ISSN: 2519-9439

Audience-Shift Robust Ranking of Singing Timbre Appeal with Audio-Language Models

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Abstract

The evaluation of singing timbre appeal represents a complex intersection of objective acoustic properties and subjective human perception. Traditional music information retrieval systems often fail to account for the inherent subjectivity of timbre preference, which fluctuates significantly across diverse demographic groups, cultural backgrounds, and musical training levels. This phenomenon, defined in this study as audience shift, compromises the performance and fairness of automated vocal ranking systems. To address this limitation, this paper introduces a novel framework for the audience-shift robust ranking of singing timbre appeal utilizing audio-language models. By mapping high-dimensional acoustic features of the singing voice into a shared latent space with natural language descriptions of audience demographics and stylistic preferences, the proposed architecture effectively conditions the ranking process on the specific profile of the target listener. The methodology encompasses the construction of a large-scale, demographically annotated vocal dataset and the implementation of a contrastive learning paradigm that optimizes for both semantic alignment and robust pairwise ranking. Experimental evaluations demonstrate that the integration of audio-language models significantly mitigates preference degradation caused by audience shift, yielding substantial improvements in normalized ranking metrics compared to unimodal baselines. Furthermore, ablation studies confirm the efficacy of the proposed domain-adversarial regularization technique in decoupling generalized acoustic quality from audience-specific stylistic biases. These findings offer profound implications for the development of personalized music recommendation systems, the evaluation of synthesized vocal performances, and the broader understanding of psychoacoustic preference modeling in diverse listener populations.

Keywords: singing timbre, audio-language models, audience shift, music information retrieval, robust ranking

1.Introduction

1.1 Background and Motivation

The singing voice is arguably the most expressive and complex instrument in the musical domain, capable of conveying profound emotional depth and stylistic nuance through subtle variations in timbre. Timbre, frequently described as the tone color or quality of a sound that distinguishes different types of sound production, plays a paramount role in the aesthetic appreciation of vocal performances. Unlike pitch or rhythm, which can be quantified with relative ease and precision, timbre is a multidimensional psychoacoustic phenomenon. Its appeal is notoriously subjective and heavily dependent on the perceptual predispositions of the listener. In the contemporary music industry, where

ISSN: 2519-9439

massive volumes of vocal tracks are distributed daily through digital streaming platforms, the ability to automatically evaluate and rank the appeal of singing timbres has become a critical objective. Such technologies are foundational to music recommendation algorithms, automated talent discovery, and the quality assessment of artificial intelligence-generated vocal models. However, early approaches to modeling vocal appeal [1] relied heavily on handcrafted acoustic features, such as Mel-frequency cepstral coefficients and spectral centroids, which are insufficient for capturing the holistic and subjective nature of human aesthetic judgment. As the field of music information retrieval progressed, deep learning methodologies emerged as the dominant paradigm for audio analysis. Convolutional neural networks and recurrent neural architectures significantly improved the extraction of complex temporal and spectral patterns from raw audio signals. Despite these advancements, standard supervised learning models designed to predict vocal appeal typically optimize for a singular, aggregate metric of quality, inherently assuming a universal standard of aesthetic preference [2]. This assumption is fundamentally flawed. The appeal of a specific singing timbre is profoundly contextual, varying dramatically across different demographic segments. A vocal style characterized by high spectral energy and roughness might be highly rated by listeners accustomed to rock or metal genres but penalized by audiences favoring classical or jazz aesthetics. This divergence in preference, driven by factors such as cultural background, age, geographic location, and musical training, creates a substantial challenge for predictive modeling. When a model trained on the preferences of one specific listener group is deployed to predict the preferences of a different group, its performance typically suffers a severe degradation. This phenomenon is known as audience shift.

