EXPLORING EMOTION ACROSS CULTURES

A reflective-reflexive workbook fostering nuanced affective awareness and culturally sensitive practices in vocal pedagogy

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Module 5: Independent Study Module Extended: Artefact Design BMPF7074D

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List of Abbreviations

DBR	Design-Based Research
EE	Emotional Expression
GRC	Gibbs Reflective Cycle
FE	Facial Expression
SDT	Self-Determination Theory
UWTSD	University of Wales Trinity St David
VE	Vocal Expression
VP	Vocal Pedagogy
VSC	Voice Study Centre

Component 1: Project Portfolio

Introduction

Within my multicultural voice teaching practice, I have observed how misalignments in the encoding and interpretation of emotional cues between peers, teachers, and students from diverse cultural backgrounds can negatively affect relationships, student confidence, and inclusion (Semnani-Azad and Adair, 2013; Hareli, Kafetsios and Hess, 2015; Carl, Icht and Ben-David, 2022; Koo, 2025; Bernier-Rock, 2025). Despite this, many expressive exercises used in voice training continue to encourage vocalists to 'embody' pre-defined emotional states, overlooking the culturally variable and nuanced norms of emotional expression (EE) demonstrated by students (Gendron, 2017; Ford, 2020; Laukka and Elfenbein, 2021).

These observations highlight a tension between evidence of culturally variable modes of EE and dominant approaches in vocal pedagogy (VP), which often rely on discrete, 'universal' categories rooted in Western 'basic emotion' models. Such frameworks risk oversimplifying EE while simultaneously privileging Western aesthetic norms (Juslin and Laukka, 2003; Cespedes-Guevara and Eerola, 2018; Ford, 2020). Failing to acknowledge cultural variation may additionally impact vocal technique, perceived emotional authenticity in performance, and, consequently, overall performance and career success (Vines et al., 2011; Wang, 2022; Miccolis, 2025).

As voice studios become increasingly multicultural, pedagogues must therefore develop more culturally responsive and inclusive practices. This requires critical reflection from both teachers and students on how EE, shaped by language, culture, and experience, may unintentionally reinforce dominant cultural norms and disadvantage others (Ford, 2020).

In response, this project aims to develop a reflective-reflexive workbook that moves beyond didactic, one-size-fits-all approaches. By integrating theoretical and pedagogical strategies, the workbook seeks to cultivate culturally nuanced emotional awareness within VP. The project is guided by the following research question:

Which theoretical and pedagogical strategies can be integrated into a reflective-reflexive workbook to cultivate culturally nuanced emotional awareness in the voice studio?

Planned Programme of Study

Context

Emotion research increasingly challenges universality, finding perception is shaped by culture, language, and experience, and that familiarity creates in-group recognition advantages (Wierzbicka, 2012; Barrett, 2017; Gendron, 2017; Liang et al., 2025). Despite this evidence that emotional meaning is contextually and culturally constructed (Barrett, 2017; Campeggiani, 2023), VP remains influenced by narrow Western frameworks and an apparent lack of reflective tools fostering emotional granularity and cross-cultural awareness. To address this issue, culturally responsive approaches that acknowledge the influence of cultural display norms and cultural dimensions, such as individualism-collectivism, on EE must be developed (Keshtiari and Kuhlmann, 2016).

Theoretical Influences

Constructivist-Constructionist Emotion Theory (Barrett, 2017)	Acknowledging the dyadic roles of encoder and decoder in co-constructing meaning and the role of culture, language, experience and context in emotion.
Circumplex Model of Affect (Russell, 1980)	A valence-arousal based dimension model supporting open-ended responses and avoiding Western bias.
Facial Action Coding System (FACS) (Ekman and Friesen, 1978)	Structuring facial analysis and fostering awareness of the individual muscles involved in expression and their influence on vocal tone.
Cross-disciplinary Insights	Synthesising research from: *Vocal acoustics* (Juslin and Laukka, 2003; Laukka et al, 2016; Sundberg, Salamão and Scherer, 2021) *Neuroscience* (Hoemann, Gendron and Barrett, 2017; Hoemann, Barrett and Quigley, 2021) *Physiology* (Kreibig, 2010; Wickramasuriya, Tessmer and Faghih, 2019).

Table 1. Theoretical influences.

Paradigm Shifts

These frameworks support three pedagogical paradigm shifts (Figure 1).

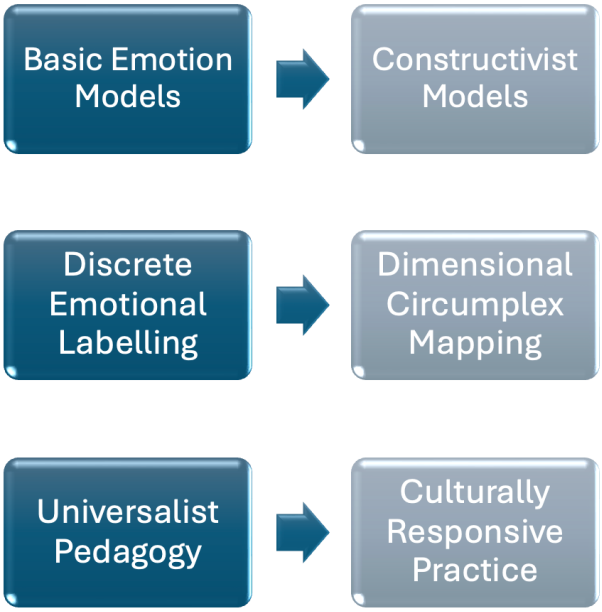


Figure 1. Pedagogical paradigm shifts.

Best Practice Influences

The workbook draws on established best practices in learning design and reflective practice, supported by evidence that identifies reflection as a key component in learning (Sandberg-Jurström, 2022). Best practices were synthesised from a combination of Voice Study Centre (VSC) courses (Appendix 3:3 and Table 2) and prior module research (Table 3).

Practice	Purpose	Presenter
Neuroscience-informed strategies *(Planned rest, breathing, mindfulness, gesture, mimic, and audiation)*	Optimise relaxation, learning and skill acquisition.	(Moss-Erickson, 2026)
Prioritising intent over 'basic emotion' labels	Avoid discrete labels and encourage spontaneous responses.	(Morgan, 2025a)
Acoustic tools for vocal expression analysis	Deepen expressive understanding and identify related variations in vocal tone.	(Morgan, 2025b)
Exploring musicality in vocal expression	Increase awareness of variations in prosody, rhythm and dynamics.	(Henny, 2025)
Biometric feedback	Enhance awareness through objective real-time data.	(Besch, 2025 Moss-Erickson, 2026)

Table 2. VSC course practitioner best practices.

Practice	Purpose	Research Paper
Emotional Mapping (Dimensional Models)	Mapping of emotions along arousal and valence dimensions supports nuanced, culturally sensitive vocal expression.	(Russell, 1980; Nummenmaa et al., 2014)
Reflective Model-Based Prompts	Structured reflection guides learners to develop awareness of technical and expressive variation in expression.	(Gibbs, 1988)
Dyadic Listening and Exchange	Paired listening fosters empathy, relatedness, and awareness of diverse emotional interpretations.	(Scherer, 2003)
Self-Reporting of Emotions	Avoidance of fixed-choice labelling promotes nuanced descriptions of individualised emotional concepts.	(Barrett, 2006b, 2006a)
Multimodal Exploration	Modal exploration of gesture, and vocal and facial expression (VE and FE) supports embodied learning, expressive and interpretive nuance, and increases emotional granularity.	(Barrett, 2006a; Angkasirisan, 2025;)

Table 3. Prior module best practice influences.

Aim

To design and develop a theoretically informed reflective-reflexive workbook, grounded in constructivist-constructionist emotion theory (Barrett, 2017; Campeggiani, 2023), that addresses the lack of culturally responsive approaches to EE in VP. Responding to the challenges of multicultural voice training, where emotional cues may be encoded and interpreted differently (Wang, 2022; Koo, 2025; Miccolis, 2025), the project aims to foster inclusivity, improve emotional granularity, and deepen understanding of emotion in multicultural voice work (Hoemann, Barrett and Quigley, 2021; Goodman, 2024).

Objectives

This project applies SMART goals to:
(Bahrami, Heidari and Cranney, 2022)

- Develop a reflective-reflexive workbook grounded in constructivist-constructionist emotion theory, incorporating valence-arousal and free-choice tasks (Barrett, 2017; Laukka and Elfenbein, 2021).
- Embed a structured reflective framework using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (GRC) (1988).
- Design a multimodal pedagogical tool integrating facial, vocal, physiological and cognitive dimensions of EE with circumplex valence-arousal models and neuroscience-informed pedagogy (Russell, 1980, Moss-Erickson, 2026).
- Integrate Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Ryan and Deci, 2000) to support autonomy, competence, and relatedness in learner engagement.
- Produce a theoretically informed artefact that explores variability in EE and its implications for vocal technique and performance.

Process

- Applying a Design-Based Research (DBR) methodology to structure iterative cycles of research, design, testing and refinement (Tinoca et al., 2022).
- Engaging in critical reflection and seeking peer feedback to refine workbook design across developmental stages (Schön, 1983; Amiel and Reeves, 2008; Allan, 2011).
- Employing Nelson's 'Know That, Know How, Know What' framework (2013) to structure reflective analysis throughout development.
- Qualitative and quantitative piloting in Module 6 with multicultural participants (McLeod, 2024).

Activities

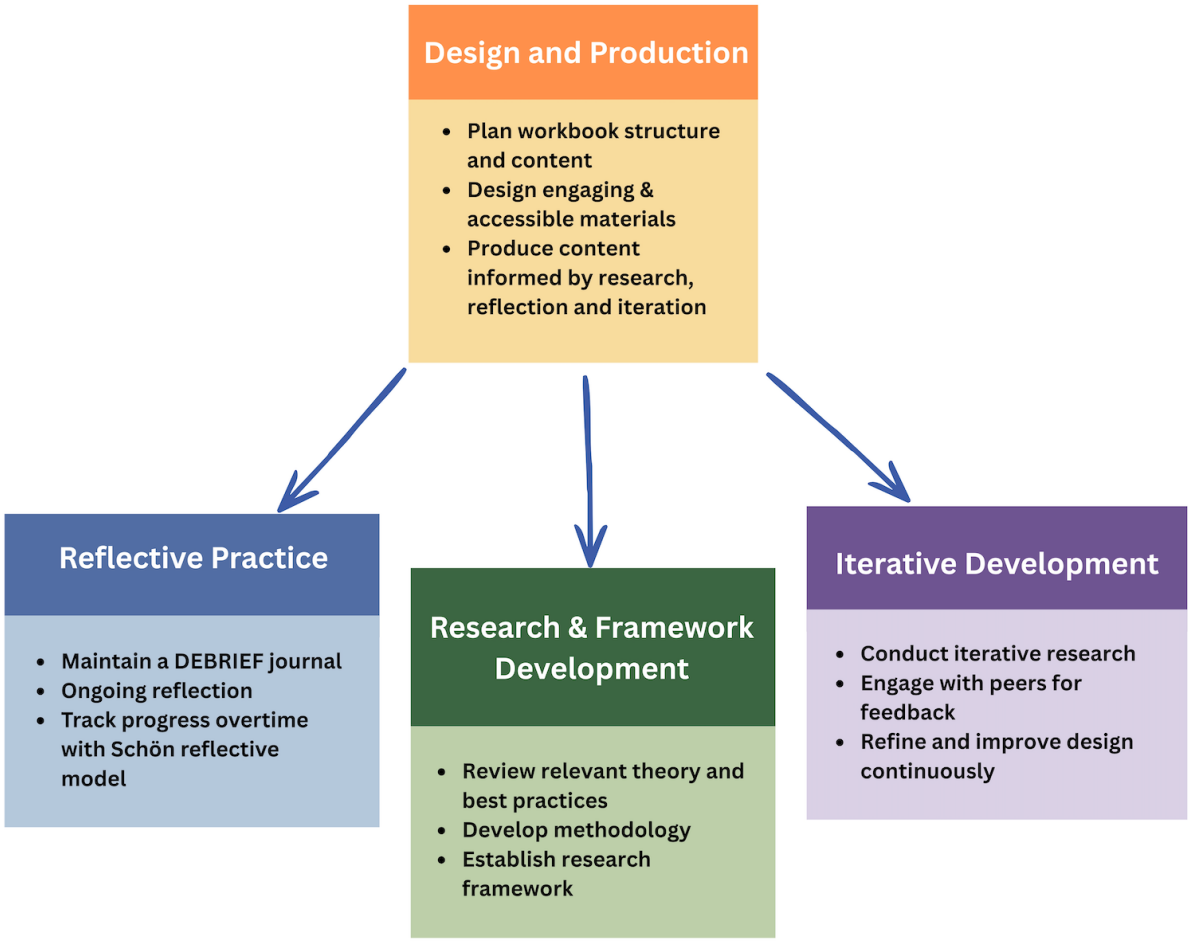


Figure 2. Activities (Schön, 1983; Allan, 2011; Wolcott et al., 2019; Tinoca et al., 2022; Suyo-Vega, Fernández-Bedoya and Meneses-La-Riva, 2024).

Assessment Criteria

The following criteria will be evaluated to gauge project success:

Quality - Research-based, well written and designed	Usability - Easy to navigate, adapt and understand	Cutural reflexivity and sensitivity
Inclusivity	Overall appeal	Alignment with Self-Determination Theory (SDT)
Affective integration of GRC	Effectiveness in supporting reflection	Iterative improvement across DBR cycles

Figure 3. Assessment criteria (Gibbs, 1988; Ryan and Deci, 2000; Tinoca et al., 2022).

