem from the song rather than the poem. This demonstrates that in the popular repertoire, at least in the musical domain, the singer-songwriter’s version is more prevalent than Machado’s poem.

This would also justify an extension of our analysis, in order to establish a classification of textual variants that goes beyond a pairwise comparison and tackles instead a holistic analysis of all adaptations of the same poem.

On the other hand, we should also consider which changes are intrinsically motivated by the new medium and which ones, on the contrary, are motivated by style. In our study we have pointed out that many of the changes at the structural level are produced by the adaptation to the musical medium. This is the case with repetitions of fragments or lines, but also with omissions. Although they undoubtedly have semantic value, in most cases they have the function of shortening the poem to fit the length of the song or of creating bridges and refrains.

Repetition is thus the most frequent type of change. In this sense, Abeillé noted that the pop song “is a formula based on repetition, whose verbal content only becomes important and is remembered by being immediately associated with a melody and a given rhyme scheme” (our translation)⁸ (Abeillé 2013, p. 167). Thus, following Abeillé’s observation, repetitions can be seen as a change favoured by new medium.

Most of our planned future work entails an enhancement of the manual change annotation. Some limitations of our first analysis have already been pointed out in this contribution, such as the impossibility of assigning more than one category per analytical dimension. In addition, another change we would like to implement to the annotation scheme is the decomposition of the

⁸ In the original source: “es una fórmula basada en la repetición, cuyo contenido verbal solo cobra importancia y es recordado al ser inmediatamente asociado a una melodía y a un esquema rítmico determinado” (Abeillé 2013, p. 167).

unit “word” into “lexeme” and “morpheme” and the addition of new analytical dimensions such as “motivation/rationale”.

Finally, we would like to complete the study by closely examining more adaptations and perhaps attempt an automatic classification of the textual changes.

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