

## **HARMONIZING IMAGINATION: THE MULTIFACETED LANGUAGE OF AMERICAN SONGWRITING**

**Elena Petrovna Kovalenko**

Department of Germanic and Finno-Ugric Philology, Faculty of Germanic Philology, Kyiv National Linguistic University, Ukraine.

### **Abstract:**

The song, as a multifaceted cultural phenomenon, has long captivated the attention of various academic disciplines, each offering a unique perspective on this intricate art form. This paper explores the rich tapestry of the song, delving into its literary, historical, and cultural dimensions. Drawing on insights from linguistics, folklore, and musicology, we uncover the intricate interplay of elements that make the song a captivating cultural artifact. Within the realm of popular songs, we find a reflection of the artist's perception of the world, a mirror through which societal values, beliefs, and traditions are refracted. As we examine this phenomenon, we reveal the deep connections between the popular song and broader aspects of human culture, including history, everyday life, material culture, ceremonies, and the collective mindset of a nation. It becomes evident that the common elements shared between musical and verbal languages are integral units within the broader framework of cultural expression. Our analysis encompasses both popular and traditional songs, with the latter firmly rooted in the domain of folklore. In this exploration, we identify points of convergence between linguistics and musical folklore. These intersections include the presence of socially embedded linguistic invariants within folklore, the linear structure inherent in both musical and verbal texts, and the dialectical nuances in speech that resonate with the national intonations found in music. Moreover, we conceptualize the song as a holistic entity, comprising musical composition, poetic text, and performance. In doing so, we acknowledge that each song, whether it belongs to the realm of popular music or tradition, is a testament to cultural creativity. It is an art form that bears the imprint of its author's cultural identity and serves as a bridge between the creator and the audience, with both contributing to the ongoing narrative of cultural perception.

**Keywords:** Song, Cultural Phenomenon, Folklore, Linguistics, Musicology

### **1. The Song as a Cultural Phenomenon**

The song as a many-sided phenomenon is a subject of studying of various sciences, each of which, as a rule, focuses the attention on one of aspects of the considered phenomenon. The literary world of a popular song is "reflected and passed through the artist's perception of world reality" (Алексеева, 1974, 6). History, everyday life and material culture, beliefs, ceremonies, traditions, features of thinking, including musical one, nation mentality in whole are embodied in the popular song. Researchers consider that "common

elements of structures of musical and verbal language can be one of units of culture language" (Хауменко, 1993, 37).

We analyze either popular or traditional songs; the latter ones belong to the domain of folklore. Linguistics and musical folklore have points of intersection. It is, first of all, realization of socially fixed in folklore invariant (language elements, "text code" in the form of versions of the individual speech, folklore work performance); the linearity of the musical text similar to linearity of verbal, its division in repeating units; dialecticisms in the speech and national intonation in music (Никитина, 1991, 14-15).

I consider the song as the aggregate of music, poetic text and performance. Besides, each text (and the song, popular or traditional, is not the exception) as well as any literary artwork has the author as the subject of cultural creativity, and the addressee as the subject of culture perception.

The song represents complex unity of words, melody and manner of performance. Without any of this component, it will not be complete. An important role is played by a melodic component (Panasenکو, 2013), which as one of components of musical intonation participates in images creation, in actualization of the utterance meaning and in expression of emotions and feelings of the author and the performer. Arrangement of a well-known song, manner of its performance and many other things are of great importance.

### **1. The notion of the Song Discourse**

Scholars have analyzed discourse and its various types in details. As far as we can treat the song from different points of view, song discourse is worth discussing. Song discourse contains such modules or blocks as CULTURE and SOCIAL MEDIUM, TIME, SPACE, which influence such modules as AUTHOR/S which create words and music; POETIC TEXT, which includes such elements as text semiotic and semantic space, language and speech means and characters; SONG, which belongs to a specific genre and has music, arrangement and performance and ADDRESSEE (listener/reader) (Панасенко, 2002; Panasenکو, 2014).

As far as my aim is to highlight linguistic and extralinguistic means of creating images, I will only touch upon some of these modules paying more attention to text characters. CULTURE and SOCIAL MEDIUM are important markers in the songs text.