Personal Learning Outcomes

Integrating Theory and Models

Developing strategies to combine constructivist-constructionist theories, dimensional models, and best practices within a pedagogical tool for voice work.

Research and Methodological Competence

Gaining competence in applying an iterative DBR methodology (Tinoca et al., 2022).

Reflective Practice and Critical Thinking

Applying a variety of reflective models (Schön, 1983; Gibbs, 1988; Allan, 2011; Nelson, 2013).

Practical Design and Production Skills

Gaining experience with Canva design tools.

Risk Mitigation

Informed consent will be obtained, with adult participation preferred and parental consent required for adolescents (Mathews, 2022). A disclaimer is included, stating the workbook is not a therapeutic tool, and a detailed risk outline provided in the appendix.

User wellbeing is supported by trained facilitator guidance, embedded SDT principles, and the option to withdraw. Confidentiality is maintained by ensuring all responses remain private, and participation in collaborative sharing optional (Costley and Gibbs, 2006).

Planning

Module 5 BMPF7074D

Independent Study Module (Extended): Artefact Design
Vanessa Eve Hirsch 2327695

Project Start: Monday 16/01/2026
Project Finish: Monday 01/06/2026

TASK	START	END
Design Based Research Steps Artefact		
Analysis and Exploration - Best Practices and Theories	Sunday 03/02/2026	Sunday 08/03/2026
Iterative Research	Monday 02/03/2026	Friday 10/04/2026
Artefact Design and Creation	Friday 20/04//2026	Friday 10/04/2026
Evaluation - Peer Feedback	Saturday 11/04//2026	Wednesday 30/04/2026
Reflection	Saturday 24/04/2026	Sunday 30/04/2026
Iterative improvements	Sunday 30/04/2026	Sunday 10/05/2026
Preparation		
Prepare Gannt Chart	Saturday 07/02/2026	Sunday 08/02/2026
Select Draft Research Question and Title	Saturday 31/01/2026	Sunday 01/02/2026
Prepare Reflective Journal	Saturday 07/02/2026	Sunday 08/02/2026
Book Tutorials	Saturday 07/02/2026	Sunday 08/02/2026
Prepare Document in Word	Saturday 31/01/2026	Sunday 01/02/2026
Choose Artefact	Saturday 31/01/2026	Sunday 01/02/2026
Reflect on Motivation and Target Group	Saturday 07/02/2026	Sunday 15/02/2026
Portfolio (1500 words)		
Write Draft Introduction (200 Words)	Saturday 31/01/2026	Sunday 01/02/2026
Write Planned Programme of Study (650 Words)	Monday 09/02/2026	Sunday 22/02/2026
Write Methodology (650 Words)	Monday 23/02/2026	Sunday 08/03//2026
Research Best Practice Influences	Saturday 31/02/2026	Sunday 08/03/2026
Research Methology and Theoretical Frameworks	Saturday 31/02/2026	Sundan 08/03/2026
Define Aims and Objectives and Learning Outcomes	Friday 09/03/2026	Sunday 22/02/2026
Define Activities and Assessment	Friday 09/03/2026	Sunday 08/03//2026
DEADLINE Complete Portfolio Draft	Monday 09/03/2026	
Send Portfolio to Tutor for Feedback	Monday 09/03/2026	
Rewrite Portfolio After Feedback	Monday 16/03/2026	Friday 06/04/2026
DEADLINE Final Draft Portfolio (actual deadline18/05)	Friday 08/05/2026	
Report (6000 words)		
Write Introduction (250 Words)	Saturday 21/03/26	Sunday 22/03/26
Write Review (4750 Words) Know That, How, What	Monday 23/03/26	Saturday 09/05/26
Write Conclusion	Saturday 25/04/2026	Sunday 26/04/2026
Reflection (1000 words)		
Keep Reflective Journal	Monday 16/01/2026	Monday 31/05/2026
Write Critical Refection (1000 words)	Monday 27/04/2026	Tuesday 28/04/26
Submit to tutor for Feedback	Tuesday 28/04/2026	
Write Final Draft	Friday 01/05/2026	Saturday 09/05/26
DEADLINE Final Draft Report (actual deadline 18/12)	Sunday 10/05/2025	
Artefact Design (first and second iterations)		
Define Components to Include	Saturday 21/03/26	Sunday 10/05/2026
Draft Text	Saturday 21/03/26	Sunday 10/05/2026
Prepare Visuals	Saturday 21/03/26	Sunday 10/05/2026
Final Text	Saturday 21/03/26	Sunday 10/05/2026
Graphic Design	Saturday 21/03/26	Sunday 10/05/2026
DEADLINE Final Draft Artefact (actual deadline 18/05)	Sunday 10/05/2026	
Other		
Reference List Format and Check	Monday 25/05/2026	Sunday 31/05/2026
Proofread	Monday 25/05/2026	Sunday 31/05/2026
Appendices	Monday 25/05/2026	Sunday 31/05/2026
List of Abbreviations and Terms	Monday 25/05/2026	Sunday 31/05/2026
List of Tables, Figures	Monday 25/05/2026	Sunday 31/05/2026
Review After Final Draft Feedback		
Review all sections above after Feedback	Monday 25/05/2026	Sunday 31/05/2026
DEADLINE FINISHED ASSIGMENT	Monday 01/06/2026	

Figure 4. Gannt chart summary.

Methodology

Design-Based Research

This project adopts a Design-Based Research (DBR) framework to guide the iterative development of a reflective-reflexive workbook for spoken and sung voice pedagogy (Figure 5). DBR bridges theory and practice through iterative cycles of analysis, design and implementation, and evaluation in real-life contexts (Wolcott et al., 2019; McKenney and Reeves, 2021). It was selected over Action Research due to its emphasis on design and refinement of educational artefacts, as well as its focus on theory-building, rather than primarily on practitioner change (Wang and Hannafin, 2005; Kamarudin and Mat Noor, 2024). Although the project shares features with Action Research (practice-based focus, active practitioner involvement, and iterative cycles of inquiry and reflection), DBR offers a structured framework for artefact development and theory-informed refinement in educational settings (Amiel and Reeves, 2008). Its emphasis on collaborative design processes aligns well with the constructivist-constructionist paradigm of this project (Tinoca et al., 2022).

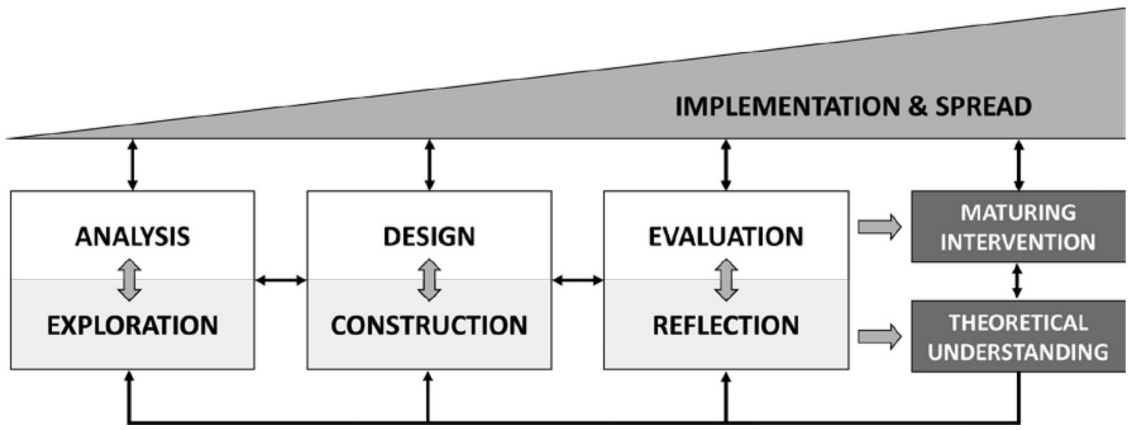


Figure 5. Model of Design-Based Research (Wolcott et al., 2019).

This module represents an initial cycle of research, artefact development, and peer evaluation (Wolcott et al., 2019; Zeng and Ravindran, 2025). Subsequent module 6 piloting is planned, extending this process by generating feedback and supporting further iterative refinement. DBR can, however, introduce bias in single-practitioner designs, especially with limited peer review and small testing groups, potentially reducing the generalisability. To mitigate this, Module 6 piloting will include more diverse participant groups.

Reflection is embedded throughout the DBR process to evaluate design decisions and integrate emerging insights. In this project, this was supported by a structured research journal informed by the DEBRIEF model (Allan, 2011), supporting critical examination of assumptions, emotional responses, and biases (Figure 6). This approach was particularly important in identifying Western assumptions embedded in both emotional frameworks used traditionally in VP and my own perspective and practices.

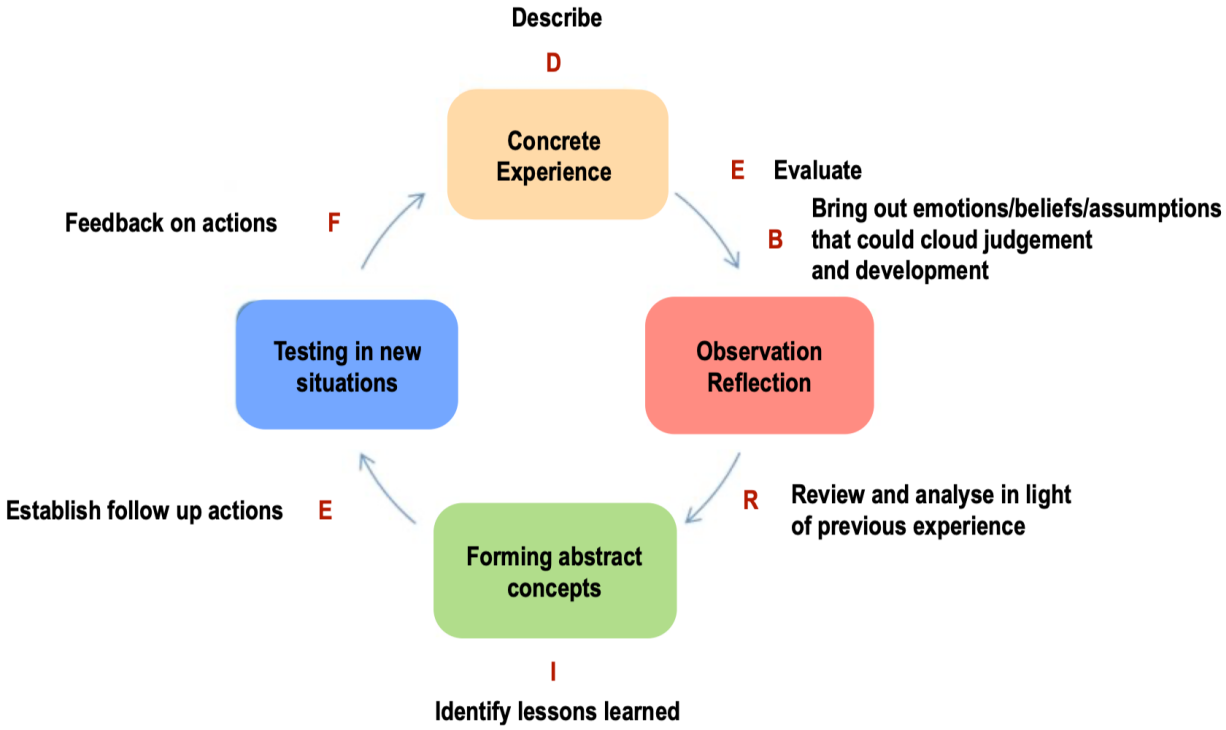


Figure 6. DEBRIEF Model (Allan, 2011).

Additionally, Schön's (1983) model complemented this by supporting reflection-in-action and on-action across the development process. Whereas DEBRIEF supported close reflection on individual aspects, Schön provided a broader lens for tracking how thinking evolved over time.

Theoretical Influences

The workbook's theoretical foundations drew on a Module 4 literature review of peer-reviewed research (post-2006), identifying key theoretical perspectives relevant to VP, emotional communication and reflective practice (Hirsch, 2026). Constructivist-constructionist perspectives were prioritised over universalist 'basic emotion' models due to their acknowledgement of cultural and linguistic variation in emotional meaning (Campeggiani, 2023). This stance informs the workbook's emphasis on variability in vocal and facial expression (VE and FE), framing emotional communication in voice work as co-constructed and context-dependent rather than universally encoded (Barrett, 2017).

Best Practices

Best practices were also drawn from Module 4 alongside five Voice Study Centre (VSC) workshops (2025 – 2026) (Appendix 3:3). Although the workshops constitute grey literature, they were included due to their relevance to contemporary pedagogical practice. A thematic analysis was conducted to synthesise these sources (Braun and Clarke, 2006) (Table 3). This approach was selected over Narrative Synthesis because the aim was not to synthesise interpretations across studies, but to identify recurring applied findings to inform design decisions (Barnett-Page and Thomas, 2009). The resulting themes were treated as interrelated design principles guiding the pedagogical methods within the workbook.

Category	Key Themes
Learning Strategies	Play, mimicry, gesture, rest, breath, brain function and embodied learning.
Emotion	Valence-arousal circumplex models, emotional granularity, constructivist-constructionist vs basic emotion theory, cultural variation.
Physiological Awareness	Body mapping, biofeedback, and mindful practices.
Expressive Strategies	Vocal and facial mimicry, gesture, prosody, audiation, facial action units (FACS), acoustic analysis and feedback, action verbs for intention.

