

THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE LYRICS OF FIVE EXTANT PANSORIS

Hwihyun You¹ and Austin Kang²

¹Department of Performing Arts Planning, Sangmyung University, Seoul, Korea

²Department of Medicine, Seoul National University, Seoul, Korea

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to examine the themes of five extant pansoris, Korean traditional music. Therefore, this study collected the lyrics of the five works, including Chunhyangga, Simcheongga, Heungboga, Jeokbyeokga, and Sugungga. This study examined the theme of each pansori using thematic analysis of the collected data. According to the results of this study, the themes of the five works could be summarized as love, loyalty, filial piety, moderation, and Confucianism and humor. This study has the significance of deriving a common theme through thematic analysis of the lyrics of five extant pansoris.

KEYWORDS

pansori, themes, Korean traditional music, thematic analysis,

1. INTRODUCTION

Pansori can be defined as a Korean genre of musical storytelling performed by a singer and a drummer [1], combining body motions and vocals to the tune of a drum [2]. The dramatic content of the pansori differs according to various rhythms based on the melody of traditional Korean music [3]. In the late twentieth century, the sorrowful "Western style" of pansori surpassed the energetic "Eastern style," and pansori came to be known as the "sound of han" of Korea [2]. All surviving pansori epics end pleasantly, while contemporary pansori concentrates on the characters' struggles and tribulations, frequently without reaching a happy ending due to the popularity of excerpt performances [4]. The history of pansori in the late twentieth century has caused tremendous disquiet among the pansori community. Pansori has been classified as Korea's National Intangible Cultural Heritage since 1964. In 2003, pansori was designated a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity of Korea [3]. The pansori practiced by ethnic Koreans in China was also nominated for UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage in 2011 [4]. Originally a form of folk entertainment for the lower classes, pansori was embraced by the Korean elite during the nineteenth century [5]. As pansori is a performance in which a soloist tells a long story, the singer should make proper humorous expressions to get the audience's attention [3]. Also, pansori is enjoyable to listen to, observe, and participate in. However, the difficulty with pansori is that its lyrics are riddled with ancient idioms that are difficult for ordinary people to grasp [6]. Pansori generally takes a long time to perform. Therefore, knowing the theme of pansori will be helpful in understanding the overall story. However, few studies have analyzed the lyrics of pansori songs [3]. This study aims to analyze the themes of the five major pansori songs through thematic analysis.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Overview

Pansori is a type of musical entertainment that has been practiced in Korea since the seventeenth century [7]. The Joseon Dynasty's pansori included sijo poetry accompanied by music [1]. As a result, it is incorrect to refer to pansori as Changgeuk [4], which is based on pansori's name dramatized after Wongaksa Temple [2]. The name "pansori" as a musical term evolved independently of the phrase "panol." Similarly, the literary version of this type of pansori is likewise known as pansori. As a result, a distinction must be made between pansori as a musical phrase and pansori as a literary phrase [8]. However, the term "pansori" can still be used to designate sijo [4]. Pansori performances are led by a "Clown" who sings and a "Gosu" who plays the drums. A clown performs a song while holding a fan in his or her right hand [5]. In terms of sound and speech, the singing part is called "aniri" or "broader," while the speaking part is called "applied" or "spacious." In addition, the "Gosu" plays drums to the clown's performance [6]. The drummer beats the emotional circuit of the song and adds attractiveness to the performance [8].