As it is known "language is a culture bearer; culture changes – language as a result also changes. Culture in a broad sense consists of two aspects: civilization history and sociological component" (Глазунов, 1993, 102). In the song, these language components harmoniously unite: sociological situation is revealed in historical context. The last one is expressed in lyrics explicitly; it can be sometimes missing, not being of paramount importance for such a genre, as a lyrical song, which accent is shifted towards the emotive component (Panasenکو, 2014).

Some words about song text or lyrics as a song basic element. Language and speech means of various levels take part in female and male images creation (morphological – diminutive suffixes and so forth; lexical – poeticisms, slang, colloquialisms, dialecticisms, etc.; phonetic – alliteration, assonance, rhythm, rhyme, etc.; semasiological – metaphor, epithet, simile, etc.; syntactic – various types of repetition, parallel and emphatic constructions, etc.), some of which will be discussed below.

## **2. System of Song Images**

I am interested in the system of song images and either linguistic or extralinguistic ways of their creation. Image is often called the main unit of text perception. It is precisely at the level of images communication with reality; assessment of the validity is carried out and the issue of adequacy of understanding is being resolved.

The system of images can also be considered in linguo-cultural and evaluative aspects. Researchers note that for the general socio-cultural paradigm four concepts are characteristic: "the beautiful person", "the brave man", "the obedient child", and "the kind woman" (Писанова, 1997, 16). Special studies of system of the images fixed in lexical and phraseological units of language, connected with spiritual, social and material types of culture have been conducted in various languages. As a result "old" stereotypes of consciousness, e.g., in Russian, characterizing the woman conceding on the intellectual properties to the man were allocated. However recently these stereotypes are forced out by others in which merits of the woman are reflected: "faithful wife", "faithful companion", "female-mother" and some others (Ольшанский, 1999, 19). The image is created by the author with the help of literary means (Эсалнек, 2001, 18, 44-45). In the song, such means are language and music.

Above I have mentioned such important song discourse modules, as CULTURE and SOCIAL MEDIUM. They are cornerstone of the cultural and national male and female stereotypes. In our song material it is also possible to find some of such stereotypical images: **a man** (in woman's estimation) – *the hero, the defender* ("Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier" – traditional); *the unfaithful beloved* ("Careless Love" – traditional); *the faithful and reliable companion till the old age* ("I Love You Truly" by Carrie Jacobs-Bond); (in man's estimation: about himself and about fellow-soldiers) – *the fearless soldier* ("Just before the Battle Mother" by George F. Root); *traitor, coward* (in the same place); **a beloved woman** (in man's estimation) – *fine* ("Daisy Bell" by Harry Dacre), *special* ("The Yellow Rose of Texas" – traditional, "Ida" by Eddie Leonard); **mother** – *a home and Homeland symbol* ("Just before the Battle Mother" by George F. Root).

## **3. Linguistic Means of Creating Images**

Language gives many opportunities for the creation and combination of language means of various level. Verbal images in song texts are created by a set of all used language receptions. First of all, these are means of stylistic lexicology, semasiology, phonetics (rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia) and some others.

### **3.1. Lexical Stylistic Means**

As for lexicon, here I would like to emphasize especially the role of words with a strong cultural connotative component, which can have the intellectual and expressive-emotional contents, a rationalistic and emotional assessment (Бельчиков, 1988). I mean some words, which cause steady associations in native speakers and are connected with cultural and historical traditions. This lexicon is nationally original and can be found in many either literary or folklore texts. These are some proper names and common ones, to which belong such words and word combinations, as: *Yankee Doodle, Cindy, Buffalo gals, Yellow rose of Texas, Clementine, the cowboy, the southerner, the northerner; coyote, jackal, skunk; sequoia, orange blossom*, etc.

Song vocabulary is extremely interesting to the linguist thanks to some historical reasons and its national features.

Russian scholar I.R. Galperin (1971, 63) claims, that the word stock of language may be represented as a definite system, in which different aspects of words may be singled out as interdependent. He divides the English word stock into three main layers: the literary layer, the neutral layer and the colloquial layer.

