

THE MUSIC OF LANGUAGE AND THE LANGUAGE OF MUSIC

My lifelong interest as a language teacher and music therapist has been 'the music of language' and 'the language of music'.

It is always interesting to notice changes in everyday usage of spoken language. Here's an example: While watching 'America's got talent' on YouTube clips, I first noticed that after receiving feedback from the judges, every single performer would always say "thank you so much".

It seems that they had been told that's what you should say. I noticed it because when I was younger, there was a continuum from 'thanks', 'thanks a lot', 'thanks very much', and then a stretch to 'thanks SO much'. That meant you were REALLY grateful.

But then I started noticing that lots of people seemed to be using that phrase these days. In fact it came to my attention this morning when I helped an Amazon delivery guy get into my apartment building. He looked like a Nigerian and clearly was still learning English. But sure enough, as we parted he said "thanks SO much".

Has anyone else noticed the slide towards extreme expressions of gratitude?! It's like the reality of the state of the world is SO awful that there is a need to grease the wheels of social interaction.