2.2. History

Pansori is considered to have developed during the Joseon Dynasty in the late seventeenth century [1]. The early pansori performers were most likely shamans and street performers, with lower-class audiences [7]. It is unknown where pansori began in Korea, but the Honam region eventually became the center of its growth [8]. Pansori is thought to have gained popularity among the aristocratic classes around the mid-eighteenth century [9]. The nineteenth century is considered the golden age of pansori, when the genre's popularity grew and its musical techniques progressed [3]. During the first half of the nineteenth century, pansori singers blended folk songs into the genre while employing vocal techniques and melodies aimed at the upper class [4]. However, some significant modifications were made to pansori in the early twentieth century. It was produced similarly to Western operas and was more often presented indoors [7]. For the first time, it was recorded and sold on vinyl records [8]. The number of female singers increased dramatically, aided by gisaeng organizations [9]. Furthermore, the sorrowful tone of pansori was heightened as a result of the Japanese occupation influence on the Korean audiences and artists [7]. The Japanese government frequently suppressed pansori that referred to the monarchy or Korean nationalism in an attempt to repress Korean culture [2]. Along with Japanese censorship, the rise of film and changgeuk, as well as the turbulence of the Korean War all contributed to pansori's decline by the mid-twentieth century [6]. In order to help conserve the pansori heritage, the South Korean government designated it an Intangible Cultural Property in 1964 [7]. In addition, pansori performers began to be legally acknowledged as "living national treasures." This contributed to a revival of interest in the genre that began in the late 1960s[5]. As previously stated, UNESCO designated the pansori tradition as a Masterpiece of Humanity's Oral and Intangible Heritage in 2003 [3]. Although the number of pansori performers has expanded significantly in the twenty-first century, the genre has struggled to achieve widespread public appeal, and pansori audiences are primarily made up of older people, scholars or students of traditional music, and the elite [8]. However, pansori fusion music, which began in the 1990s, has persisted into the twenty-first century, with performers developing pansori-reggae, pansori-classical music, and pansori-rap [3].

2.3. Types of Pansori

It is widely assumed that pansori reached the stage of completion with its contents and forms as folk music from King Sukjong of the Joseon Dynasty to King Yeongjo [2]. Pansori's heyday corresponds to the yearlong reign of King Cheoljong from King Jeongjo [4]. In other words, the golden age was from the late eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century, as proven by the fact that Shin Jae-hyo, a prominent pansori writer and theorist, and eight master vocalists emerged during this period [2]. Pansori has twelve sounds, which are often known as twelve yards [1]. Based on this data, at least 12 pansori plates existed prior to 1810. However, most of them have been gradually reduced, and only five yards still being performed [4]. Currently, among the 12 pansori yards, Chunhyangga, Shimcheonga, Heungbuga, Jeokbyeokga, and Sugungga are still performed. In contrast, only the editorials, such as Byun Gangsoe Taryeong, Janggi Taryeong, Baebi Taryeong, and Onggojip Taryeong, have been called. Gangneung Maehwa Taryeong and Waljataryeong are not known and are not called [3].

2.4. Application and Music

Pansori is directed by a lengthy editorial, with one person's voice standing up and mixing "sound" and "applied," and an accompanist sitting down, playing the drum rhythm, creating enthusiasm with "Chu-imsae." Pansori singers were once referred to as singers and clowns, but neither term is generally used anymore [8]. The performer wore a "gat," leather shoes, and held a fan and a handkerchief [9]. "Gosu" dress in a "durumagi" and a "gat." Pansori is made by one person's sound and one person's drumming, hence Pansori music is formed from the sound of the speaker and the drummers' drumming [3]. The pansori rhythm is made up of a certain beat based on the passage, and the drummer plays the rhythm based on this pansori rhythm [4]. The pansori rhythm is known by several names depending on the portion, but it is also known as a "Huge word big rhythm," a basic rhythm, or a so-called "angle," which is known as a modified rhythm [5]. Pansori uses various melodies depending on its musical expression [9].

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Subjects

3.1.1. Chunhyangga

Chunhyangga is the most well-known pansori in Korea, having been popular for almost a century. Chunhyangga is regarded as the best pansori, both musically and as a piece of literature and drama. Chunhyangga depicts the love story of Chunhyang, the daughter of a gisaeng entertainer, and Yi Mongryong, the son of a magistrate [2]. After the two are unlawfully married, Mongryong travels to Seoul, where a corrupt local magistrate, Byeon the wicked, attempts to force Chunhyang to be his concubine. She can be rescued at the last moment by Mongryong, who has returned home in his new role as a secret royal inspector [6]. The story takes place in Namwon, Jeolla Province, during the annual Chunhyang Festival. Chunhyangga is not only a fable about pure love but also a story that presents the problem of the caste system in the Joseon Dynasty [7]. Chunhyang is the daughter of a gisaeng (female entertainer) who becomes the wife of Lee Mong-ryong, the son of a nobleman. In other words, she refused to become a local official's concubine to become Lee's wife. In Chunhyangga, one can find an expression of the common people's wish for truth and human freedom. The story has peaceful, sad, humorous, and serious scenes [9]. The music changes with the scene, story and theme. Thus, Chunhyangga is valuable musically and historically. Chunhyangga is the longest among the five pansoris [4],

which is one of the five surviving stories of the Korean pansori musical storytelling tradition [11].