The literary layer in our language material is presented by poetic words and archaisms, e.g.:

*"Hit her foot against a splinter,*

*Fell into the **foaming brine**". "Clementine" (poeticism)*

*"**Farethee well, farethee well,***

***Farethee well, my fairy fay**". "Polly Wolly Doodle" (archaisms)*

The colloquial layer in our language material is presented by dialectic words, jargonisms and colloquialisms, e.g.:

*"I wanna make that **gal** my wife, **Gal** my wife, **gal** my wife".*

*"Buffalo girls **won'cha** come out tonight*

*Come out tonight, come out tonight". "Buffalo Gals" (dialecticisms)*

*"You ought **ter** see my Cindy*

*She lives away down South*

*"I wish I **was** an apple*

***A-hangin'** on a tree*

*If I were made of sugar*

***A-standin'** in the town". "Cindy" (colloquialisms)*

Lexicon is closely connected with the genre of a song. If we take, for example, such a genre as cowboy songs ("The streets of Laredo" – traditional, "Bury me not on the lone prairie" – traditional, "Goodbye, Old Paint (I'm leaving Cheyenne)" – traditional) we may find there a lot of interesting characters created by lexical means (Panasenکو, 2008). The song "I ride an old Paint" is included into many cowboys song albums and has many interpretations of its performance. It originated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when cattlemen were already well established in the American West. The beloved pinto pony, "Old Paint" and bovine "little doggies" become favourite characters of cowboy songs (Appleby, Stone 1991: 382).

Vocabulary of this song deserves special mentioning. We come across such a word as **coulee** – (Webster Dict.) chiefly Western U.S. – a deep ravine or gulch, usually dry, that has been formed by running water (*They feed in the coulees*); **draw** – a gully shallower than a ravine (*they water in the draw*); **pony** – not a modern one, but in the meaning "wild horse" (*...when I die take my saddle ...and put it on my pony*); **doggies** (in this song) and **dogies** in many others ("Git along, Little dogies") (*ride around little doggies*) – in the language of the American West, a motherless calf is known as a *dogie*; *to throw the animal* – a specific movement with the help of lasso and many others.

The text of the couplets is the 1<sup>st</sup> person narrative, thus we may claim, that the author of the song is the cow-boy. People of this profession were not well educated, to enhance this image, the author employs many colloquialisms and mistakes in the text which from stylistic point of view are very interesting, e.g. *I ride an old paint, I ride an old Dan* – the article may have stylistic meaning, when it is used with proper names, here

it has the meaning "a certain"; *Dan* is Western pronunciation of *Dun* (a duncolored horse with a black mane and tail).

Then *He is going to throw the hoolihan, They feed in the coulees* – hoolihan /hooligan, after the Irish surname Hooligan, a ruffian or hoodlum or behaving like hooligan. In this case, nominal meaning of the word is substituted with the logical one, but as far as this word is applied not to a man, but to young animals, we may speak about metaphorical shift. It is interesting to observe that the word *hoolihanis* is used in the plural and with the definite article. The lyrical hero names "hoolihan" young wild cattle which are *fiery and snuffy*, the older ones sometimes lead away domestic animals with them. Here we have such a stylistic semasiological device as synecdoche, which is very often connected with the use of the singular number (...*just to through the hoolihan, They feed in the coulees...*). These wild animals are described with the help of emotionally charged words (*Their tails are all matted, their backs are all raw*).

Research of song lexicon allows to speak about the creation period, the author (or the social group which has generated this work of art), the cultural environment and realities of ethnos or the nation.

### 3.2. Syntactic Stylistic Means

Stylistic syntax is represented in our poetic texts by inversion combined with anaphoristic repetition: *Black, black, black is the color of my true love's hair* ("Black Is the Color of My True Love's Hair" – traditional).

Polysyndeton with the conjunction "and" imitates the bustling activity and emphasizes the flow of the narration:

**And** when ye come, **and** all the flow'rs are dying

If I am dead, as dead I well may be

Ye'll come **and** find the place where I am lying **And** kneel **and** say an «Ave» there for me.

**And** I shall hear, tho' soft you tread above me

**And** oh, my grave shall warmer, sweeter be

For ye will bend **and** tell me that you love me **And** I shall sleep in peace until you come to me.

This example is taken from the song "Danny Boy" – words by Frederick Edward Weatherly, music – traditional) "Danny Boy" is considered to be an unofficial signature song and anthem, particularly by Irish Americans and Irish Canadians(Danny Boy).