Table 4. Key themes from thematic analysis.

Further Research

Identified themes were further researched alongside the workbook's structural development. Supporting literature was sourced using Boolean searches via the UWTSD library, Google Scholar, AI-assisted tools, and 'snowballing' techniques (Greenhalgh and Peacock, 2005). Inclusion criteria prioritised English-language, peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters post-2006, reflecting developments in constructivist and constructionist emotion theory (Barrett, 2006a, 2006b, Hirsch, 2026). Grey literature was generally excluded unless it addressed specific gaps or contemporary practice and was restricted to recent sources.

Workbook Development and Design

Synthesis of the findings informed the integration of reflective, embodied, and collaborative learning activities within the workbook design. Developed in Canva, the artefact was refined iteratively through both ongoing reflection and peer feedback. User reflection is structured at both macro and micro levels using GRC (Gibbs, 1988), selected for its progression from experience to evaluation and action-oriented insight, supporting reflection on co-created, culturally sensitive practices in voice work (Sandberg-Jurström, 2022) (Figure 7).

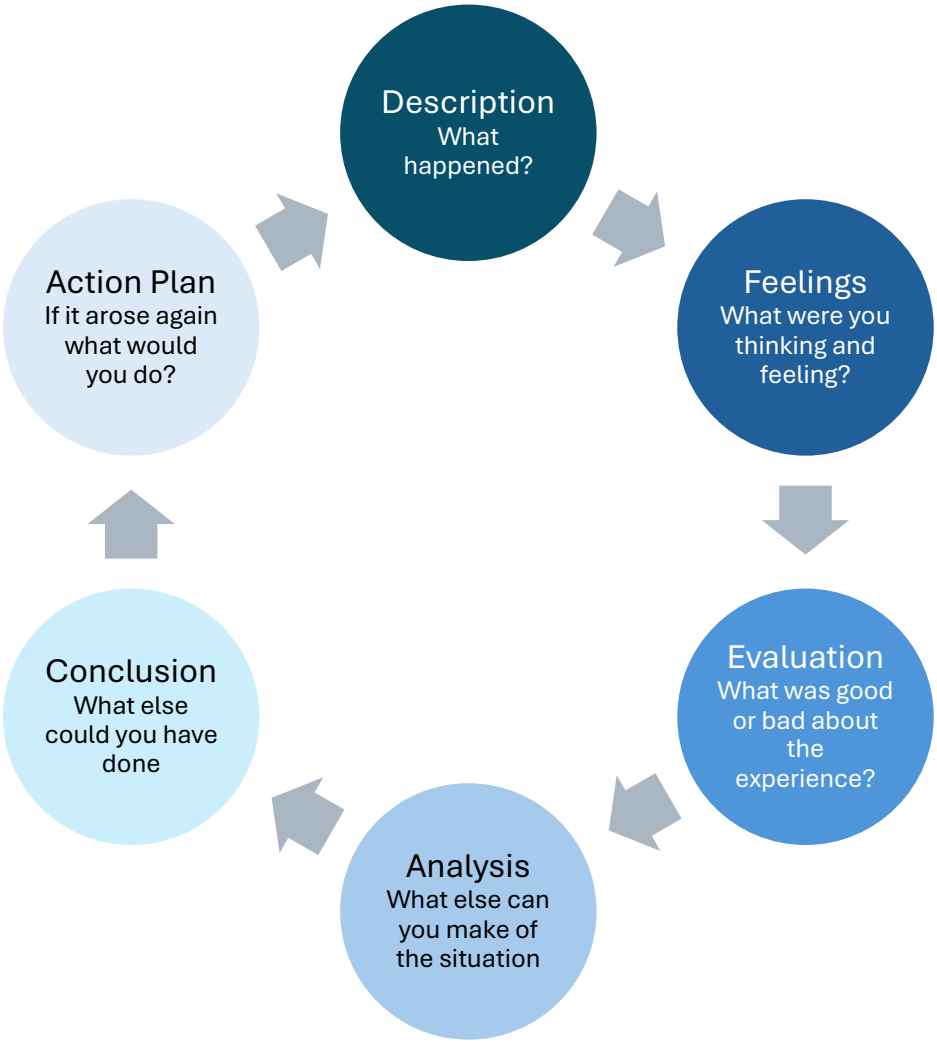


Figure 7. Gibbs Reflective Cycle (1988).

Peer Feedback and Future Testing

Aligned with DBR, peer feedback evaluated usability, clarity, theoretical alignment, and assessment criteria, informing iterative refinement (Appendix 3:1). Module 6 piloting will test the workbook in real-life settings using mixed methods (McLeod, 2024), extending the DBR cycle into implementation and supporting iterative development of culturally sensitive VP practices (McKenney and Reeves, 2021) (Figure 8).

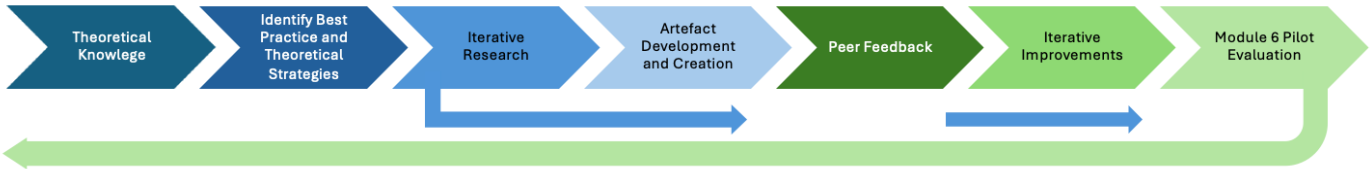


Figure 8. Iterative DBR framework for this study.

Component 2 - Project Report

Introduction

This project addresses a gap in vocal pedagogy (VP) by developing a reflective-reflexive workbook for vocalists and pedagogues of both sung and spoke voice. It fosters awareness of the culturally, socially, and individually shaped nature of affective expression while challenging the field's overreliance on Western 'basic emotion' models and their underlying value assumptions (Ford, 2020; Hoemann, Barrett and Quigley, 2021; Li, Olsen and Thompson, 2025; Ferm Almqvist and Hentschel, 2026). Through reflection, open-response activities, and intercultural exchange, the workbook supports exploration of how language, culture, and personal experience shape emotional expression (EE) in multicultural contexts (Laukka et al., 2016 Vedernikova, Kuppens and Erbas, 2021; Westerlund et al., 2022; Li and Zheng, 2025).

The workbook draws on research from linguistics, acoustics, acting methodologies, and neuroscience of voice and learning. Experiential activities are presented in free-choice themed chapters, supporting flexibility and learner autonomy (Ryan and Deci, 2000). User reflection is structured following a framework based on the Gibbs Reflective Cycle (GRC) (1988) with the workbook culminating in identifying insights and actionable steps for improving EE and VP.

Primarily designed for adult learners, this student-centred workbook may also be used with adolescents aged 15 and over with parental consent (Mathews, 2022). Its implementation requires a trained facilitator who is aware of the potential risks (Haber and Deaton, 2019; Ferm Almqvist and Hentschel, 2026). Although the workbook is intended for workshop settings that support the collaborative co-construction of meaning, it can also be adapted for one-to-one teaching, with facilitator participation in reflective exchanges.

Key Themes

The critical review of this workbook, organised under three key themes (Figure 1), is structured according to Nelson's, "Know That, Know How, Know What" (2013), offering a clear framework for artefact examination.

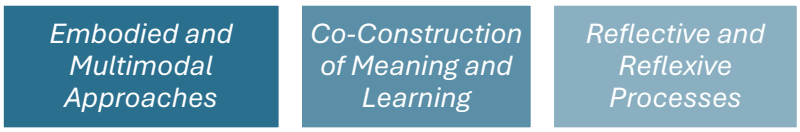


Figure 1. Key themes.

Know That

This section presents the conceptual and theoretical foundations of the workbook, grounded in psychological constructionist and constructivist theories of emotion (Barrett, 2017), which serve as the primary lens guiding all subsequent design decisions.

Constructivist-Constructionist Perspectives

Recent research challenges Western-based ‘basic emotion’ models associated with Ekman and Friesen (Ekman, 1971; Ekman and Friesen, 1971, 1978), instead conceptualising emotion as context-dependent and constructed rather than biologically fixed or universally expressed (Barrett, 2006a, 2017). Within this framework, emotions arise from the interaction of bodily states, conceptual knowledge, and predictive neural processes, shaped by prior experience and contextual interpretation (Barrett and Simmons, 2015; Hoemann et al., 2017; MacCormack and Lindquist, 2017; Barrett, 2006b, 2022).

Emotional meaning is therefore understood as socially co-constructed, through language, culture, and experience, with significant implications for VP, expressive performance, and interpersonal communication (Cespedes-Guevara and Eerola, 2018; Crivelli and Fridlund, 2019; Ford, 2020; Wang, 2022; Westerlund et al., 2022). This perspective directly informs the workbook’s design, particularly its rejection of fixed emotional categories in favour of culturally and individually variable expressive concepts.

Key Themes

Embodied and Multimodal Approaches

The workbook adopts embodied and multimodal approaches to learning as the primary mechanism for exploring emotional meaning. Embodied Cognition proposes that emotion, perception and cognition are integrated within bodily experience (Liu et al., 2026), with emotion understood as 'sense-making' that emerges through continuous interaction between the body and environment (Thompson and Stapleton, 2009). This is grounded in interoception, the perception of internal body signals such as heart rate, body temperature or changes respiration (Barrett and Simmons, 2015), and expressed through coordinated vocal, facial, gestural, and postural modes rather than isolated means of expression (Niedenthal, 2007).

This is directly relevant to vocalists and voice pedagogues, where expressive control and vocal technique rely on integrated embodied systems (Miccolis, 2025). VE is encoded through subtle variations in prosody and non-linguistic vocal bursts (Semnani-Azad and Adair, 2013; Cordaro et al., 2016; Ponsot et al., 2018), and is supported by neural systems involved with auditory processing, language, and sensorimotor integration (Jiang and Wu, 2025).

Despite ongoing debate between embodied and disembodied theories of emotion (Díaz, 2022), the workbook adopts an embodied constructivist-constructionist position in which bodily experience is central to both the expression and interpretation of emotional meaning. This is further supported by *Embodied Learning Theory*, which emphasises sensorimotor experience as fundamental to cognition and learning (Glenberg, 2008), reinforcing the role of the body in EE exploration.

Gamified activities are incorporated to enhance engagement and retention, aligning with research on play-based learning and embodied cognition (Mercer, 2007; Moss-Erickson 2026) (Workbook pp. 18, 26 and 27). This further supports the embodied constructivist-constructionist position by promoting experiential and collaborative engagement.

Co-Construction of Meaning and Learning

While psychological constructionism explains how emotion is formed and embodiment explains how it is experienced, social constructivist theory explains how it is developed and mediated in learning environments (Vygotsky, 1978). Learning is socially mediated through interaction, dialogue, and scaffolding within the Zone of Proximal Development, with knowledge co-constructed through collaboration and guided participation (Wibowo, Wangid and Fridaus, 2025).

Workbook users are active participants developing EE competence through observation, imitation, discussion, and feedback. Collaborative group work is embedded to support technical and expressive development while fostering relatedness, a key component in SDT and central to learner wellbeing and intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000) (Figure 2).

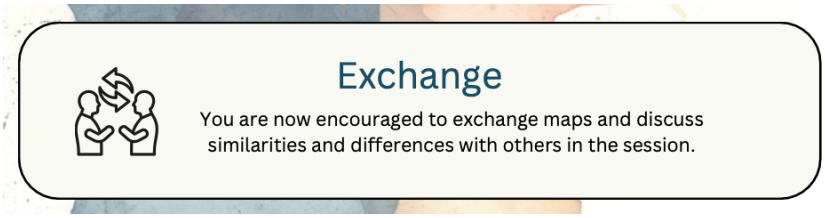


Figure 2. Collaborative group exchange – p. 11.

Complementing this, psychological constructionist approaches emphasise that emotional meaning is socially co-constructed rather than individually generated (Barrett, 2017; Hoemann et al., 2025). Language plays a central role in shaping emotional categories, variable across cultures and contexts (Wierzbicka, 2012; Lindquist et al., 2014), highlighting the importance of paying attention to the influence of language within the workbook. This reinforces the significance of individual, cultural and linguistic awareness in vocal training and performance, in which emotional meaning is continually shaped by peers, mentors and audiences (Koo, 2025).

Reflective and Reflexive Processes

The workbook integrates structured reflective-reflexive practice to support ongoing emotional awareness and development, while enabling learners to track perceived competence, a central component of SDT (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

The GRC model is adopted as the primary reflective structure, at both macro and micro levels, due to its progression from experience through emotional response, analysis, and action planning (Gibbs, 1988). This aligns with experiential and practice-based learning and supports iterative skill development in VP (Kolb and Kolb, 2022) (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Modified GRC structure – p. 3.

Emotional granularity is developed through structured self-reporting, enhancing differentiation of emotional experience (Widdershoven et al., 2019; Hoemann, Barrett and Quigley, 2021). Reflection is further supported by a simplified valence-arousal dimensional model, enabling comparison of emotional states across participants while accounting for cultural and individual differences in emotional labelling (Russell, 1980 Kuppens et al., 2013, 2017) (Figure 4). This fosters culturally responsive, nuanced exploration of EE among vocalists and voice pedagogues, avoiding reductive or stereotyped EE and enhancing inclusion and cultural sensitivity within VP (Ford, 2020; Ferm Almqvist and Hentschel, 2026).