3.1.2. Heungbuga

Heungbuga, also known as Baktaryeong, is one of the five surviving pansori stories from Korea [2]. It tells the story of Heungbu, a poor yet kind man with a large family. With a folksy mood, Heungbuga illustrates the lives of ordinary people. Due to its emphasis on humor, many listeners prefer Heungbuga [4]. The most renowned section of Heungbuga is "Cranky Nolbu," which presents the nefarious Nolbu in a light-hearted manner with a rapid Jajinmori rhythm. Heungbu, a poor but kind-hearted younger brother, treats the injured swallow that repays Heungbu for his kindness. The bird delivers a gourd seed to Heungbu, who plants it [11]. The gourd produces fruit that contains wealth. The aria about how Heungbu and his family saw open the gourds is always enjoyable and cheerful.

When Heungbu's older brother, the cruel and selfish Nolbu, hears this, he becomes envious and purposefully breaks a swallow's leg. Nolbu then receives a gourd seed, but the fruit contains goblins [2].

3.1.3. Simcheongga

Simcheongga is one of the five surviving pansori stories from the Korean storytelling tradition [2]. It is unknown when the Simcheong narrative was turned into a pansori [12]. According to records, Simcheongga may be found in Manjae Song's Gwanuhui, written during the reign of Sunjo of Joseon, as well as Nosik Hung's The History of Joseon Traditional Opera written in the 1900s. Simcheongga, the most dramatic of the five pansori, is regarded as a magnificent work of art thanks to the participation of pansori singers' deoneum [4]. The story is nearly entirely about grief and misery. As a result, the melody sounds low and melancholy. The sensation of the voice is more significant in pansori than its purity or beauty. The pansori demands "a voice like geuneul (shadows)" to communicate great sorrow. Because the mystic geuneul is vital in Simcheongga, only a master pansori singer is thought to be capable of performing it well [6]. Simcheongga is a story of Simcheong and her blind father, Sim Hak-Gyu, also known as Sim-Bongsa [7]. The sad story is occasionally lightened with humor [8]. The highlight of Simcheongga is when Sim-Bongsa regains his eyesight [9]. A realistic expression of this requires a master singer. After Sim-Bongsa regains his eyesight, other blind people also recover. Finally, Simcheongga concludes with a celebratory tone [10].

3.1.4. Jeokbyeokga

Jeokbyeokga, a heroic story, is a retelling of the Chinese historical legend of the Battle of Red Cliffs [12]. Therefore, the expressions are grand, sublime, and strong. As a result, female vocalists rarely perform it. Since Jeokbyeokga contains several episodes representing the conflict between the king, feudal lords, and a commander, the singer must be able to make great vocalizations [9]. A singer with an intense voice is best suited for Jeokbyeokga, the most challenging pansori despite its short length [8]. The last part is Liu Bei and Guan Yu's episode of Red Cliff. The highlights of Jeokbyeokga include 'The Sorrow of the Military,' 'Fire of Red Cliff,' 'Bird Song,' and 'Jangseung Song,' all of which are absent from the original version of Romance of the Three Kingdoms [11]. The Jeokbyeokga altered the consistent grand and sublime atmosphere, adding humorous expression [7]