In the poetic text we come across the cases of patterned repetition, namely anadiplosis:

*Just to keep her from the foggy, foggy dew.*

("The Foggy, Foggy Dew" – traditional)

Parallel constructions also belong to a very frequent phenomenon in the song:

**Bill Jones had a daughter,**

**Bill Jones had a son.** ("I ride an old Paint" – traditional)

### 3.3. Semasiological Stylistic Means

Semasiological means create different images, but in the examples below they mainly create poetic female images, though in the first example the image of a dying cowboy is created. It is done, e.g., with the help of simile combined with full parallelism:

**As I walked down in the streets of Laredo**

**As I walked down in Laredo one day,**



*I spied a **cowpuncher**, all wrapped in white linen* **Wrapped up in white linen and cold as the clay.**

("The streets of Laredo" – traditional)

Now some examples of simile:

a) *I got a gal at the head of the creek Goin up t' see her 'bout the middle of the week Kiss her on **the mouth, just as sweet as any wine***

*Wraps **herself** around me **like a sweet potato vine.***

("Cripple Creek" – traditional)

b) **Eyes like the morning star, cheeks like the rose,**

*Laura was a pretty girl everybody knows.* ("Colorado Trail" – traditional)

c) **Her brow is like the snow-drift,**

**Her neck is like the swan,**

**Her face it is the fairest, That 'er the sun shone on.**

("Annie Laurie" – words by William Douglas, music by Lady John Scott)

In the last example simile is enhanced by hyperbole.

The song text also includes euphemistic periphrasis. The heroine instead of saying "I don't want to die", says:

*She cried "my love, don't you murder me*

**I'm not prepared for eternity."**

("The Banks of the Ohio" – traditional)

Of course, in the songs there are many metaphors, especially in description of a girl/woman whom the narrator loves dearly. In the examples below, metaphor is combined with simile:

*There's a **yellow rose in Texas**, that I am going to see...*

**She's the sweetest rose of color** *this darky ever knew,*

**Her eyes are bright as diamonds, they sparkle like the dew.** ("The Yellow Rose of Texas – traditional)

From the examples above, we see how images are formed with the help of linguistic means. Dialectal words show the origin of the narrator or the place where events unfold; colloquialisms, vulgarisms, slang, etc. indicate educational and cultural background of the narrator. Metaphor and means, which have metaphoric character (simile, epithet, personification, figurative periphrasis) create images of women of unreal beauty, worthy of admiration.

#### **4. Musical Means**

Speaking about musical means of creating images it is possible divide them into three groups. The first one includes **tonal characteristics**: type of melody, key, i.e. the main tonality of a composition, intervals, harmony, mode (major or minor), etc. To the next group belong **dynamic characteristics**: dynamic nuances, accent, etc. And the last group, **temporal characteristics**, includes meter, pauses, value of a note or a pause, etc. (Panasenکو, 2013, 145). Musical means allow to feel visually "the appearance of heroes, to see their portraits, to understand their internal characteristics, deeply to open motives of their actions" (Кэ Ян, 1997, 1).

There are different types of melody development, such as repetition, modification, sequence and leading notes (leading tone)(Васина-Гроссман, 1978, 104). Sposobin (Способин, 1958, 168-169) indicates five basic types: **repetition** of identical sound several times; **leading note** (preparing for the appearance of this

or that scale tone with the help of nearby (introductory) notes; **ascending movement**, i.e., transition to higher sounds, which is often connected with the tension growth; **descending movement**, i.e. transition to lower sounds, which is often connected with the decline in the tension; **wave-like movement**, i.e. sequence of ascending and descending transitions, which consists of leaps (i.e., wider intervals) and smooth movement (i.e., narrower intervals).

## **5. Song Analysis**

All the set of linguistic and musical means work in harmony; they are interdependent and interrelated. Very often syntactic repetitions are connected with repetition with the type of melody development or with the repetition of the note several times, creating effect of insistence, self-assurance, accentuating several times something, which is important for the author and correspondingly must be taken in the same way by the listener. Now let us on the example of two American songs see how language and music work and what images are created in the text and in the minds of listeners.

We will consider by what linguistic and musical means some female and male images are created by the author. Let us start with a lyrical song "I love you truly". This song was written by Carrie Jacobs-Bond at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1912 the song became hit №1 in the United States. In the 1930s it enjoyed a wide popular revival – and has since become a mainstay of wedding and anniversary celebrations worldwide (Appleby, Stone 1991: 381).