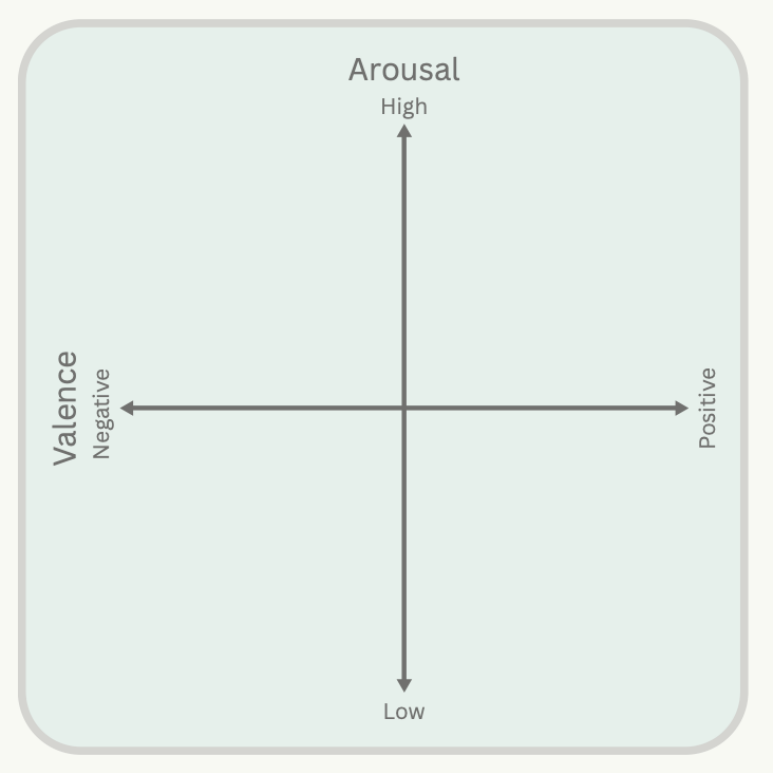


Figure 4. Simplified dimensional model – p. 10.

Reflective exercises are integrated with mindfulness practices, as present-moment attentional focus has been linked to increased emotional granularity (Van der Gucht et al., 2019). Breath regulation, associated with the autonomic nervous system (Kreibig, 2010), further supports interoceptive awareness when combined with reflection (Liu et al., 2026). Slow nasal breathing reduces arousal and performance anxiety and supports learning and regulation (Jerath et al., 2015; Zaccaro et al., 2018). Structured rest and reset phases also support learning retention (Buch et al., 2021). These elements are embedded and repeated through the workbook to strengthen reflective efficacity (Figure 5).

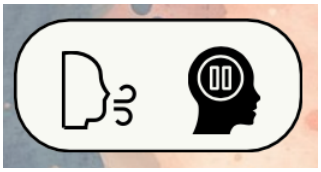


Figure 5. Breathe and rest symbol – p. 11.

Physiological and embodied tools further strengthen the reflective process. Body mapping examines bodily sensations (Nummenmaa et al., 2014), while biofeedback enables real-time awareness of subtle EE variation, increasing granularity in vocalists and pedagogues (Mercer and De Franches, 2025).

Mimicry-based activities extend embodied learning by engaging sensorimotor systems associated with empathy (Niedenthal, 2007). Vocal imitation and audiation engage predictive internal sound patterns that begin in auditory processing regions of the brain, are translated into speech-motor planning, and culminate in vocalisation (Jiang and Wu, 2025). Mimicry may therefore support cross-cultural understanding of diverse expressive norms.

Integration

Tensions are acknowledged between emotion models and theories, particularly where emphasis is placed on physiological, cognitive, and socio-linguistic dimensions of emotional experience (Barrett, 2006b; Kreibig, 2010; Wierzbicka, 2012; Jiang and Wu, 2025).

- **Physiological constructionism and constructivism** explain how emotion is formed and interpreted.
- **Embodied cognition and learning** explain how emotion is experienced and expressed, and how learning arises through embodied emotional experience.
- **Social constructivism** explains how emotion and learning are mediated socially.
- **Reflective models** structure how learners critically engage with and refine these experiences over time.

Although often treated as distinct theoretical perspectives, emotion is understood within this artefact as a holistic, multidimensional experience. Rather than competing explanations, they are treated as complementary ‘lenses’ on the same phenomenon. The workbook integrates them, conceptualising EE exploration as reflective, embodied, socially mediated, and culturally constructed.

Combined, these theories and models support a pedagogical shift from didactic, category-driven EE training towards reflective, culturally sensitive exploration. Workbook users are active constructors of emotional meaning, fostering more nuanced, inclusive, and culturally responsive VP and performance practices.

Design-Based Research

A Design-Based Research (DBR) approach was adopted to support development, providing an iterative framework in which theory, design and practice are continuously refined through peer review and application in real-world pedagogical contexts (Tinoca et al., 2022). This methodology was selected for its capacity to align theoretical frameworks with VP practices, and to ensure ongoing responsiveness to vocalists and pedagogues.

Rather than functioning as a fixed artefact, the workbook continues to evolve through cycles of implementation, evaluation, and redesign. The current iteration is informed by feedback from four peers across the fields of education, technology, design, copywriting and VP (Appendix 3:1). Further iterative development will follow module 6 multicultural participant piloting.

Identifying Best Practices

Best practice knowledge informing this artefact was drawn from Module 4 research (Hirsch 2026) and relevant VSC training courses (Appendix 3:3). Synthesis helped to bring different sources together into a clear, organised framework.

Practice	Purpose	Research Paper
Emotional Mapping (Dimensional Models)	Mapping of emotions along arousal and valence dimensions supports nuanced, culturally sensitive vocal expression.	(Russell, 1980; Nummenmaa et al., 2014)
Reflective Model-Based Prompts	Structured reflection guides learners to develop awareness of technical and expressive variation in expression.	(Gibbs, 1988)
Dyadic Listening and Exchange	Paired listening fosters empathy, relatedness, and awareness of diverse emotional interpretations.	(Scherer, 2003)
Self-Reporting of Emotions	Avoidance of fixed-choice labelling promotes nuanced descriptions of individualised emotional concepts.	(Barrett, 2006b, 2006a)
Multimodal Exploration	Modal exploration of gesture, and vocal and facial expression supports embodied learning, expressive and interpretive nuance, and increases emotional granularity.	(Barrett, 2006a; Angkasirisan, 2025;)

Table 1. Module 4 research best practices.

Practice	Purpose	Presenter
Neuroscience-informed strategies *(Planned rest, breathing, mindfulness, gesture, mimic, and audiation)*	Optimise relaxation, learning and skill acquisition.	(Moss-Erickson, 2026)
Prioritising intent over 'basic emotion' labels	Avoid discrete labels and encourage spontaneous responses.	(Morgan, 2025a)
Acoustic tools for vocal expression analysis	Deepen expressive understanding and identify related variations in vocal tone.	(Morgan, 2025b)
Exploring musicality in vocal expression	Increase awareness of variations in prosody, rhythm and dynamics.	(Henny, 2025)
Biometric feedback	Enhance awareness through objective real-time data.	(Besch, 2025 Moss-Erickson, 2026)

Table 2. VSC course practitioner best practices.

These practices directly informed key design decisions. *Emotional Mapping* supported inclusion of a valence-arousal circumplex model due to its flexibility compared with fixed category approaches (Workbook p. 10). *Self-reporting* informed reflective journalling and the development of emotional granularity (Workbook p. 12). *Reflective Model-based Prompts* informed the use of GRC as the overarching structure, aligned with experiential and practice-based learning. *Dyadic Listening and Exchange* shaped collaborative group work, reinforcing constructivist principles, while *Multimodal Exploration* informed embodied, experiential activities for exploring EE complexity in voice work (Hoemann et al., 2023) (Table 2).

While this thematic approach enabled translation of best-practice insights into design, it required researcher selection and prioritisation, which may introduce bias and limit alternative perspectives. Ensuring peer and user consultation during iterative DBR phases may help mitigate this limitation.

Thematic Analysis

To inform the artefact's development, areas requiring further research were identified through thematic analysis. These themes provided a design framework and were subsequently integrated into the workbook (Table 3).

Category	Key Themes
Learning Strategies	Play, mimicry, gesture, rest, breath, brain function and embodied learning.
Emotion	Valence-arousal circumplex models, emotional granularity, constructivist-constructionist vs basic emotion theory, cultural variation.
Physiological Awareness	Body mapping, biofeedback, and mindful practices.
Expressive Strategies	Vocal and facial mimicry, gesture, prosody, audiation, facial action units (FACS), acoustic analysis and feedback, action verbs for intention.

Table 3. Synthesis of themes for further framework research.

Know How

This section evaluates how theoretical principles are translated into embodied, multimodal, and culturally responsive learning activities within the workbook. It focuses on the procedural and experiential knowledge informing the design decisions, including practice-based insights. Key elements were selected for their ability to support nuanced emotional exploration in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts, favouring flexible, non-prescriptive approaches to emotion labelling over fixed or category-based models.

Demographic and Scope

The workbook is designed for adult learners and adolescents with parental consent, resulting in a relatively dense informational structure. This demographic was selected due to alignment with my existing teaching context. Furthermore, adult learners are prioritised over child-centred models due to their increased autonomy, prior experience, and capacity for critical engagement, supporting reflective-reflexive and culturally responsive approaches in VP (Sim and Bierema, 2025).

The workbook is not intended for independent use. It is designed for facilitated use in line with social constructivist theory (Wibowo, Wangid and Firdaus, 2025), as embodied and reflective learning processes require guided scaffolding to sustain engagement, avoid misinterpretation, and support depth of reflection, as well as to ensure ethical handling of emotional material (Kontra, Goldin-Meadow and Beilock, 2012; Bruno and Dell'Aversana, 2017; Madsgaard et al., 2022).

Group use is prioritised due to its stronger alignment with co-constructed learning and relatedness (Ryan and Deci, 2000; Wibowo, Wangid and Firdaus, 2025), although adaptation for individual use is also possible. Session structure is intentionally non-prescriptive, allowing facilitators to respond to learner needs and time constraints. The workbook is designed for iterative use across multiple sessions, either distributed over time or delivered intensively, rather than as a single-sitting activity. This structure is informed by my teaching practice, where learning outcomes generally improve when content is broken down into sequential manageable stages.

Disclaimer and Consent

The inclusion of a disclaimer (Figure 6) is a deliberate ethical design decision prioritising transparency over direct learner immersion. This was preferred as an initial safeguarding measure, establishing clear boundaries around participation without disrupting the main learning material. An informed consent form was included, following established ethical frameworks (Lincoln and Guba, 1989), with additional parental consent required for adolescents to ensure safeguarding compliance (Mathews, 2022).

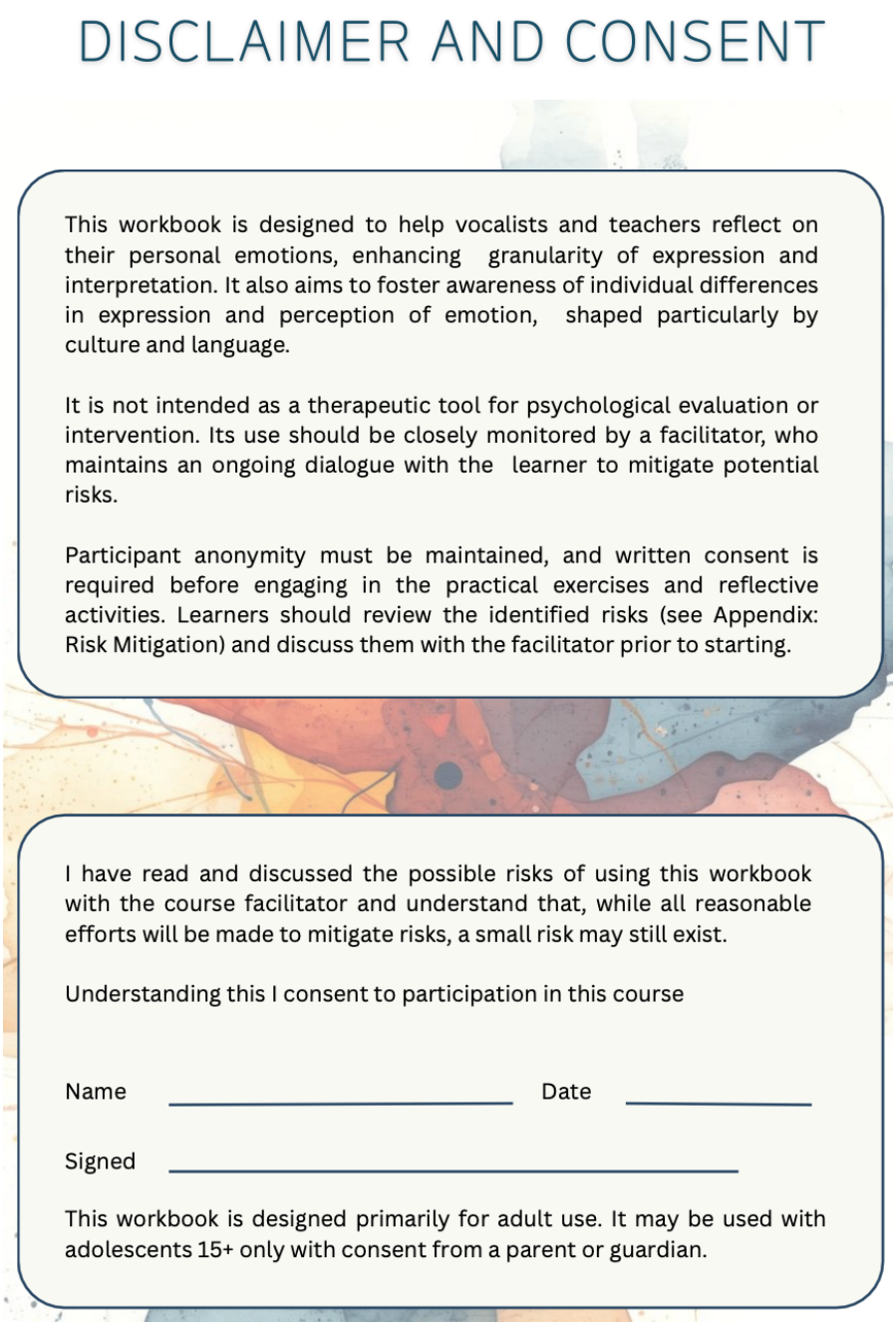


Figure 6. Disclaimer and consent – p. 1.