3.1.5. Sugungga

Sugungga is one of the five surviving stories of the Korean pansori storytelling tradition. Sugungga is considered to be more exciting and farcical than the other pansoris due to its personification of animals [2]. The satire is more frank and humorous. It has serious parts as well in the characters of the king and loyal retainers [4]. Sugungga is based on the story of the Dragon King of the Southern Sea, a turtle, and a wily rabbit. The theme of this story is the relationship between the subjects and king. Recently, the play was popularized by the Korean band Leenalchi, who uploaded their live-action performance of the story to YouTube. The video went viral in Korea, amassing over six million views as of January 2021 [3]. The story begins in a fictional kingdom in the Southern Sea ruled by a Dragon King. The king suffers from an illness that can only be cured by consuming the liver of a rabbit. In hopes of finding the liver to cure his disease, the dragon king commands his servants to go onto land, find a rabbit, and bring its liver back to the kingdom [5]. Out of the servants, a turtle volunteers to perform this act, showing his loyalty to the king. The turtle is met with several challenges on land, from an encounter with a predatory tiger to not knowing what a rabbit looks like [4]. However, the turtle succeeds in finding a rabbit. To get the rabbit to follow it back to the underwater kingdom, the turtle tells it that a wonderful and luxurious life awaits it there [6]. The rabbit falls for it, follows the turtle underwater, and soon finds itself captured in the dragon king's palace. The rabbit soon realizes that it has been tricked and will be slaughtered for its liver [8]. Just before slaughtering, however, the rabbit tells the dragon king that its liver is so valuable that someone may steal it away from the king as soon as he kills it and that owing to this, it had to be slaughtered somewhere away from everyone [10]. The dragon king listens to the rabbit and commands the turtle to kill it away from the kingdom. Upon getting far enough from the kingdom, the rabbit ridicules the dragon king's stupidity and flees back onto land, essentially tricking the turtle and the dragon king. The story ends with the rabbit ridiculing the king and the turtle once again but also admiring the turtle's loyalty to the king [11].

3.2. Data Collection and Analysis

Thematic analysis is one of the most common forms of analysis within qualitative research. It emphasizes identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning (or "themes") within qualitative data [13]. Thematic analysis is often understood as a method or technique in contrast to most other qualitative analytic approaches, such as discourse analysis, grounded theory, narrative analysis, and interpretative phenomenological analysis, which can be described as methodologies or theoretically informed frameworks for research (they specify guiding theory, appropriate research questions, and methods of data collection, as well as procedures for conducting analysis). Thematic analysis is best thought of as an umbrella term for a variety of different approaches rather than a singular method. Different versions of thematic analysis are underpinned by different philosophical and conceptual assumptions and diverge in terms of procedure [14].

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Chunhyangga

Mongryong marries the beautiful Chunhyang without telling his father, the Governor of Namwon. When his father is transferred to Seoul, Mongryong must leave Chunhyang and finish his exams. Chunhyang, being the daughter of a courtesan, is also legally a courtesan. She is beaten and imprisoned when she refuses to obey the new Governor Byun, as she wishes to be faithful to her husband. After three years, Mongryong passes his exam and becomes an emissary to the king. He returns to Namwon, disguised as a beggar, just before Chunhyang is to be flogged to death at the governor's birthday celebration [2]. The theme of Chunhyangga is true love.

4.2. Heungbugga

In Heungbugga, the kind-hearted Heungbo fixes the swallow's broken leg one spring day, and he becomes rich with the magical gourd seeds brought by the swallow in the fall of next year. Over the months in between, Heungbo and his family experienced extreme poverty. Heungbo's story supposedly implies that it takes time for a good deed to be rewarded, just as it took months for the magical seeds to bear fruits of good fortune. Also, the reward feels more precious and sweeter since they had endured hardship for so long. Two magical chests that fill up with money and rice no matter how much they take seems to represent Heungbo's heart, which overflows with love and generosity [7]. The theme of Heungbugga is kindness.

4.3. Simcheongga

Simcheongga is a story of a faithful daughter restoring his eyesight for her blind father. Sim Cheong may be the lead character, but her father is the one who drives the story. Mr. Sim was not born blind but lost sight when he was around 20 years old. He had relied on his wife for everything, but sadly his wife died only a few days after she gave birth to her daughter, Simcheong. As he had to raise his baby daughter, Simcheong, he carried her in his arms and begged for breast milk from village women [8]. Fortunately, Shimcheong grew up lovely and affectionate, caring for her father with the food she received from her neighbors. Unsuspecting in nature, Mr. Sim was scammed into donating three hundred bushels of rice to a Buddhist temple to get his eyesight back, believing that he could take better care of his daughter once he could see again [10]. But he is too poor to get the rice, and Shimcheong sacrifices herself to the sailors who offer to give the rice. She leaves with the sailors, and her father cries for his daughter. She jumps into the sea, being saved by the King of the Sea, who is moved by her filial piety. She eventually becomes the Queen of the Sea and is reunited with her father, who regains her sight [11]. The theme of Simcheongga is love and sacrifice.