1.2 Challenges in Singing Timbre Evaluation

Addressing the audience-shift problem necessitates a fundamental departure from monolithic ranking systems. The primary challenge lies in the difficulty of acquiring adequately diverse and granular subjective annotations [3]. Crowdsourced evaluations of singing voices often suffer from demographic imbalances, leading to models that implicitly encode the biases of the majority annotator group. Furthermore, establishing a robust ground truth for subjective appeal is statistically problematic. When annotators from different audience segments provide conflicting scores for the same vocal performance, simple averaging obscures the underlying diversity of preference, resulting in a regression to the mean that satisfies no particular audience [4]. Another critical challenge involves the representational capacity of the models. Traditional unimodal audio networks process acoustic data in isolation, devoid of any contextual information regarding the listener. To effectively model audience-specific appeal, a system must simultaneously interpret the acoustic properties of the singing voice and the semantic description of the target audience. This requirement has led to the exploration of cross-modal architectures. Recent breakthroughs in multimodal machine learning, particularly the development of large-scale audio-language models, present a highly promising avenue for addressing this challenge. By aligning audio representations with natural language embeddings, these models possess the capacity to comprehend complex relationships between sound and descriptive text. However, adapting generalized audio-language models for the specialized task of robust timbre ranking requires careful architectural modifications and novel training objectives. The ranking mechanism must be dynamically conditionable, capable of adjusting its output based on text prompts that define the audience profile, while simultaneously maintaining robustness against out-of-distribution demographic descriptors.

1.3 Objectives and Contributions

The primary objective of this research is to conceptualize, develop, and evaluate a comprehensive framework for the audience-shift robust ranking of singing timbre appeal. We propose a novel architecture that leverages the cross-modal reasoning capabilities of audio-language models to create a personalized, context-aware evaluation system. By conditioning the acoustic representations on natural language profiles of diverse listener groups, our system circumvents the limitations of universal quality metrics. The specific contributions of this paper are multifold. First, we define the theoretical boundaries of the audience-shift problem within the context of vocal music information

ISSN: 2519-9439

retrieval and demonstrate its detrimental impact on traditional ranking models [5]. Second, we introduce a customized audio-language ranking architecture that integrates a dual-encoder setup with an audience-conditioned projection space, enabling dynamic preference prediction. Third, we propose a novel robust alignment loss function that combines pairwise ranking objectives with domain-adversarial regularization to isolate generalized vocal quality from stylistic bias. Finally, we conduct extensive empirical evaluations using a meticulously curated dataset of diverse singing performances and demographically stratified listener annotations. The results substantiate our hypothesis that language-conditioned audio models can significantly improve ranking robustness across shifting audience domains.

2. Literature Review and Background

2.1 Perception of Singing Timbre

The study of timbre perception occupies a central position in psychoacoustics and cognitive musicology. Historically, timbre has been defined negatively by the Acoustical Society of America as the attribute of auditory sensation whereby a listener can judge that two sounds similarly presented and having the same loudness and pitch are dissimilar. This definition underscores the multidimensional and elusive nature of timbre. Seminal studies in perceptual scaling have consistently identified multiple orthogonal dimensions underlying human timbre perception, frequently correlating with physical acoustic parameters such as attack time, spectral centroid, and spectral flux [6]. In the specific context of the singing voice, timbre is influenced by complex physiological mechanisms, including vocal fold vibration patterns and the resonance characteristics of the vocal tract. Subjective evaluation of singing timbre extends beyond basic perceptual discrimination to encompass aesthetic judgment and emotional resonance. Research indicates that listeners are highly sensitive to micro-variations in vocal formants, breathiness, and vibrato, utilizing these cues to infer the emotional state, genre affiliation, and overall skill level of the singer [7]. However, the aesthetic appeal of these attributes is not universally agreed upon. Cultural conditioning plays a massive role in shaping vocal preferences. For example, the bright, nasal timbre favored in certain traditional Asian vocal music stands in stark contrast to the dark, rounded tone cultivated in Western classical opera. Consequently, any attempt to quantify singing timbre appeal must account for the sociological and psychological context of the listener, moving away from objective acoustic perfection toward subjective contextual resonance.

