Student singers' development and use of performance cues

Jane Ginsborg, Emile Perkins
Chloe Latchmere and Victoria Barton
ADVANCING INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN SINGING: PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Chaffin & Imreh (1994)
Chaffin, Imreh & Crawford (2002)


Chaffin, Gerling, Demos, & Melms (2013)
ADVANCING INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN SINGING: PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Lisboa, Chaffin, & Logan (2012)

Ginsborg & Chaffin (2011a, b)
Ginsborg, Chaffin, & Demos, & Nicholson (2013)
Ginsborg, Chaffin, & Demos (in press)
Advancing Interdisciplinary Research in Singing: Overview of Method

- Longitudinal case study method
- Tracks musician’s engagement with music from first sight to performance and beyond
- One musician at a time rather than groups of musicians
- Important feature: psychologist and musician are equal partners
- Combining objective “outsider” viewpoint of scientist with subjective “insider” expertise of performer
Performance cue (PC) theory derives from the findings of several case studies. Musicians attend to particular features of the music when they practise. Locations of features become landmarks in musicians’ mental representation and serve as retrieval cues during performance from memory. BUT Theory does not account for spontaneity in performance. Ginsborg, Chaffin, & Demos (in press): practice features, thoughts in Performance 1 (i.e., PCs) and thoughts in Performance 2.
Schoenberg: *Ich darf nicht dankend In diesen Wintertagen*

Overlap between thoughts reported for practice (A), public performance (B) and reconstructed performance (C)

***p<.001
**p<.01
*p<.05
ADVANCING INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN SINGING: RATIONALE & AIMS

- Only one longitudinal case study has involved students (Chaffin, Demos, & Crawford, 2009), both pianists
- Opportunity for singers of different levels of expertise to track their own practice and performance of one song each
- Nature of practice features, PCs and spontaneous thoughts
- Compare approaches with those of other musicians
- Reflect on experience of undertaking project in relation to other practice and performance
ADVANCING INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN SINGING: METHOD / Participants

- Chloe – 2\textsuperscript{nd} year undergraduate student
- Vic – graduate student (currently MMus, applying for PhD in performance)
- Emile – 4\textsuperscript{th} year undergraduate student (researcher under supervision)
• Chloe: *The Light That is Felt* by Charles Ives
• Vic: *No. 1 of Five Am’rous Sighs* by Jonathan Dove (English, b. 1959)
• Both songs short, with texts in English, composed during the 20th century using tonal harmony
ADVANCING INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN SINGING: PROCEDURE

- Both singers audio-recorded practice sessions and performances
- At the end of the last practice session before the performance each singer annotated multiple copies of the score indicating structural, basic, interpretive, expressive and ensemble features
- Immediately after the performance they annotated another copy of the score to indicate PCs and spontaneous thoughts in the same categories
- Noted first and last beats of practice segments
- Interviews with Jane
Chloe: 8 practice sessions lasting 3 h12 m
Vic: 13 practice sessions lasting 3 h 30 m
### ADVANCING INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN SINGING: RESULTS & DISCUSSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features/PCs</th>
<th>Chloe</th>
<th>Vic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structural</td>
<td>Section</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Switch</td>
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<td>Basic</td>
<td>Clear vowels</td>
<td>Intonation</td>
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<td>Engagement / connection</td>
<td>Support</td>
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<td>Breathing / onset</td>
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<td>Interpretive</td>
<td>Tempo</td>
<td>Legato</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Phrasing</td>
<td>Word meaning</td>
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<td>Sound quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expressive</td>
<td>Convey understanding of composer’s intentions to audience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensemble</td>
<td>Co-ordinate with pianist</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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Chloe: The Light that is Felt (100 beats)

- Features
- PCs
- Spontaneous thoughts
ADVANCING INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN SINGING: RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Vic: [First] Am’rous Sigh (142 beats/100)

- Features
- PCs
- Spontaneous thoughts

Graph showing the comparison of different categories such as Structural, Basic, Interpretive, Expressive, and Ensemble.
• Findings challenge two conclusions drawn by Chaffin et al. (2009)
  1. Number of PCs increase with
     • musician’s experience
     • Level of difficulty of piece
  2. Nature of PCs
Comparison with Jane’s PCs
*(Ricercar 1 from Stravinsky’s Cantata)*
ADVANCING INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN SINGING: FUTURE RESEARCH

• Different singers’ approaches to the same piece
• Same singers’ approaches to different pieces (as in Ginsborg & Chaffin, 2011b)


Thank you for your attention!

Any questions?

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