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Aesthetic and affective effects of consonant alliteration and meter in Japanese poems

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Abstract

This study investigated the effects of consonant alliteration and meter on valence, arousal, and aesthetic evaluations. In Study 1, native Japanese speakers evaluated valence, arousal, beauty, and understandability of classical Japanese poems after listening to both alliterated and non-alliterated versions. The alliterated poems were rated as slightly calmer than the non-alliterated ones, although the difference was not statistically significant. In Study 2, native Japanese speakers listened to poems that consisted of pseudowords. The poems used as stimuli were systematically made in terms of alliteration and meter. The metered poems were perceived as more preferable, calmer, and more beautiful than the non-metered ones, regardless of the presence or absence of alliteration. Additionally, the alliterated and metered poems were perceived as more exciting than non-alliterated and metered poems. These results suggest that metered poems make people feel beautiful and comfortable. It might be applicable to clinical treatment.