4.4. Jeokbyeokga

Jeokbyeokga, also called "Song of the Red Cliffs," is one of the stories of pansori, Korea's traditional epic chant. The story was inspired by the Chinese historical legend of the Battle of the Red Cliffs, which was contained in a book titled Sanguozhi Yanyi (Romance of the Three Kingdoms). Cheng Yu, an aide to Cao Cao, criticizes his master for fleeing after the devastating defeat at the battle. There are five types of manners to form and sustain a friendship: sincerity, loyalty, honor, forgiveness, and reciprocation [4]. Thus, the theme of Jeokbyeokga includes Confucianism and humor.

4.5. Sugungga

An ailing Dragon King of the sea sends a devoted turtle to land to catch an animal it has never seen before, a rabbit. The Dragon King, the sea king, was gravely ill. His people advise that a hare's liver may be able to cure him, but none of them are bold enough to travel onto land to obtain the organ [2]. When the turtle arrives on land, he meets a rabbit and persuades him to visit the undersea kingdom, which is filled with immense riches, beauty, and honor [4]. As a result, the rabbit agrees. Back in the Dragon King's audience, the rabbit is shackled and regretfully reminded that he must offer his liver to save the king. The rabbit skillfully informs them that while he would be honored to assist in saving the king's life, he has left his liver in the woods. Knowing the worth of their livers, rabbits, he tells the king, bury them in secret places [11]. The hare replies he would be honored to get it and return it to the king, provided the king send the turtle to accompany him. This cavalier flattery wins over the Dragon King, who sends them back. Once on land, the rabbit flees the turtle, informing him that they will never have his liver, that they were fools to believe him, and that the Dragon King will have to die. He then vanishes. The theme of Sugungga is desire [10]. This study derived the results shown in Table 1 through thematic analysis.

Table 1. Thematic analysis on pansori

Contents	Contents	Subcategory	Category	Theme
Chunhyangga	Chunhyang, the daughter of a gisaeng (traditional entertainer), and Mongryong, the son of a magistrate, fall in love and are secretly married. After he leaves for Seoul on a trip, a corrupt official attempts to force Chunhyang to be his concubine. She risks death by refusing but is rescued at the last minute by Mongryong, who returns as a secret royal inspector.	Love, Suffering, Reunion, Punishment	Love between man and woman	Love
Simcheongga	Simcheong lives with her blind father. Simcheong decides to die when she is told that if she sacrifices herself, her father can restore his sight. She jumps into the sea herself, being saved by the King of the Sea, who is moved by her filial piety. She eventually becomes Queen of the Sea and is reunited with her father, who regains her sight	Love, filial piety, sacrifice, resurrection, reunion	Love between father and daughter	Love
Heungbuga	Heungbu, a poor but good man with numerous children, tends to a broken leg of a swallow, and the bird sends him pumpkin seeds. He sows the seeds, and the fruit that grows from them contains a treasure. When his older brother, the ugly and greedy Nolbu, discovers this, he attempts the same thing by breaking a swallow's leg, but with a different outcome.	brotherly love, good and evil, reward and punishment, reconciliation	Brotherly love	Love
Jeokbyeokga	Jeokbyeokga begins with the determination of Liu Bei, Guan Yu, and Zhang Fei to become brothers in Taoyuan. In the Great War of Jeokbyeok, Gongmyong borrows the southeast wind and destroys Jojo's army, thanks to the efforts of Liu Bei and others. Guan Yu captures and then releases Cao Cao when he retreats to Hwayong Island.	Loyalty to organization, life and death, humor	Hatred of war, satire on corrupt political leaders, humor	Confucianism and humor.
Sugungga	Incidents of persuasion, solicitation, and deception take place between a rabbit and a turtle in a fictional sea kingdom ruled by a dragon king suffering from a rare disease. The Dragon King orders his servants to go to the surface to obtain the rabbit's liver, which is supposed to provide a cure. The tortoise volunteered for this and brought the hare to the Dragon's palace. He seduces the hare and takes it to the Dragon King. When the hare is destined to die, it tricks and lies, saying he left his liver on land. The Dragon King then orders the hare to go to land and bring his liver. The hare, who returned to land with the tortoise, runs away.	Excessive desire, deception, careless behavior, relationship between king and subject,	Moderation, desire, deception	Moderation