Introduction Section

The introductory section is designed to provide a concise overview of workbook aims, structure, use, and key theoretical approaches. A simplified 'how to use' visual guide, supported by brief textual instructions, is prioritised over extended explanations to improve accessibility, particularly for non-native English speakers, neurotypical and visual learners, and to reduce cognitive load (Fahim et al., 2021; Alwadei and Mohsen, 2023) (Figure 7). Similarly, a symbol guide (Figure 8) supports the use of visual navigation of complex material, which has proven effective in supporting learners with dyslexia and dyspraxia when applied in my own teaching practice.

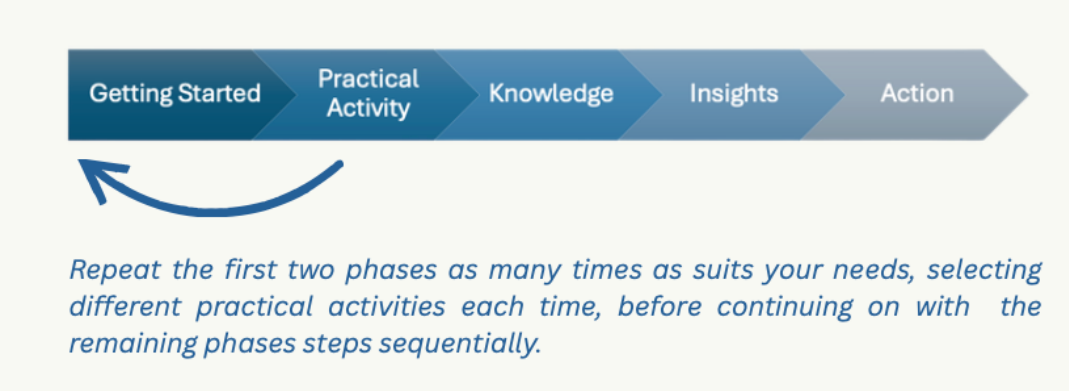


Figure 7. Visual guide explaining use – p. 4.

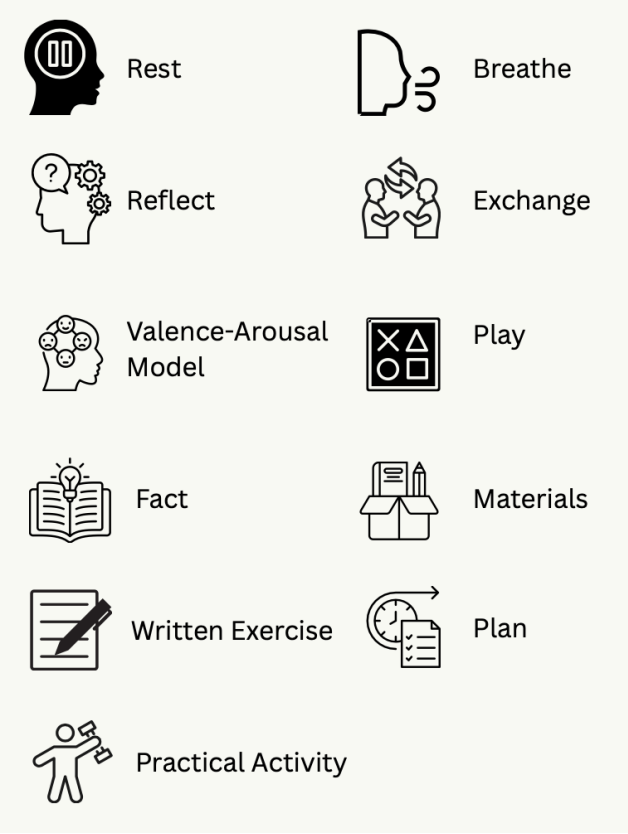


Figure 8. Symbol guide – p. 6.

Embodied and Multimodal Approaches

A deliberate decision was made to prioritise experiential engagement before theoretical explanation. Fact boxes (Figure 9) are positioned after activities rather than before, reflecting a preference for embodied learning over didactic instruction. This aligns with Kolb's experiential learning cycle, prioritising experience over abstract conceptualisation (Kolb, 1984), rather than conventional theory-first pedagogies which may influence responses. In keeping with this approach, a consolidated theory section is intentionally placed after the experiential phases (Workbook p.55).

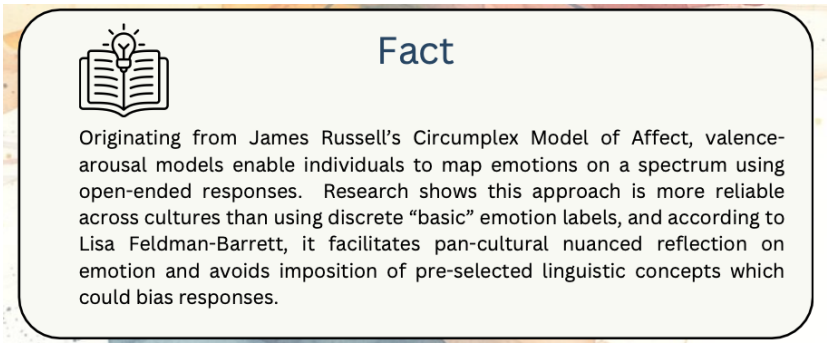


Figure 9. Fact box – p. 16.

Gamification ('Play') is integrated to further support this experiential framework and foster engagement, learning and motivation (Mercer, 2007) (Figure 10).



Figure 10. FE game – p. 18.

Getting Started

A ‘Getting Started’ section is introduced before experiential exploration to support cognitive and physiological readiness and to encourage a mindful, non-judgemental approach. It is placed early so it can subsequently be revisited before each experiential activity.

Reflecting evidence supporting structured breathing protocols for emotional regulation and focus (Zaccaro et al., 2018; Saoji, Raghavendra and Manjunath, 2019; Mohamed et al., 2025), ‘Box Breathing’ has been included. This is selected over alternative breathing and mindfulness techniques due to its simplicity and cross-cultural accessibility, making it more appropriate than religion-based or more complex interventions (Figure 11). Box Breathing, which encourages slowed and nasal breathing, has also been trialled in my individual studio teaching with adolescents and in an adult community choir context, with noticeable increases in concentration and performance.

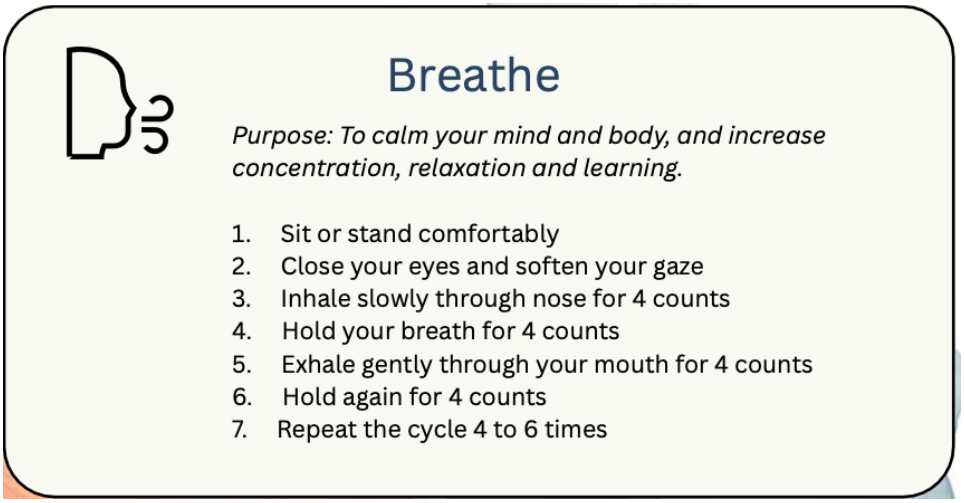


Figure 11. Box breathing – p. 7.

This is complemented by emotional baseline reflection (Figure 12), which is preferred over directly undertaking experiential tasks as it better captures variability in daily affective states and considers its potential to influence responses (Critchley and Garfinkel, 2017; Hoemann et al., 2023).

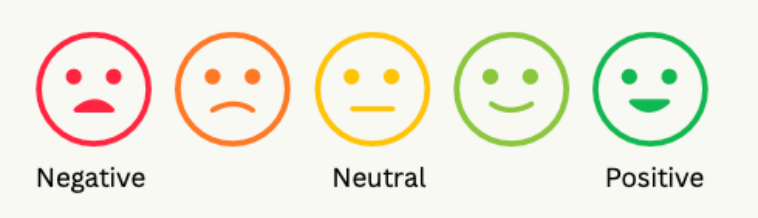


Figure 12. Visual guide mapping “How do I feel today?” – p. 8.

Structured rest pauses are included, rather than continuous engagement, based on evidence of their benefits for focus and retention (Ariga and Lleras, 2011; Buch et al., 2021) (Figure 13). This approach has also been applied within my practice, where pauses combined with breathing have produced notable improvements in skill performance.

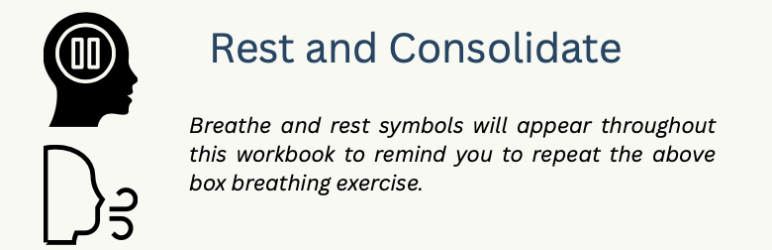


Figure 13. Rest pause – p. 7.

Valence-Arousal Mapping

A valence-arousal dimensional model of emotion is used instead of categorical labelling due to its greater flexibility in emotional description and cultural neutrality (Russell, 1980) (Figure 4). It was selected over 'basic emotion' frameworks because of their potential limitations in cross-cultural contexts (Crivelli and Fridlund, 2019). The model also supports engagement with both discrete and dimensional theories of emotion, encourages exploration of the relationship between valence and arousal, and facilitates comparison within group exchange.

Modal Embodied Sections

Although EE is inherently multimodal, workbook exploration is initially structured through individual expressive modalities to support focused awareness before progressing later to integration.

Facial Expression

FE content draws from the Facial Action Coding System (Ekman and Friesen, 1978), which provides a framework for FE analysis. This system and accompanying visual, however, is simplified to prioritise accessibility over anatomical pression, which could risk excluding non-specialist users, while supporting the introduction of primary facial muscles involved in EE (Figure 14).