### **I Love You Truly**

*I love you truly, truly, dear.*

*Life with its sorrow, life with its tear, Fades into truly, dear when I feel you are near, For I love you truly, truly, dear.*

*Ah! love, 'tis something to feel your kind hand,*

*Ah! yes, 'tis something by your side to stand; Gone is the sorrow, Gone doubt and fear, For you love me truly, truly, dear.*

Speaking about the vocabulary, there are many emotionally charged word with positive connotation: *truly, dear, your kind hand*, which are repeated several times: *I love you truly, truly, dear* – epiphora; exclamations *Ah*, which at the beginning of the phrase forms the anaphoristic repetition. But life is not a bed of roses, and the author with the help of such a stylistic device as antithesis reminds the reader/listener about it: *Life with its sorrow, life with its tear, Gone is the sorrow, Gone doubt and fear*.

But true, sincere love conquers all the misfortunes, sorrow, doubt and fear go away and a happy couple at first dances their first wedding dance under this music and then celebrates their silver or golden anniversary of their wedding.

The narrator of the text is a man; the performer of this song as well as the listener can be of any sex. Above I have mentioned different modules of song discourse and arrangement as one of it. I have found different arrangements of this song. It was performed by such outstanding singers as Perry Como, Al Bowlly, Al Martino; by different orchestras (101 String Orchestra, Richard Hayman Symphony Orchestra). These and other recordings (piano only, e.g.) are available at YouTube. No wonder that at the website (<http://artsongcentral.com/2007/bond-i-love-youtruly/>) we can find sheet music in three keys: in A-flat major, in C major, in F major; at other sites I found one more key. I will analyze the version of the song written in F major.

The text is a song **form**; the form of the couplet is two-part simple, with the reprise. Form **stability** is created exactly thanks to the reprise, though the reprise is not very precise. In harmony tonic (T) sounding prevails (in the 1<sup>st</sup> phrase, at the beginning of the song – T – T II – D; in the last phrase – T – T – T – T), which creates the feeling of the calmness and stability.

The **tonality** under analysis is F-dur, which is so called "pastoral" tonality; its pitch creates the image of the serene country nature.

The **melody** imprecisely repeats the song beginning. Second intonations in it (descending, creating at the beginning of a song an image of entreaty, a request) disappear. In the reprise it is at first the repetition of sounds, and then the movement on the steady sounds: V – III – I. Moreover, the movement goes from more unstable sound to the steady one. The melody renders the text in general, without taking into account speech intonation; it subordinates the text to itself, changing the semantic loading of the sentence. It is the information concerning music in general and now we will analyze two couplets separately.

#### Couplet 1

**I Love You Truly**  
Words and Music by Carrie Jacobs-Bond

Andante con amore

Voice

Piano

*Impasto*

*rall.*

*rall.*

The 1<sup>st</sup> sentence. The word *truly* is accentuated twice. Music renders this repetition by different harmonization. Moreover, the 2<sup>nd</sup> phrase with this word starts not with the expected resolution DV IT, but with the subdominant harmony (triad of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade). Such a device creates beauty of sounding. Without getting expected resolution, listeners focus their attention on the word *truly*.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence. The melody and harmony precisely repeat the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, only right at the end in the accompaniment there appear the main sound – the tonic (T), creating stability.

The **accompaniment** in which arpeggio appears relieves the monotony of the tune. Sounding of a chord is as though stratified – quietly being rolled wave, softly envelops three melodies. The word *sorrow* does not receive those expressive means, which would discover the sense it contains. It turns out that "grief washing is light.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the couplet (beat 13) starts with the modulation into another tonality (D-moll) via DV. Harmony dominant sounds during two beats. On the word *dreams* there is the resolution in T (tonality D-moll).



This is the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> phrase. The 2<sup>nd</sup> phrase begins in the tonality D-moll, at the end of it tensely sounds underrated VII<sub>7</sub> (D<sub>o</sub>). This chord sounds tensely stop the melody development and, at the same time, it is the **culmination** of the whole song in the word *near*.

