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'CALL ME MOTHER'. EFFECTIVE LANGUAGE STRATEGIES IN RUPAUL CHARLES JONES'S SONGS

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Many of RuPaul's songs are seen as active anthems of the drag queen culture. The lyrics of these songs contain catchy phrases, which are ideal for energetic singing and dancing, but they also present empowering messages addressed to all those that are listening or watching the singer's and/or the troupe's performance and feel identified. These messages may be sometimes political and social, and they may be supportive of a particular stance, often promoting hard work and determination as a means to achieve one's inner self, one's projected image, and one's place in life. All the messages communicated in the lyrics clearly represent the author's perspective concerning how things should be done in order to achieve what people wish and to make their rights to be the way they prevail.

One way in which the lyricist(s) may signal these directions is by means of effective language strategies. The purpose of these strategies is to show the authors' ability, wants and needs to indicate perspective concerning the realisation of events, as well as the author's intentions and aspirations. The identification in the lyrics of effective language strategies follows Marín-Arrese's (2009) taxonomy of these strategies that include deontic and volitive modals, attitudinal expressions, the imperative mood, communicative evidentials, among others. Differing degrees of interpersonal distance may arise from the use of these effective devices.

Objectives

The main objective of this paper is to identify the effective strategies used in a corpus of RuPaul's songs and to describe the function they fulfil in their texts.

Methodology

We will use corpus linguistics methodology in order to interrogate our compilation of texts and retrieve samples of effective language strategies, according to the categories described in Marín-Arrese (2009).

Conclusions

Our conclusions will inform us on the frequencies of the effective strategies found in RuPaul's songs and the communicative functions these strategies show in the texts, along with their significance for the targeted community.

Keywords: Communication, Effective strategies, Modality, Lyrics, Drag queen culture.