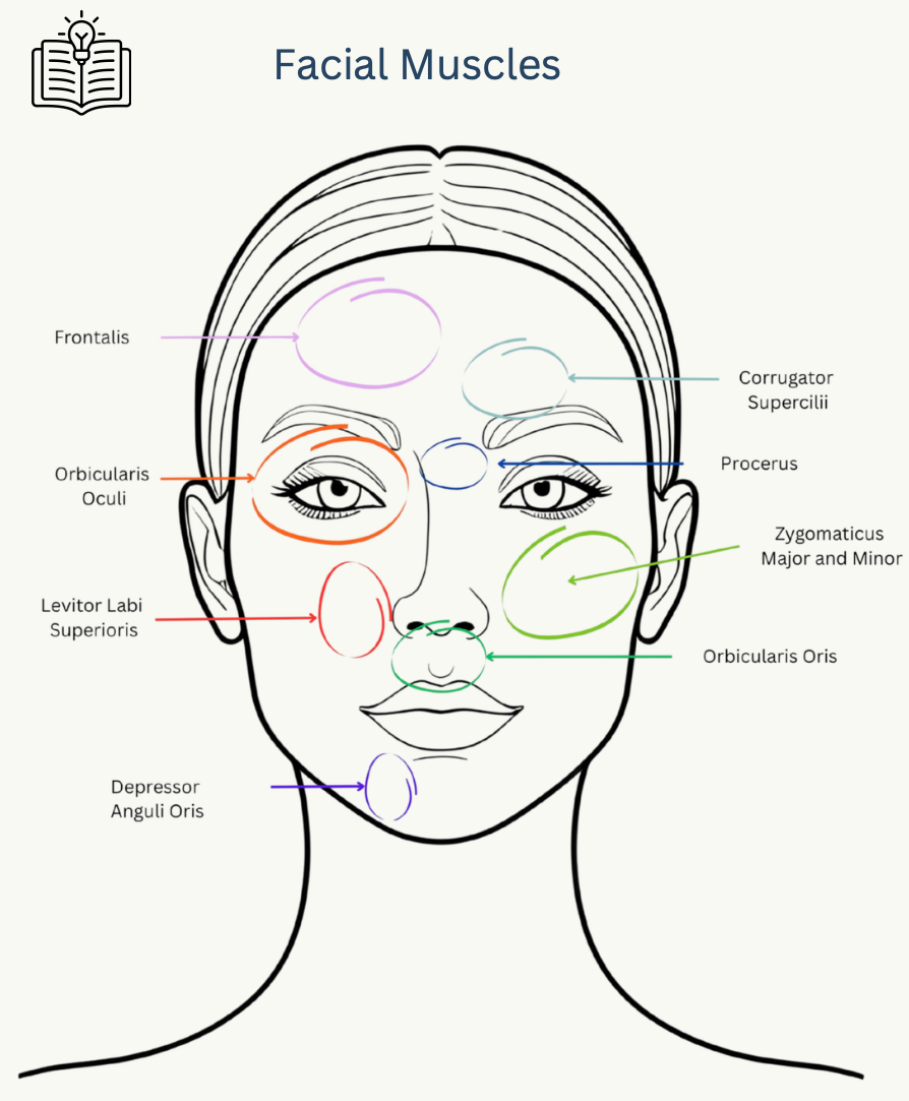


Figure 14. Simplified image of facial muscles – p. 19.

Vocal Expression

Gamified tasks are included in this section to enhance engagement, breakdown barriers and facilitate group exploration (Figure 15).

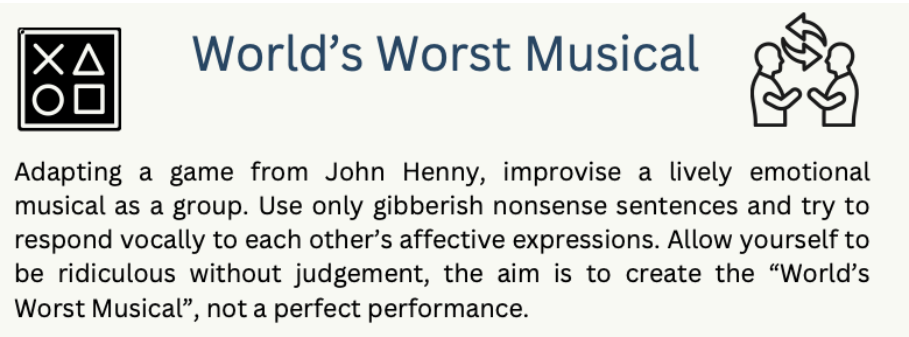


Figure 15. Gamification – p. 27.

Biofeedback

An acoustic biofeedback activity is presented as optional rather than core content, following peer feedback and reflecting a deliberate emphasis on accessibility over technological complexity. This avoids privileging high-resource environments or technically experienced users, supporting greater inclusivity (Figure 16). Suggested software includes Praat, selected for its accessibility, alongside VoceVista, which is identified as particularly suitable for voice pedagogy contexts (Besch, 2025).

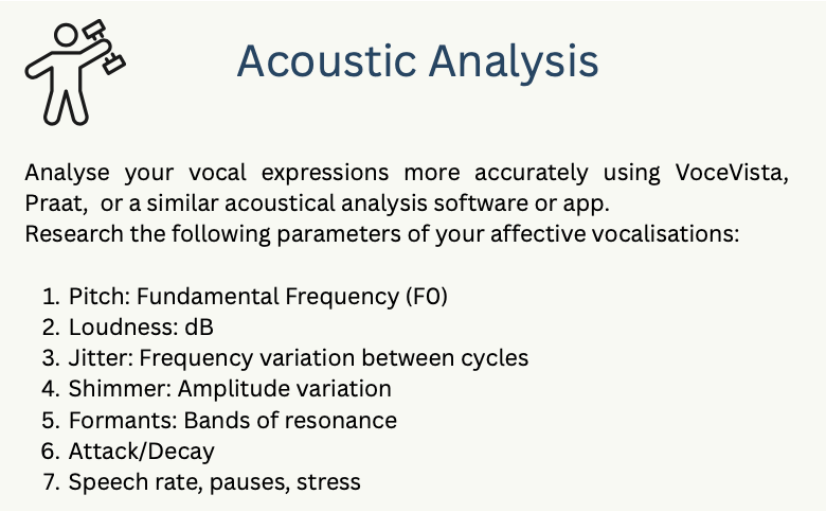


Figure 16. Optional acoustic biofeedback – p. 27.

Body Mapping

Body mapping is simplified to prioritise experiential accessibility over anatomical detail and is combined with mindfulness practices to support interceptive awareness (Van der Gucht et al., 2019) (Figure 17).

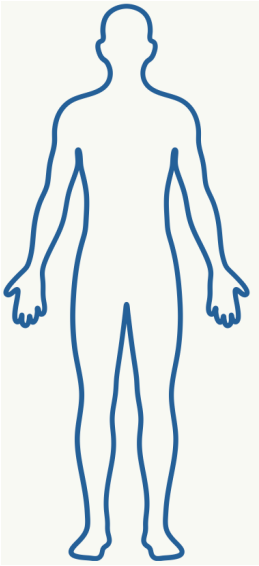


Figure 17. Simplified body map – p. 34.

'Actioning', created in the 1970s by the Joint Stock Theatre Company and particularly the work of Gaskill and Stafford-Clark (Morgan, 2025b), is used instead of discrete emotion labelling due to its greater flexibility in culturally diverse contexts. This is preferred over discrete, universal or 'basic' emotion-category acting methods, which may reinforce Western assumptions about EE. Its inclusion is also supported by evidence of its effectiveness in my multicultural studio practice where students often come from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Figure 18).

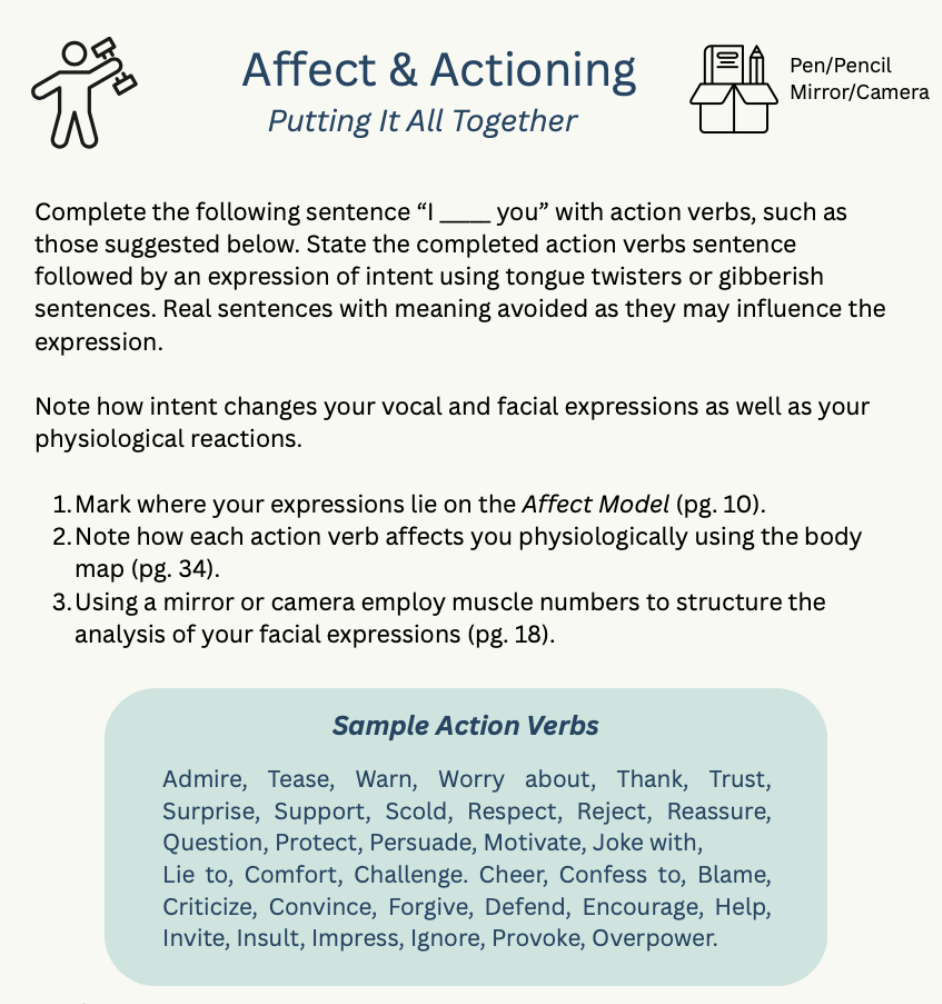


Figure 18. Actioning – p. 47.

Mimicry

Mimicry-based learning is retained as a core collaborative approach due to its role in fostering empathy through sensorimotor resonance, supporting audiation, and developing awareness of gesture and posture in expressive communication (Niedenthal, 2007; Jiang and Wu, 2025, Moss-Erickson, 2026) (Figure 19). Students from my voice studio regularly report that they more easily achieve a required vocal tone following teacher demonstration or listening to audio samples, further supporting the value of mimicry in voice work.

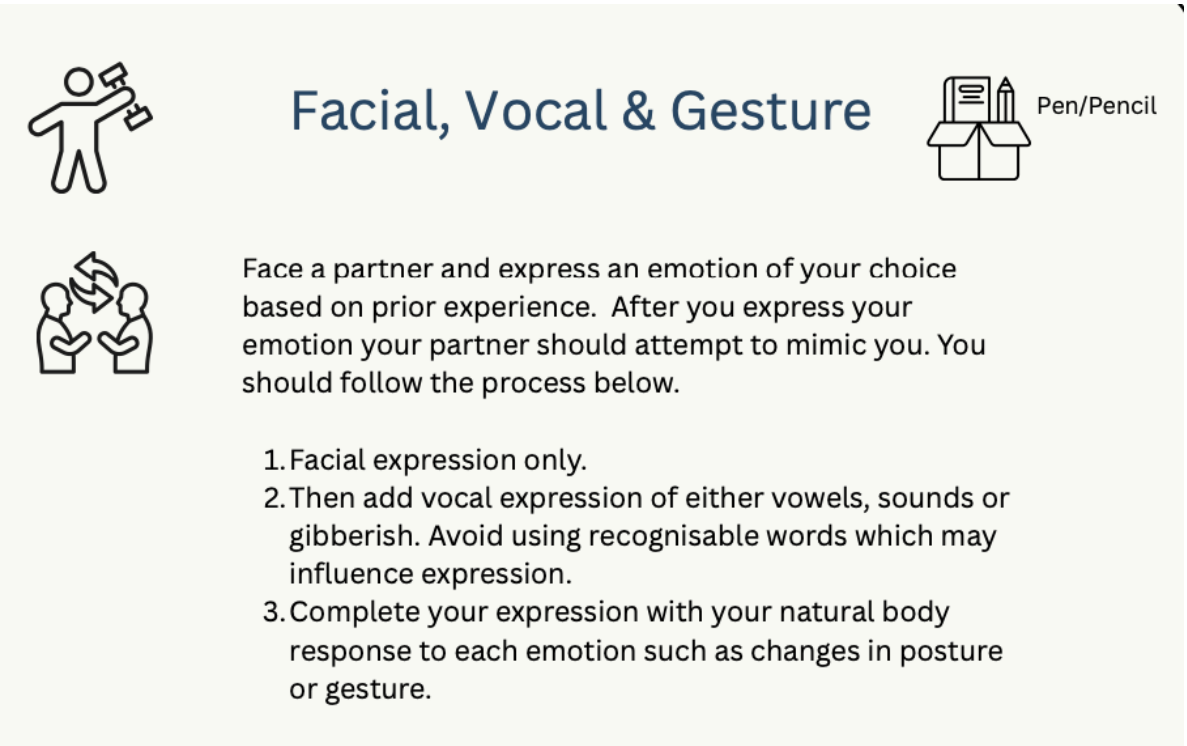


Figure 19. Mimicry – p. 48.

Collaborative learning and meaning-making are prioritised over individual approaches due to stronger alignment with constructionist-constructivist principles (Vygotsky, 1978; Barrett, 2017). Visual signposting is preferred to reduce linguistic bias and support cross-cultural accessibility and comprehension, rather than relying on text-heavy formats which risk exclusion (Dewaele, Lorette and Petrides, 2019) (Figures 4 and 20). Language is intentionally minimised and visual tools favoured, as fixed linguistic concepts may restrict and influence emotional interpretation (Laukka and Elfenbein, 2021) (Figures 8 and 21).

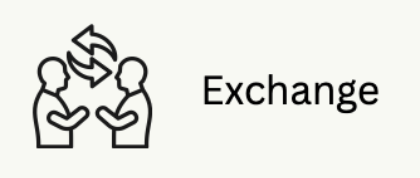


Figure 20. Collaborative discussion and exploration symbol.