The chord by inclination had to be resolved in F-dur dominant, but it sounds as a question on which there is no answer. Everything as though hangs in mid-air and dissolving, fades. The main tonality F-dur comes back. The word *truly* is being accentuated again, but its sounding in the 1<sup>st</sup> phrase is shorter, than at the beginning of the song.

The word *dear* in the 1<sup>st</sup> phrase comes to an end by the III scale degree. At the end of the song it is the steady T – I scale degree, which sounds as two beats.

As I have already mentioned there are many varieties of this song arrangement. Sometimes the tune is identical for both couplets and sometimes there are two music sheets. In one version I have found different tunes. E.g., the word *sorrow* more corresponds to the harmony, than the word *dreams* in the 1<sup>st</sup> couplet. It has already become grief, and a stop on this chord, and this sounding with the shade of grief says that there were dreams, but they had never come true. This chord in the 1<sup>st</sup> couplet as though prepares the listener for the next couplet. The word *fear* in this couplet also receives that very sounding which precisely transfers the condition of intensity and fear. Thus musical expressive means prepare us for perception of what will be further. It is obvious that the 1<sup>st</sup> couplet doesn't bring to light precisely and fully contents of the text. More exact compliance of the text and music is observed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> couplet.

The use of simple binary form (AB) leads to that that there is no stability and confidence. And the reprise (4 beats) can't create this stability since dimensions of the form are too small for this purpose. It is perceived rather as the conclusion, end, instead of repetition.

## Couplet 2

2

Bond - I Love You Truly

27 *p* Ah! love, 'tis some-thing to feel your kind

28 *p* *legato* hand, Ah! yes, 'tis some-thing by your side to stand; Gone is the

35 *rall.* sor-row, Gone doubt and fear, For you love me truly, truly, dear.

This Free edition has been created for ArtSongCentral.com  
and is based on the 1906 edition published by Carrie Jacobs-Bond & Son.

Besides in the song there are only two couplets. It also cannot create the stability of the form. Though the basic principle of a form of development offered by Asafyev (1971: 129) i:m:t remains: i – impulse – m – development – t – end + 3 transitions.

Summing up the role of musical means, I would like to mention, that some of them are more important some are less, but all of them work simultaneously. Each piece of music is performed with definite tempo, which is usually mentioned at the very beginning. This song has many arrangements, but in every version, the tempo of performance is the same: *Andante con amore*. The title "I love you truly" is enhanced by the recommended tempo – "moderate with love".

There is also one more important element of music, dynamics, which refers to the volume of a sound. Like the tempo, dynamics in all the arrangements is identical: **p** – piano; in each musical phrase there is *crescendo* in the second beat, which turns into *diminuendo* at the end of the sentence.

The very last phrase "For I love you truly, truly, dear" has the note *rall.* on the syllable *tru-* of the second word, which means *rallentando* or broadening of the tempo, progressively slower.

The song "Just before the Battle Mother" was written in 1863 by George Rut and treats the period of Civil war in the USA. Its author is a man; it is the 1<sup>st</sup> person narrative and the narrator is a soldier who a minute of a respite before the battle addresses himself to his mother. The song consists of three couplets and a refrain. In each couplet and in the refrain the man not only addresses to his mother, but describes soldiers, comrades in arms and traitors who stayed at home. The USA is said to be the country of family and religion.

In this plan it is especially a national song, in which the author addresses himself to mother and to God: *Comrades... are...*

*Filled with thoughts of home and God, we'll perish nobly there.*

**Lyrics**

1. <i>Just before the battle, mother, I am thinking most of you, While upon the field we're watching enemy in view. Comrades brave are 'round me lying, Filled with thoughts of home and God well they know that on the morrow, sleep beneath the sod.</i>	2. <i>Oh, I long to see you, mother, And the loving ones at home, But I'll never leave our banner, Till in honor I For can come. Tell the traitors all around you</i>
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**CHORUS:**

*Farewell, mother, you may never*

*That their cruel words we  
know, In every battle kill  
our soldiers By the help  
they give the foe.*

**CHORUS:**

*Press me to your heart again, But, oh, you'll not forget me, mother, If I'm numbered with the slain.*