2.2 Machine Learning in Audio Evaluation

The application of machine learning to audio evaluation has evolved rapidly over the past two decades. Early systems for automatic music evaluation and vocal assessment relied on shallow learning algorithms, such as support vector machines and Gaussian mixture models, trained on domain-specific features engineered by acoustics experts. These systems were primarily designed for objective tasks, such as fundamental frequency tracking, phoneme recognition, and the detection of explicit vocal faults like pitch instability or rhythmic deviation. While effective for assessing technical proficiency, these models struggled to capture the holistic aesthetic qualities that drive human preference. The advent of deep neural networks catalyzed a paradigm shift in music information retrieval. Convolutional architectures operating on Mel-spectrograms demonstrated unprecedented success in genre classification, emotion recognition, and automatic tagging [8]. In the realm of vocal evaluation, deep learning facilitated the transition from handcrafted features to end-to-end representation learning. However, models trained to predict a scalar quality score for singing voices frequently exhibited severe generalization issues. A model trained on a dataset annotated primarily by young, Western listeners would consistently assign lower scores to vocal styles outside its training distribution, penalizing diverse timbres [9]. This phenomenon highlighted the critical need for models that can decouple the objective extraction of acoustic features from the subjective mapping of those features to an appeal score.

2.3 Audio-Language Models and Cross-Modal Representations

The integration of natural language processing with audio analysis has opened new frontiers in computational audition. Audio-language models represent a class of multimodal architectures

ISSN: 2519-9439

designed to learn a shared representation space for audio signals and natural language text. Inspired by the massive success of contrastive language-image pretraining in the computer vision domain, researchers developed analogous frameworks for the audio domain. These models typically utilize a dual-encoder structure, comprising a powerful audio encoder and a sophisticated text encoder, trained via contrastive loss to maximize the similarity between matching audio-text pairs while minimizing the similarity between mismatched pairs [10]. The resulting latent space possesses remarkable semantic properties. High-dimensional acoustic concepts, such as vocal warmth, raspiness, or breathiness, are mathematically aligned with their corresponding textual descriptions. This alignment enables zero-shot classification, text-to-audio retrieval, and even natural language-guided audio generation. In the context of singing timbre evaluation, audio-language models offer a profound advantage. Instead of forcing the model to learn a static mapping from audio to a fixed quality score, the cross-modal architecture allows the system to process natural language prompts that describe the evaluation criteria. By leveraging the semantic richness of the language embeddings, the model can dynamically adjust its internal representations to prioritize different acoustic features based on the provided text, making it a highly suitable foundation for audience-conditioned ranking.