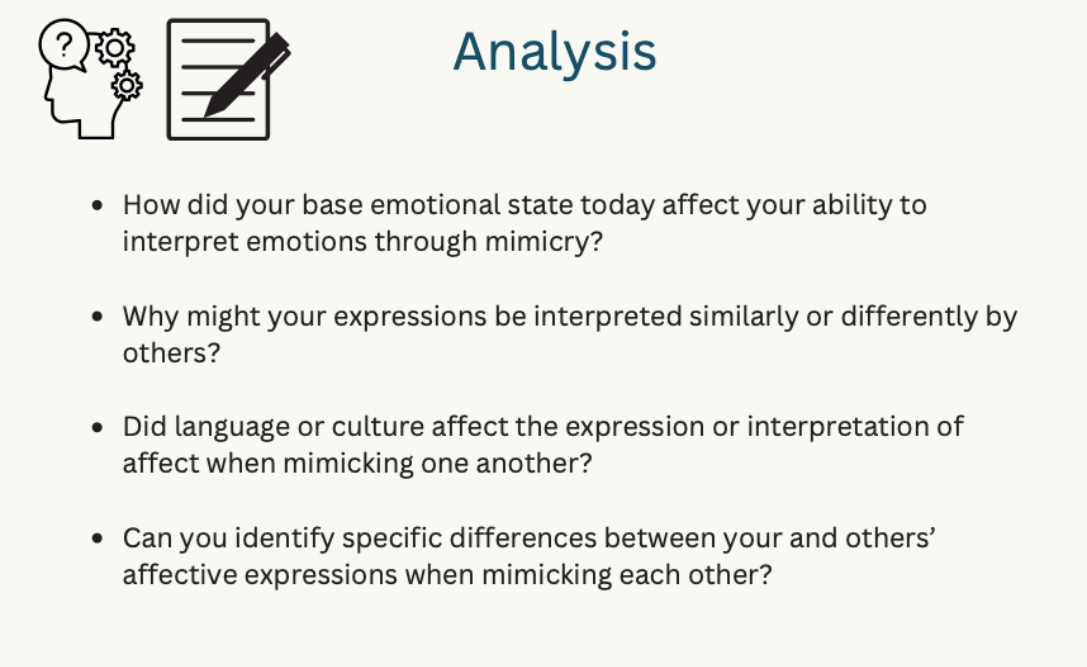


Figure 21. Concise questions – p. 51.

Structured journalling tasks are included to enhance emotional granularity and awareness (Widdershoven et al., 2019). Both individual and group reflection are employed but serve different functions (Figure 22). Individual reflection is prioritised for reflexivity and critical self-examination, while group reflection is prioritised for co-construction of meaning and cross-cultural comparison.

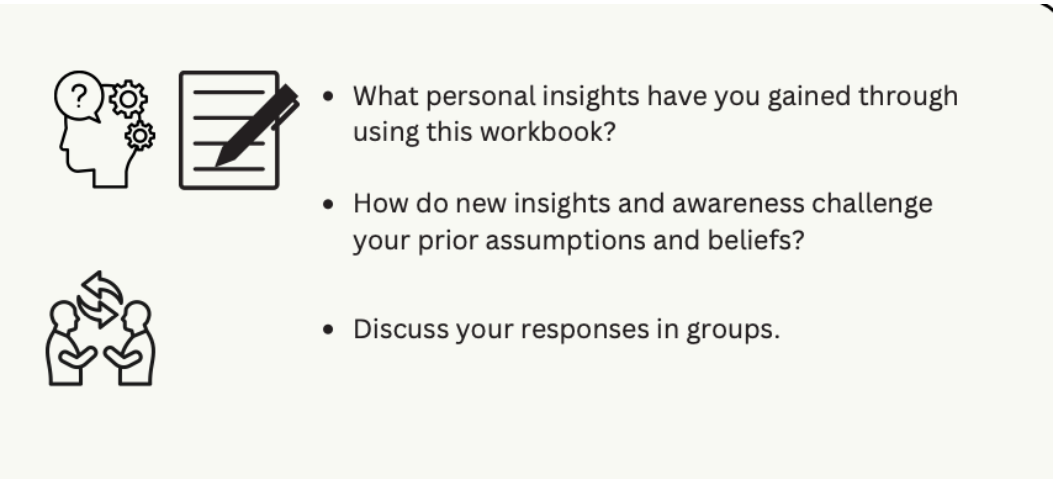


Figure 22. Individual and group reflection – p. 58.

A modified GRC model is used over alternative reflective frameworks due to its clearer experiential progression and stronger alignment with practice-based learning (Figure 3). The final action phase, focused on voice pedagogy and expression, ensures reflection translates into practice and is preferred over purely reflective models that do not include implementation planning (Schön, 1983) (Figure 23).

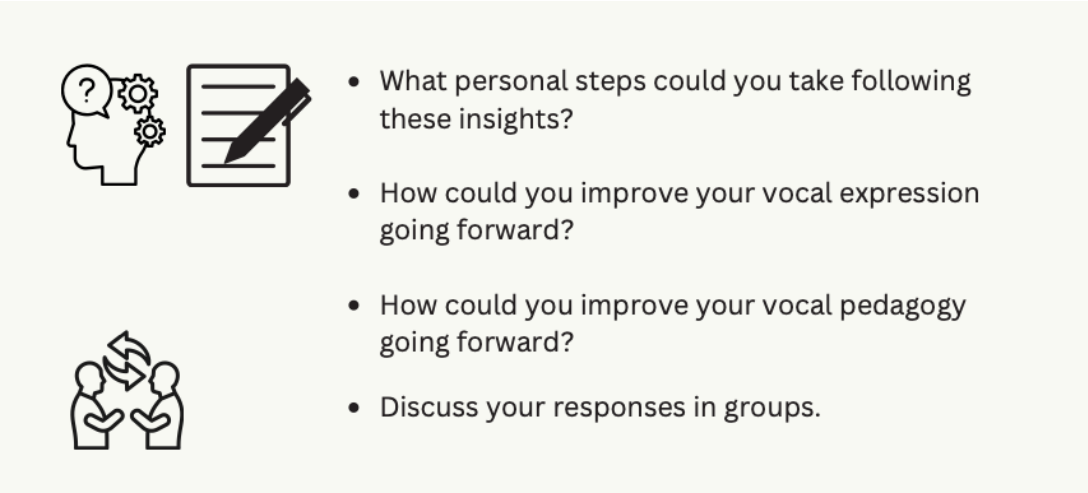


Figure 23. Action – p 59.

Know What

This section outlines the key theoretical and design principles underpinning the workbook. It evaluates the conceptual knowledge generated through the artefact development process, synthesises its main features, and considers the extent to which project aims and objectives have been met in relation to assessment criteria and key themes identified. It then identifies limitations, and outlines directions for further research and iterative development, informed by future Module 6 piloting.

Evaluation of Aims and Objectives

A key strength of the artefact lies in its integration of multiple theoretical frameworks, in line with a DBR approach that ensures strong connections between theory with practice (Wolcott et al., 2019). The alignment of constructivist-constructionist principles with DBR supports iterative, context-sensitive design, while SDT provides a motivational framework that fosters autonomy, competence and relatedness, thereby supporting user wellbeing (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Embodied learning theories further reinforce the bridge between theory and practice, a central aim of this project (Glenberg, 2008). Together, these frameworks strengthen the pedagogical value of the workbook by supporting experiential, reflective, and collaborative learning (Wibowo, Wangid and Firdaus, 2025).

This second iteration of the artefact, refined through peer feedback, has met the objective of applying a DBR framework to the development of a reflective-reflexive EE workbook (appendix 4). Peer exchange was particularly valuable in identifying both strengths and limitations, as well as highlighting areas for further refinement (Tinoca et al., 2022).

Feedback indicates that the artefact meets key assessment criteria, including quality, usability, adaptability, inclusivity, and cultural reflexivity and sensitivity. It also suggests that constructivist-constructionist principles are communicated in an accessible and engaging way. In addition, SDT principles were reported as being effectively integrated, supporting user motivation and wellbeing through autonomy, competence and relatedness (Figure 24).

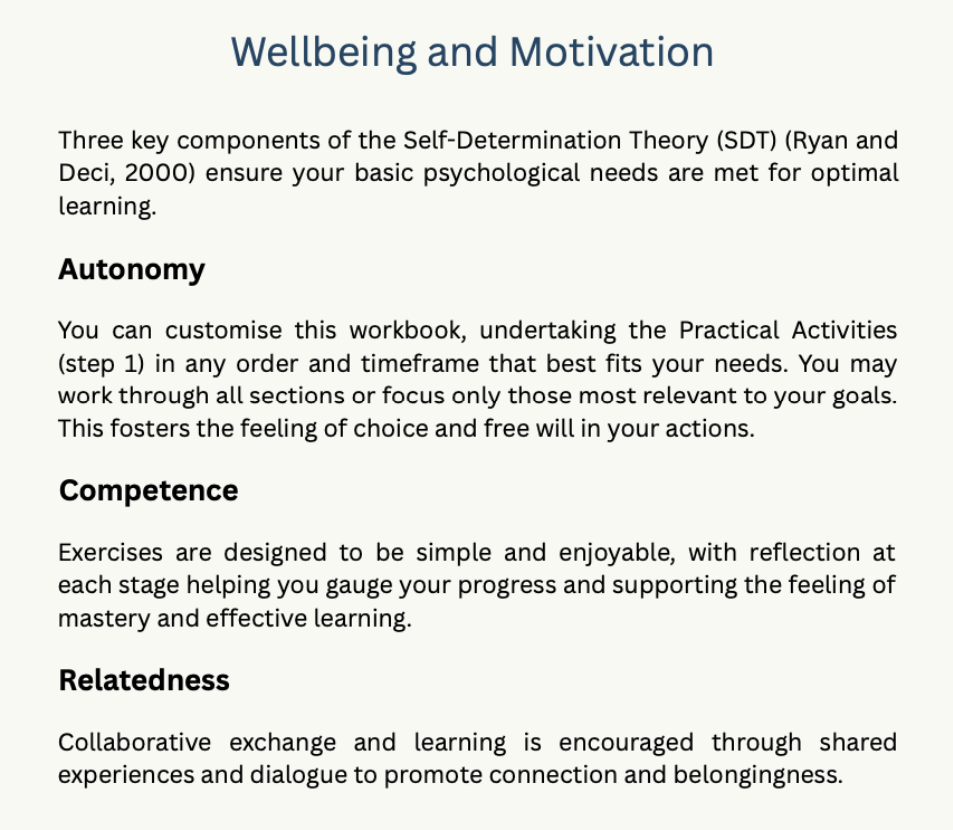


Figure 24. SDT integration – p. 4.

Key Themes

Embodied and Multimodal Approaches

The workbook integrates multimodal expressive modes with reflective processes through experiential activities. This emphasis on embodied engagement is particularly relevant to VP, where learning is inherently situated in the body (Jiang and Wu, 2025). By engaging with multimodal expression, the workbook extends beyond purely cognitive approaches to learning and aligns with principles of embodied cognition (Sullivan, 2018). Emotional learning is therefore understood not as a purely cognitive activity, but as an embodied and multimodal process shaped through sensory, vocal, physiological, and interpersonal interaction.

Exploration is often guided by a valence-arousal dimensional model, supporting awareness of facial, vocal, and physiological responses (Figure 4).

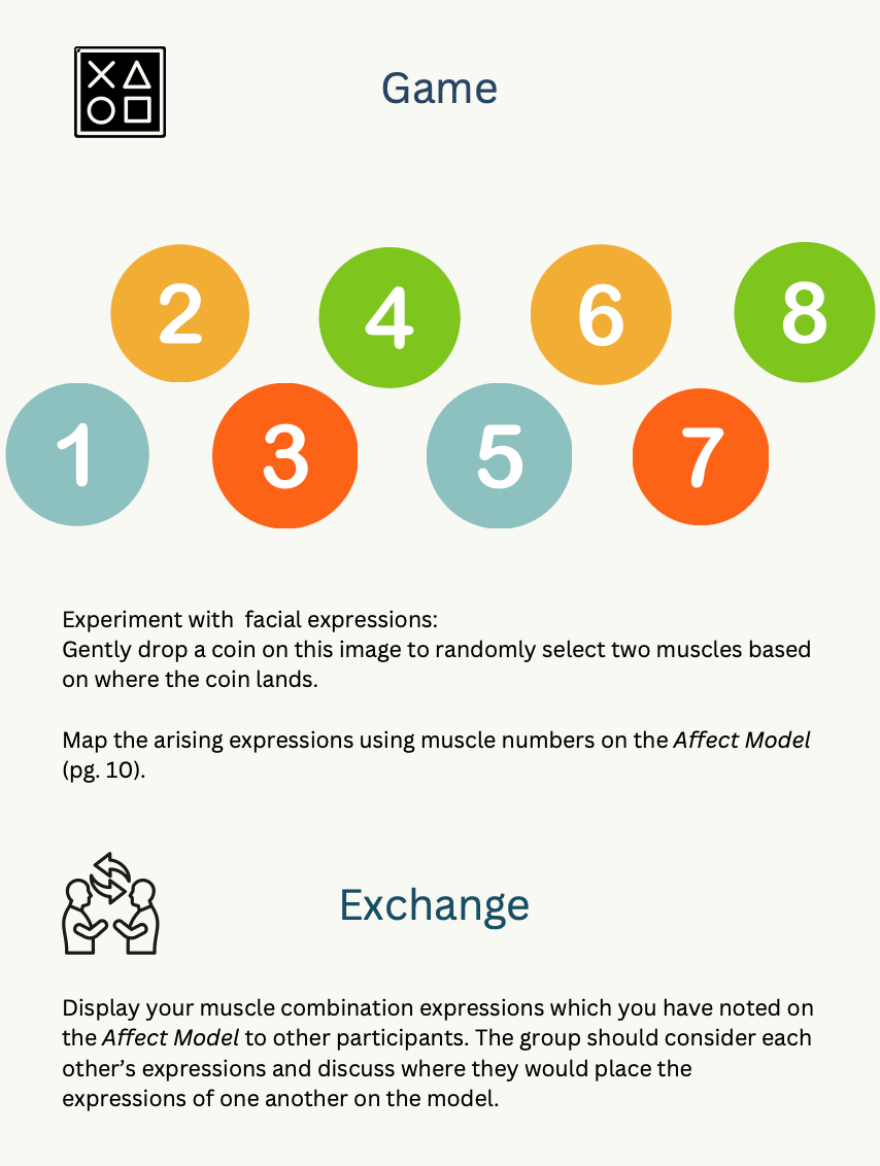


Figure 25. Exploration guided by the dimensional 'Affect Model' – p. 18.