3. *Hark! I hear the bugles sounding,*

*'Tis the signal for the fight,*

*Now, may God protect us, mother, As He ever does the right.*

*Hear the "Battle-Cry of Freedom,"*

*How it swells upon the air,*

*Oh, yes, we'll rally 'round the standard, Or we'll perish nobly there.*

**CHORUS:**

**Lyrics are in the Public Domain**

The text abounds in evaluative lexicon, thus soldiers are opposed to traitors: *Comrades brave are 'round me lying; Tell the traitors all around you, That the cruel words we know, In every battle kill our soldiers By help they give the foe.* In the text military terms are used: *battle, enemy, banner, soldiers, bugle sounding, signal for the fight, standard, to rally*, which stylistic function is the creation of true to life atmosphere of a military situation. From one hand, colloquial forms, inversion characterize the soldier as a simple, uneducated person: *'round, 'tis; comrades brave, for well they know, In every battle kill our soldiers.* On the other hand, the use of archaisms (*morrow, woe, hark*), euphemistic periphrases (*... they know that on morrow Some will sleep beneath the sod; Farewell, mother, you may never Press me to your breast again; If I'm numbered with the slain*), describing death, speak about poetic nature of the author.

The storyteller uses synonyms (*enemy – foe, to be killed – to be slain – to perish, hark – hear*), belonging either to literary, or lofty lexicon.

In this text it is possible to consider an antithesis as the main stylistic device:

positive heroes and villains are opposed (soldiers – traitors), the world – war, the house – a battlefield, life – death, to remember – to forget, lie in an entrenchment – to be constructed for fight near a standard.

As for the phonetic aspect, the so-called "eye" rhyme (*home – come*) takes place. Only the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> stanza are rhymed.

The analysis of language means shows that the main images in this text are brave soldiers and cowardly traitors. The image of the storyteller and mother is created indirectly. Now we will examine, what role of music in this song is, and what images are caused by it in the listener.

Above I have already mentioned numerous arrangements of the previous song under the analysis. "Just before the Battle Mother" also has many variants arranged for the piano only, for the voice and piano, for mandolin, etc., in different keys: B-dur, C-dur, and G-dur. The variant of the sheet music presented below is not the best, but it is the shortest one; other variants consist of 2-3 pages. What is important and missing here will be given from another variant.



It is the **song-form** with a refrain; a couplet is a simple binary form with the similar 2<sup>nd</sup> part and a reprise, which consists of 16 beats. In the refrain, the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence repeats a couplet material, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence is the exact repetition of the first if to consider music without text.

The smaller quantity of beats in a refrain creates unbalance of the form and causes in the listener the desire to hear the continuation.

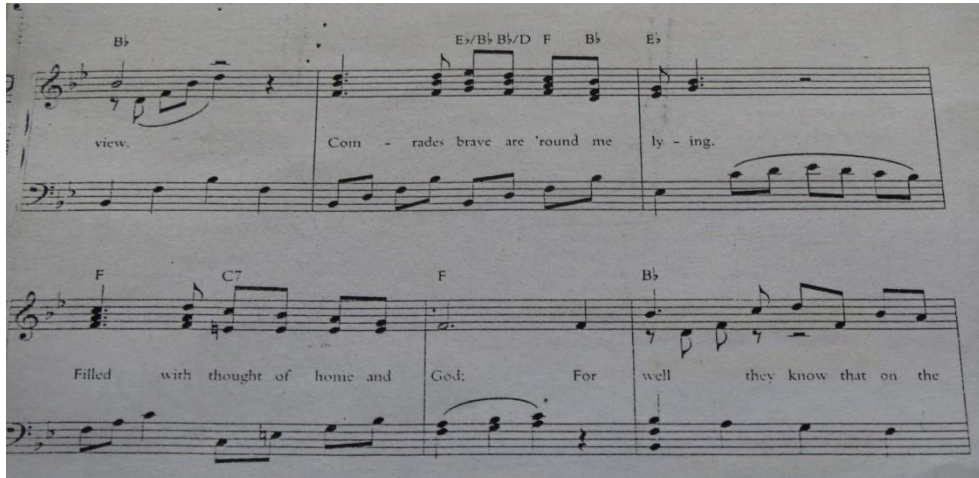
As a whole in music there is no development: the **melody** all the time comes back to the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence without changing at all, reminding a movement in a circle. But it is not a rondo form since there is no tonal comparison. **Harmony** also is not distinguished by variety: it is the sequence T – S – D – T. Change of harmony is in general rhythmical – each one occupies one beat. On the word *for* (*For well they know that on the morrow*) the reprise begins one downbeat earlier. It is the anacrusis, reminding the deep breath.