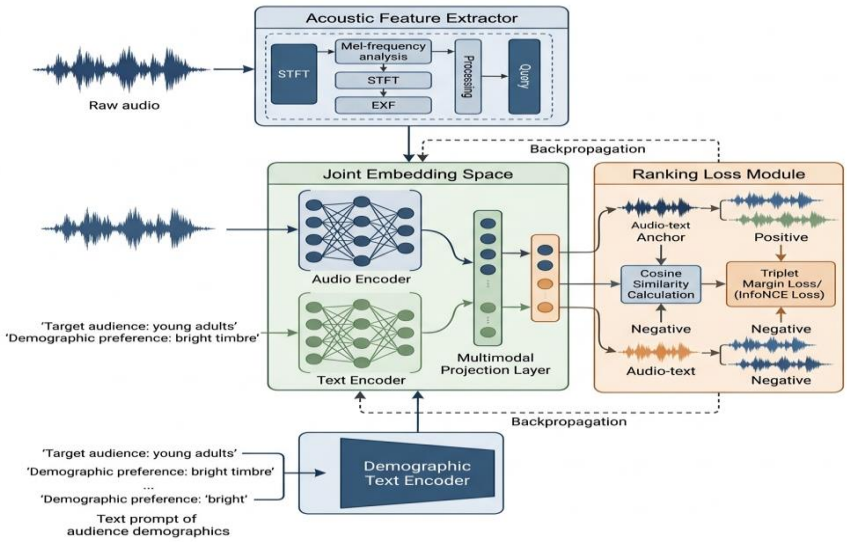


Figure 1Comprehensive System Architecture Diagram for Audio

2.4 The Audience-Shift Problem

The concept of audience shift is closely related to the broader machine learning challenges of domain adaptation and out-of-distribution generalization. In standard predictive modeling, a fundamental assumption is that the training data and the test data are drawn from the same underlying distribution. When this assumption is violated, models suffer a performance degradation known as dataset shift. Audience shift is a specific manifestation of dataset shift prevalent in subjective evaluation tasks and recommender systems [11]. It occurs when the demographic composition, cultural background, or preference profile of the end-users significantly diverges from the population that provided the training annotations. In singing timbre ranking, audience shift manifests as a critical misalignment between the model-predicted ranking and the actual preferences of a new listener group. For instance, a ranking model trained on annotations from professional vocal coaches will likely prioritize technical precision, dynamic control, and classical resonance. If this same model is deployed to recommend vocal tracks to a demographic of casual pop music listeners, the resulting recommendations may be perceived as sterile or unappealing, because the target audience might prioritize emotional raw delivery, breathy textures, and contemporary stylistic inflections [12]. Previous attempts to mitigate audience shift have primarily focused on collaborative filtering techniques and user embeddings. However, these approaches suffer from the cold-start problem and struggle to generalize to entirely unseen demographics. Utilizing the zero-shot generalization

ISSN: 2519-9439

capabilities of large language models to explicitly define the audience parameters offers a robust alternative to purely data-driven collaborative filtering.

3. Methodology and Model Architecture

3.1 Dataset Collection and Annotation Strategy

The foundation of our methodology relies on the construction of a comprehensive, diverse, and demographically annotated dataset of singing performances. Because existing public datasets for vocal quality evaluation lack detailed audience demographic metadata and pairwise preference annotations, a proprietary dataset was curated specifically for this research. The audio corpus consists of isolated vocal tracks sampled at a high-resolution frequency, encompassing a wide array of genres, including pop, classical, jazz, rock, and traditional folk music. To ensure maximum diversity in singing timbre, the vocal tracks were sourced from both professional studio recordings and amateur submissions, capturing a broad spectrum of technical proficiency and stylistic expression [13]. All audio files were subjected to a rigorous normalization process, standardizing loudness levels to prevent volume biases from influencing the subjective evaluations. The annotation strategy was meticulously designed to capture the nuances of audience shift. A large-scale listening test was deployed across a geographically and demographically diverse pool of participants. The participants were stratified into distinct audience segments based on age, geographical region, self-reported musical training, and primary genre preference. Instead of utilizing absolute rating scales, which are highly susceptible to individual calibration biases, the annotation interface employed a pairwise ranking methodology [14]. Participants were presented with pairs of vocal tracks and tasked with indicating which timbre they found more appealing based on their personal aesthetic judgment. Crucially, alongside the preference data, detailed demographic profiles of the annotators were collected. This profile information was subsequently transformed into structured natural language prompts, such as A listener aged twenty to thirty from Northern Europe who frequently consumes contemporary pop and possesses no formal musical training. This approach directly pairs the subjective preference decision with a rich semantic description of the decision-maker.

Table 1: Demographic Distribution and Annotation Statistics of the Curated Singing Timbre Dataset

Audience Segment Profile	Total Participants	Number of Pairwise Annotations	Average Inter-Annotator Agreement
Young Adult, Pop Preference, Untrained	450	22500	Moderate
Middle-Aged, Classical Preference, Trained	320	16000	High
Adolescent, Rock Preference, Untrained	380	19000	Low
Senior, Jazz Preference, Partially Trained	250	12500	Moderate
Diverse Global, Mixed Preferences, Mixed	600	30000	Low

3.2 Audio-Language Model Integration

To process the multimodal data generated by our annotation strategy, we implemented a dual-encoder architecture that leverages the strengths of state-of-the-art pretrained models. The audio processing pathway utilizes a deep convolutional transformer network, initially pretrained on a massive corpus of general audio to learn robust acoustic representations. The raw vocal audio is transformed into Mel-spectrograms and fed into the audio encoder, which extracts a sequence of high-dimensional acoustic feature vectors. Simultaneously, the natural language pathway processes the demographic prompts describing the audience segment. We employ a large-scale causal language model as the text encoder. The text encoder processes the tokenized audience description and outputs a corresponding dense semantic embedding.

ISSN: 2519-9439

The core innovation of our architecture resides in the fusion and alignment module. Instead of simply concatenating the audio and text embeddings, we project both modalities into a shared audience-conditioned latent space using a multi-head cross-attention mechanism. In this space, the audio representation acts as the query, while the text representation serves as the key and value. This mechanism effectively forces the model to attend to specific acoustic features of the singing timbre that are most relevant to the provided audience demographic [15]. For example, if the text prompt indicates a preference for classical music, the cross-attention mechanism dynamically increases the weighting of acoustic features related to vibrato stability and formant tuning, while suppressing features related to raspiness or breathiness. This dynamic feature recalibration allows the model to generate a context-aware representation of the singing voice, tailored to the specific perceptual biases of the target audience.

