

Applying *Normalised Pairwise Variability Index* to Musicology

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Abstract

This article provides an overview of Normalised Pairwise Variability Index (nPVI), a method originated from linguistic research, which has been applied to musicology since 2000s. nPVI is a quantitative method which allows to analyze big amount of data. For music analysis nPVI shows the inner rhythmic contrast for the musical work, for other words, it shows how much rhythmic variability there is. Studies (Raju, Asu and Ross, 2010; Raju and Ross, 2010) show that the rhythmic contrast in music, as expressed by nPVI, is not sensitive to differences between score and performances of the same musical work or stylistic differences between various performances of the same work. The rhythmic contrast seems to be one of the key components in the identity of the musical and allow us to perceive different performances of the same compositions as the same musical works. nPVI method has of course its limitations which have to be considered when using it in music analyses. But used for example with descriptive analyses and being careful with making widespread conclusions, it gives an interesting objective opportunity for comparing different musical works.