4.6. Discussion

This study investigated the lyrics of the five major Korean pansori, such as Chunhyangga, Heungbo, Simcheongga, Jeokbyeokga, and Sugungga, using topic analysis [2]. Love, filial piety, loyalty and friendship, desire, and good actions were the themes derived. This is mainly compatible with East Asian Confucianism. Jeokbyeokga, in particular, is a Chinese work. China clearly affected pansori, which is listed with UNESCO [1]. Pansori can be considered as a work that sings Korean narratives in the sense that the other four works, with the exception of Jeokbyeokga, formed their own storytelling against the backdrop of Korea, and even Jeokbyeokga was adapted to suit the Korean situation [3]. Pansori is a musical storytelling style performed by a vocalist and percussionist. This popular tradition encompasses both elite and folk culture, as seen by expressive singing, stylised speaking, and a repertoire of storytelling and gestures [4]. A male or female singer, accompanied by a single barrel drum, improvises on texts that combine rural and academic literary expressions throughout eight-hour concerts [6]. Pansori originated in south-west Korea in the seventeenth century, probably as a new expression of the narrative songs of shamans [8]. It was an oral tradition among the common people until the late 1800s, when it acquired more sophisticated literary substance and gained popularity among the urban elite [4]. The pansori universe's locales, characters, and situations are all rooted in Joseon-era Korea (1392-1910). Pansori singers go through extensive training to learn a wide range of unique vocal timbres and memorize intricate repertoires [11]. Many virtuosos have developed personal interpretive techniques and are well-known for how they execute specific episodes [5]. Pansori was named a National Intangible Cultural Property in 1964 after being threatened by Korea's rapid modernization. This policy resulted in considerable institutional backing, which aided in the restoration of this tradition [8]. Although pansori remains one of the most renowned traditional stage arts genres, it has lost much of its original spontaneity. Ironically, this new evolution is a direct effect of the preservation process itself, as the increasing volume of written texts tends to inhibit creativity [3]. Indeed, few singers nowadays can properly improvise, and modern listeners are less open to traditional pansori's unplanned originality and vocabulary [2]. Such pansori is performed continuously and inherited in modern Korean society, and joint performance with other genres are being attempted [12]. The 12-song repertory of pansori was revised and passed on as a five-song repertory. This study reviewed the lyrics of five pansori works through thematic analysis. Themes such as love, loyalty, filial piety, moderation, Confucianism, and humor derived from the five works are virtues that have been emphasized in a Confucian-centered society. In other words, it is judged that pansori is a work that sings the emotions of Koreans under the influence of Confucianism. Thus, thematic analysis can help the audience understand the works in the narrative structure of pansori works. This study has the significance of deriving the themes from pansori works through this method. In follow-up studies, there is a need to approach the lyrics of pansori works through various analysis methods.

5. CONCLUSION

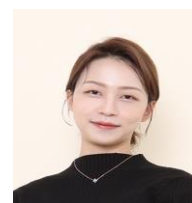
This paper aimed to examine the themes represented in Korean pansori among the five major Korean pansori songs. According to the results of this study, the themes of the five pansori works were summarized as love, loyalty, filial piety, moderation, Confucianism and humor. This paper has the significance of deriving a common theme through thematic analysis of the lyrics of pansori songs, a traditional Korean performing art.

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AUTHORS

Ms. YOU is in the doctoral course at Sangmyung University. She is very interested in fusion culture and performing arts.



Dr. Kang is a medical doctor and a researcher interested in various academic fields such as the humanities.