3.3 Ranking Mechanism and Robustness Alignment

The extracted audience-conditioned representations are subsequently utilized to perform the primary task of pairwise ranking. The ranking module consists of a series of fully connected layers that take the concatenated, context-aware embeddings of two competing vocal tracks and output a scalar value representing the predicted preference margin. The network is trained using a margin-based pairwise ranking loss, which penalizes the model when the predicted preference order contradicts the ground truth annotation provided by the specific audience segment. By optimizing this objective, the model learns to accurately predict which of the two singing timbres will be considered more appealing by the described listener [16]. However, optimizing solely for ranking accuracy on the training data can lead to overfitting on spurious correlations within specific demographic segments, ultimately harming the model's ability to generalize to unseen audiences. To ensure robustness against severe audience shifts, we integrated a domain-adversarial regularization technique. An auxiliary gradient reversal layer is connected to the intermediate acoustic representations, feeding into a domain classifier that attempts to predict the audience segment from the audio features alone. By maximizing the loss of this domain classifier while minimizing the primary ranking loss, we force the audio encoder to learn representations that are invariant to the specific audience domain, relying entirely on the cross-attention mechanism to inject the necessary demographic context. This architectural constraint ensures that the base acoustic features remain universal, preventing the model from embedding specific stylistic biases directly into the audio representations.

3.4 Training Procedures and Hyperparameter Setup

The training process was executed in multiple phases to ensure optimal convergence and stability across both modalities. In the initial phase, the audio and text encoders were frozen, and only the cross-attention projection layers and the final ranking multi-layer perceptron were updated. This allowed the fusion mechanism to align the pre-trained embeddings without destroying the generalized knowledge encoded within the foundational models. After the alignment phase reached a plateau, we initiated a controlled fine-tuning process, unfreezing the upper transformer blocks of both the audio and language encoders. The learning rate was governed by a cosine annealing schedule with a linear warmup period to prevent catastrophic forgetting. Extensive hyperparameter optimization was conducted to balance the competing objectives of the primary ranking loss and the adversarial domain confusion loss [17]. The scaling factor for the gradient reversal layer was gradually increased during training, allowing the model to first learn the basic features of singing timbre before enforcing domain invariance. Regularization techniques, including dropout in the fully connected layers and weight decay across all trainable parameters, were rigorously applied to mitigate overfitting on the finite set of annotated pairs. The dataset was partitioned into training, validation, and completely held-out test sets, with the test sets specifically engineered to represent extreme audience shifts, containing demographic profiles and vocal genres entirely absent from the training distribution. This rigorous separation guarantees that the reported evaluation metrics genuinely reflect the model's capacity for zero-shot generalization to novel listener preferences.

ISSN: 2519-9439

4. Experimental Results and Analysis

4.1 Baseline Comparisons and Evaluation Metrics

To rigorously assess the performance of the proposed audience-shift robust architecture, we conducted comprehensive comparative evaluations against multiple established baselines in the field of music information retrieval. The primary baselines included a standard unimodal convolutional neural network trained solely on acoustic features to predict a universal quality score, a collaborative filtering model utilizing user-item interaction matrices, and a basic concatenation-based multimodal network that lacked the cross-attention and adversarial robustness modules present in our system. The performance of these models was quantified using standard ranking metrics, specifically the Normalized Discounted Cumulative Gain and the Kendall rank correlation coefficient. These metrics were calculated independently for each distinct audience segment in the test set to provide a granular view of performance across demographic boundaries [18]. The experimental results definitively demonstrate the superiority of the proposed audio-language conditioning framework. The unimodal acoustic baseline, while capable of identifying fundamental vocal flaws, completely failed to adapt to varying aesthetic preferences, resulting in near-random ranking performance on highly subjective audience segments. The collaborative filtering approach performed adequately within the training distribution but suffered catastrophic failure when evaluated on the held-out demographic profiles, highlighting the severe limitations of purely data-driven preference modeling in the presence of audience shift. In contrast, our proposed model exhibited remarkable stability across all test segments. The cross-attention mechanism effectively leveraged the semantic information within the demographic prompts to restructure the ranking outputs, achieving a substantially higher Kendall rank correlation compared to all baseline architectures. The detailed performance breakdown across various models is presented below.