In the song, the **time signature** is C, which is a simple duple time meter signature, but the accompaniment creates the pattern, characteristic for quadruple time signature. In some versions of the song, the

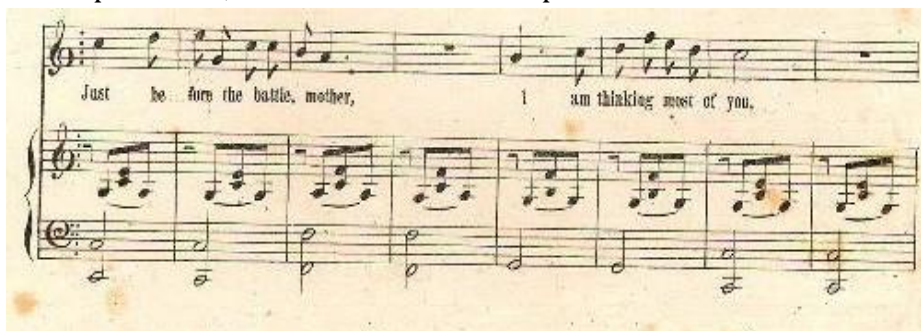


**accompaniment** in a refrain starts playing an expressive role. In two versions, which I present below, which have different keys the role of accompaniment is vividly seen.

The accompaniment creates continuous movement in those places when the melody as though fades and reminds steps of a person: sometimes accurate and measured, sometimes stopping for a while.



The image of the storyteller, which is not vividly described in lyrics, is created by music, namely by the accompaniment, as it comes from examples of below and above.



There appear pauses on downbeats and relatively strong beats. At the end of each phrase there is a stop in a melody development, which is created by rhythmic means – by a syncope. But it is rather a continuation of sounding at the expense of pauses. The phrase termination as though hangs in mid-air, without finding itself a support; there is a long lag of the sound, time stopping a current.

Thus, various musical expressive means take part in creation song images. The **melody** draws the indecisive man, who does not know how to express his feelings. The melody is closely connected with harmony, the melody as though tries to come off harmony, but it cannot.

**Harmony** – harmonious means create the culmination at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences in the solo part and at the end of the refrain. The sequence of functional chords is uneven; there are long sounding chords, during more than one beat. They draw attention to the text. There are also bifunctional chords.

The **meter** creates a visual image, i.e. something external: steps and stops. It is not the movement forward, but like in circles.



**Acoustics** – sounding of overtones is used. It is the hidden impact on the listener. Though dynamics marks are found not in all the versions, in general they are the same: *mf* at the beginning and *pp* at the very end. This dynamics accentuates the psychological state of the narrator, who is afraid of the coming battle, does not know its results, but addresses himself to his mother at first decisively and then plunges into meditation and stops. Music gradually changes from *mf* to *pp* and fades.

## **6. Conclusion**

The research of American traditional and popular songs gave me the possibility to establish interrelation between linguistic and extralinguistic means in creating images. To linguistic ones belong the means of stylistic lexicology, semasiology, phonetics and in a less degree – of syntax, though it depends on song genre. The melody, harmony and meter belong to extralinguistic (musical) tools for creating images. The complex analysis of song texts is a topical problem from the point of view of a linguo-cultural studies and gender studies.

The speech characterization of acting characters is created by lexical means. Research of song lexicon allows stating the creation period, the author, the cultural environment and realities of the ethnos or nation. Song text vocabulary is a powerful instrument of the inner world of the poetic text creation. Combining lexicon of various social groups, the author reaches the greatest rapprochement between the ideal image or the concept of a song existing in author's consciousness and an embodiment of this image in the form of musical and poetic work.

Stylistic means of syntax (elliptic constructions, various types of patterned repetition, polysyndeton, inversion and many others), semasiology (metaphor, epithet, simile, etc.) in combination with musical expressive means (type of melodic movement, rhythm, timbre, texture, dynamics, syntax of the musical speech) and arrangement create special type of communication between the performer and the listener, serving the decoding of the author's intentions.

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