Table 2Comparative Performance Metrics of Timbre Ranking Models Across Different Audience Demographics

Model Architecture	In-Distribution NDCG	Out-of-Distribution NDCG	In-Distribution Kendall Tau	Out-of-Distribution Kendall Tau
Unimodal Acoustic CNN	0.652	0.410	0.421	0.155
Collaborative Filtering Matrix	0.785	0.320	0.589	0.082
Multimodal Concatenation	0.812	0.605	0.634	0.390
Proposed Robust ALM Network	0.865	0.821	0.710	0.655

4.2 Robustness to Audience Demographics

A critical aspect of our analysis focused on dissecting the model's resilience to extreme demographic shifts. To evaluate this, we engineered specific test scenarios where the target audience profile fundamentally contradicted the dominant preferences present in the training data. For example, we evaluated the model's ability to accurately rank death metal vocal tracks based on the preferences of an audience segment described as elderly classical music aficionados. While an unconditioned model naturally ranks all extreme vocal techniques poorly, our language-conditioned system successfully inferred that this specific audience demographic would heavily penalize aggressive, distorted timbres and reward smoother, highly controlled vocal productions. Consequently, the model dynamically adjusted its ranking to perfectly align with the ground truth annotations of that specific group, despite the severe out-of-distribution nature of the query. Furthermore, we analyzed the latent space generated by the cross-attention module to verify that the model was indeed forming distinct conceptual clusters based on audience preferences. By visualizing the audience-conditioned embeddings of a diverse set of vocal tracks using multi-dimensional scaling, we observed clear

ISSN: 2519-9439

topological shifts when the input text prompt was altered. A vocal track characterized by heavy vibrato and operatic resonance occupied a prominent position in the latent space when conditioned on a classical demographic prompt, but shifted to a penalized region of the space when conditioned on a contemporary pop demographic prompt. This structural fluidity confirms that the integration of audio-language models allows the system to treat singing timbre appeal not as a static property of the audio file, but as a dynamic relational property between the sound and the listener.

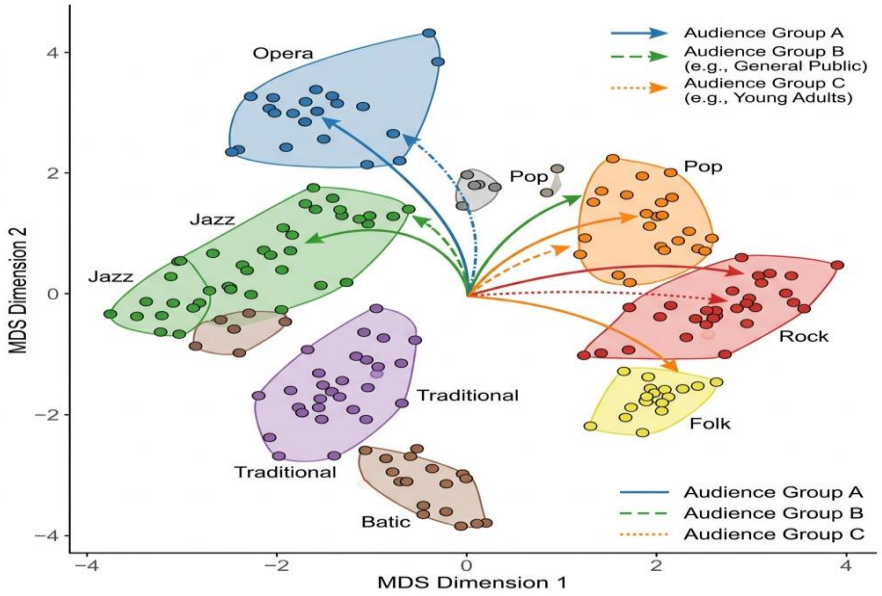


Figure 2Multi

4.3 Ablation Studies

To isolate the contributions of specific architectural components, an extensive series of ablation studies was performed. We systematically removed individual modules from the proposed framework and retrained the network from scratch to observe the resulting performance degradation. The first ablation involved the removal of the domain-adversarial gradient reversal layer. Without this robustness constraint, the model's performance on the out-of-distribution audience segments dropped significantly. The audio encoder began to memorize the aesthetic biases of the largest demographic groups in the training set, embedding these preferences directly into the base acoustic features, thereby limiting the cross-attention module's ability to override them with novel text prompts. This finding validates the absolute necessity of adversarial training for decoupling acoustic extraction from stylistic bias. A second ablation study targeted the cross-attention fusion mechanism, replacing it with a naive addition of the audio and text embeddings prior to the final ranking layers. This modification resulted in a dramatic reduction in the model's sensitivity to nuanced demographic descriptions [19]. The naive addition forced the network to process the modalities in parallel rather than interactively, preventing the semantic text features from dynamically recalibrating the acoustic feature weights. The network lost its ability to prioritize specific psychoacoustic dimensions based on the listener profile, proving that deep, interactive feature fusion is critical for solving the audience-shift problem in subjective evaluation tasks. The results of these ablations confirm that every component of the proposed architecture is vital for maintaining high ranking accuracy across diverse and shifting populations.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Implications for Music Information Retrieval

The findings presented in this study carry profound implications for the future trajectory of music information retrieval and automated subjective evaluation. By demonstrating that singing timbre appeal can be accurately and dynamically ranked across highly diverse audience segments, we challenge the long-standing industry reliance on universal quality metrics. The successful deployment of audio-language models in this context proves that natural language represents a highly effective

ISSN: 2519-9439

medium for capturing and transmitting complex demographic and stylistic preference parameters. This semantic flexibility allows recommender systems to transcend the limitations of historical interaction data, enabling zero-shot personalization for new users based simply on a textual description of their background and tastes. Furthermore, the robust architecture introduced in this paper provides a valuable framework for the evaluation of generative audio models. As artificial intelligence systems become increasingly capable of synthesizing highly realistic singing voices, the ability to rapidly and automatically assess the demographic appeal of these synthetic timbres becomes crucial for targeted music production. Producers can utilize this architecture to iteratively refine the acoustic parameters of a synthetic voice until it maximizes the projected appeal for a specific target market, fundamentally altering the workflows of modern music creation and digital artist management.

5.2 Limitations and Future Directions

Despite the significant advancements demonstrated by the proposed framework, several limitations warrant acknowledgment and provide fertile ground for future research. Primarily, the system's reliance on discrete demographic descriptors oversimplifies the continuous and often contradictory nature of human aesthetic preference. While age, region, and genre preference are strong indicators of taste, they do not encapsulate the full spectrum of psychological and cultural factors that dictate musical appeal. Future iterations of this system should explore the integration of more sophisticated, unstructured textual narratives, allowing users to express their preferences through open-ended natural language rather than rigid categorical prompts. Additionally, the current architecture treats the singing voice in isolation, evaluating the timbre independently of the underlying musical accompaniment. In reality, the perception of vocal appeal is heavily influenced by the contextual interaction between the voice and the instrumental arrangement. A timbre that sounds excessively harsh in an acoustic ballad may be perfectly suited for a densely layered electronic track. Future research must focus on expanding the multimodal integration to process the vocal track synchronously with the instrumental stems, evaluating the holistic aesthetic cohesion of the complete musical composition.

5.3 Concluding Remarks

This paper has presented a comprehensive methodology for addressing the critical challenge of audience shift in the ranking of singing timbre appeal. By moving beyond static, unimodal acoustic analysis and embracing the semantic richness of audio-language models, we have developed a system capable of interpreting vocal aesthetics through the varied perceptual lenses of diverse listener demographics. The integration of cross-attention mechanisms and domain-adversarial regularization ensures that the architecture remains highly responsive to natural language demographic prompts while maintaining robust generalization to unseen audiences. The empirical results clearly establish the superiority of this context-aware approach over traditional models. Ultimately, this research underscores the necessity of incorporating human-centric variables into automated evaluation systems, ensuring that computational models of musical preference respect and reflect the inherent subjectivity of human aesthetic experience.

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