The project aims are met through the structured integration of experiential embodied exercises, descriptive reflection, collaborative exchange, reflective writing, and theoretical knowledge (Figure 26).

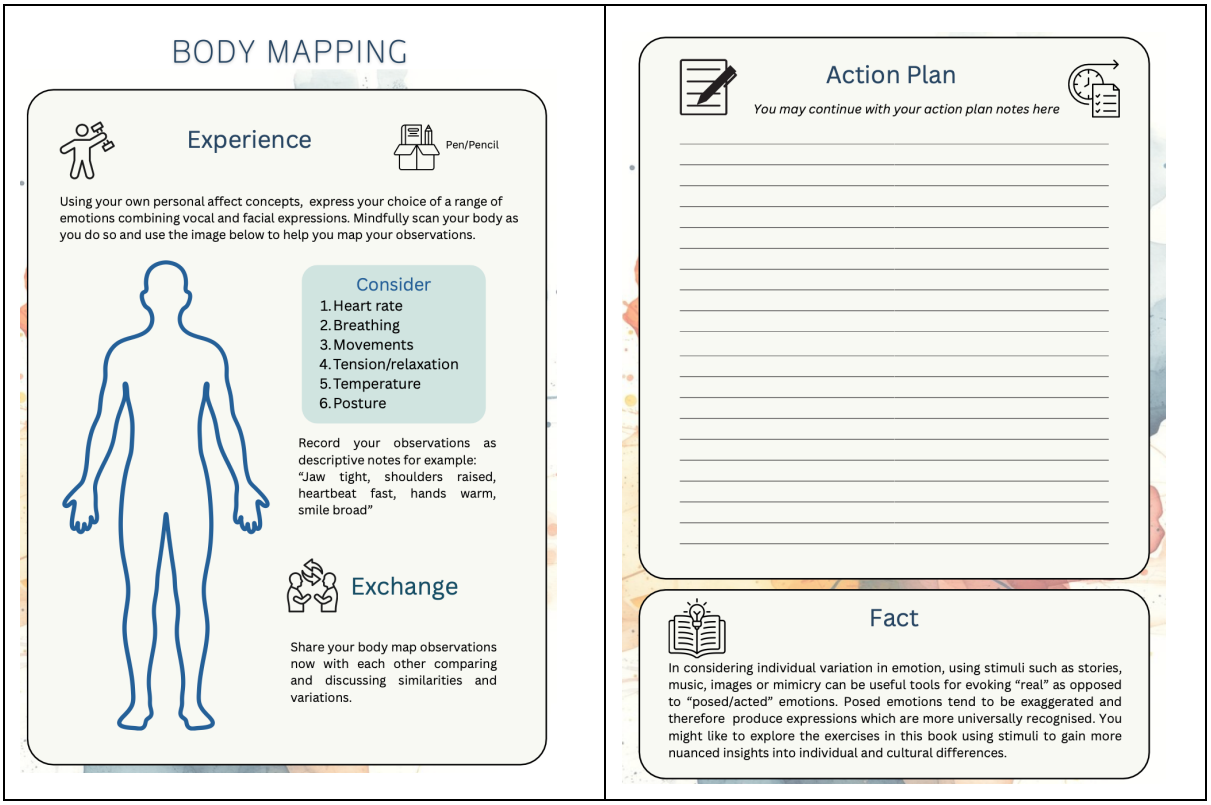


Figure 26. Integrated experiential, collaborative, reflective and theoretical learning cycle – p. 34 and 40.

This embodied exploration is further supported by neuroscience-informed concepts such as audiation and the role of structured pauses in enhancing learning and retention (Ariga and Lleras, 2011).

The following assessment criteria have been addressed through the embodied and multimodal design:

- **Adaptability** is supported through user free choice in the order in which experiential sections are undertaken.
- **Inclusivity and cultural sensitivity** are enhanced through reduced length of texts, visual supports, and open-ended prompts that minimise reliance on Western emotion labels and encourage interpretative flexibility.
- **Engagement** is strengthened through gamified activities, while **appeal and usability** are supported by Canva-based design and clear, accessible, and appealing visual presentation.

Grounded in constructivist-constructionist theories, the artefact meets the aim of supporting co-constructed, collaborative meaning-making by embedding regular opportunities for collaborative exchange within group contexts (Figure 27).

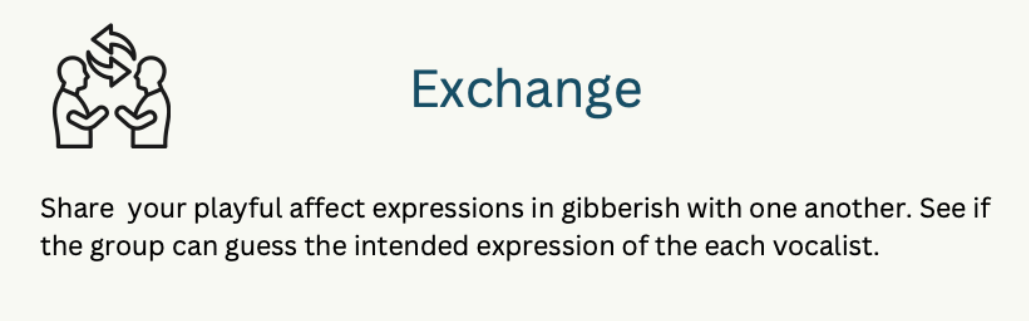
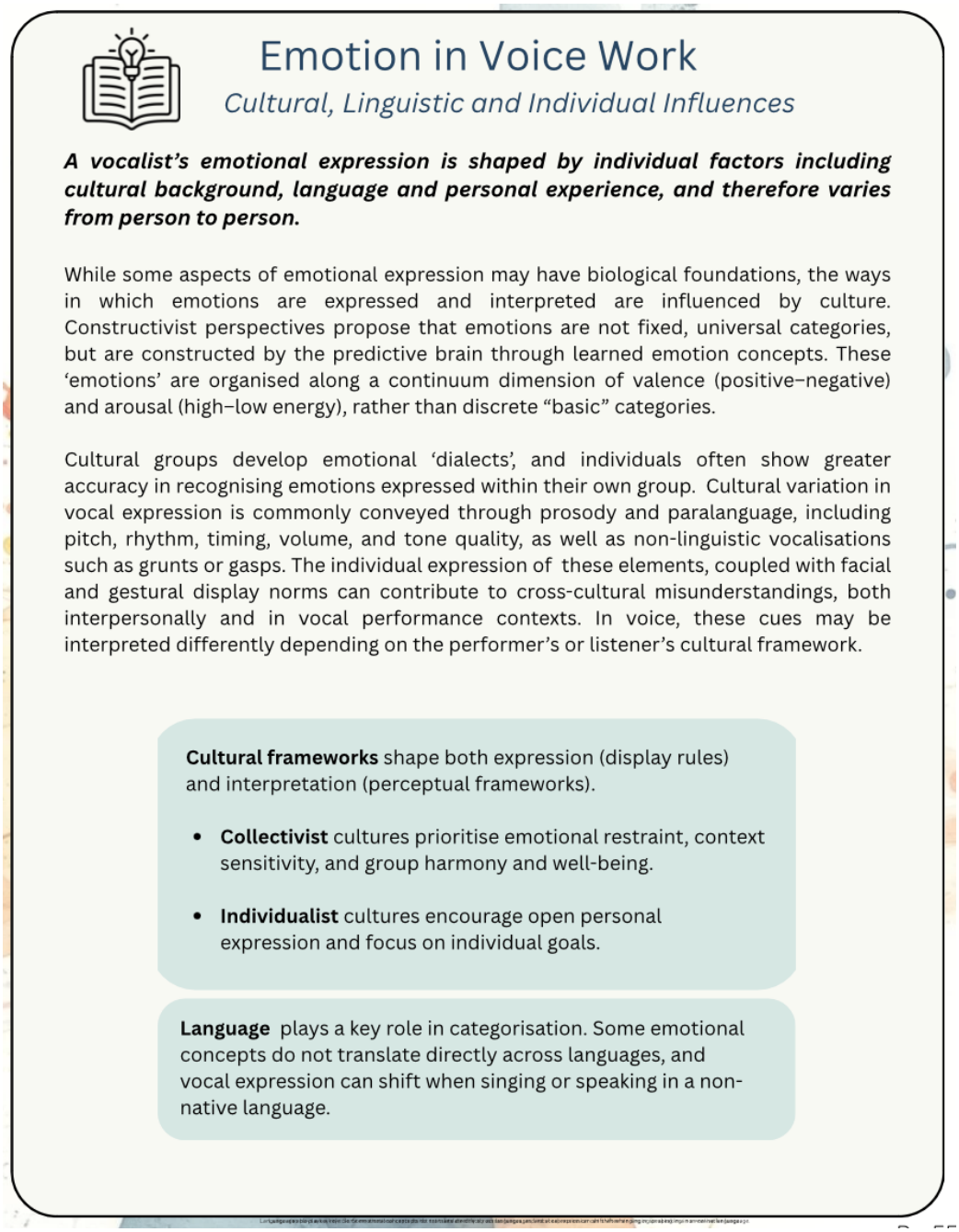


Figure 27. Collaborative meaning-making through exchange – p. 26.

Through a progressive structure of collaborative knowledge acquisition, users are guided towards increased awareness of subtle variation in EE, particularly as shaped by culture and language. This is scaffolded through the integration of concise 'Fact' boxes preceding a more detailed 'Knowledge' section, which together support progressive engagement with theory (Figure 9 and 28).



Emotion in Voice Work

Cultural, Linguistic and Individual Influences

A vocalist's emotional expression is shaped by individual factors including cultural background, language and personal experience, and therefore varies from person to person.

While some aspects of emotional expression may have biological foundations, the ways in which emotions are expressed and interpreted are influenced by culture. Constructivist perspectives propose that emotions are not fixed, universal categories, but are constructed by the predictive brain through learned emotion concepts. These 'emotions' are organised along a continuum dimension of valence (positive–negative) and arousal (high–low energy), rather than discrete "basic" categories.

Cultural groups develop emotional 'dialects', and individuals often show greater accuracy in recognising emotions expressed within their own group. Cultural variation in vocal expression is commonly conveyed through prosody and paralanguage, including pitch, rhythm, timing, volume, and tone quality, as well as non-linguistic vocalisations such as grunts or gasps. The individual expression of these elements, coupled with facial and gestural display norms can contribute to cross-cultural misunderstandings, both interpersonally and in vocal performance contexts. In voice, these cues may be interpreted differently depending on the performer's or listener's cultural framework.

Cultural frameworks shape both expression (display rules) and interpretation (perceptual frameworks).

- **Collectivist** cultures prioritise emotional restraint, context sensitivity, and group harmony and well-being.
- **Individualist** cultures encourage open personal expression and focus on individual goals.

Language plays a key role in categorisation. Some emotional concepts do not translate directly across languages, and vocal expression can shift when singing or speaking in a non-native language.

Figure 28. Excerpt from knowledge section – p. 55.

Positive peer feedback suggests the workbook meets key assessment criteria of inclusivity and cultural sensitivity, both central to the co-construction of meaning (Appendix 3:1). This is encouraging in relation to its potential to support culturally responsive practices within VP, moving away from Western-centric didactic approaches towards collaborative meaning-making, where emotional interpretation is viewed as shaped through language, culture and social interaction rather than fixed universal categories.

Reflective and Reflexive Processes

Reflection is embedded throughout the workbook using GRC on both micro and macro levels, supporting structured engagement across the learning process (Gibbs, 1988), and is progressively deepened to enable learners to gradually build awareness of individual and cultural variation in emotion (Kember et al., 2008).

Users are initially guided to produce descriptive, surface-level accounts of embodied sensations, which are then shared in group exchange to support collaborative understanding of the experience. From this foundation, reflection is progressively developed through stages of emotional awareness, evaluation, and analysis, enabling learners to the identify emerging insights.

The process culminates in critical reflexivity, where users are encouraged to question the ontological and epistemological assumptions underlying their understanding of EE (Figure 29). This includes examining how personal beliefs and cultural frameworks shape perceptions and may constrain culturally responsive practice in voice work (Salzman, 2002; Westerlund et al., 2022). At this level, reflection moves beyond evaluation to become a reflexive process that exposes the cultural, pedagogical and epistemological assumptions underpinning EE and current VP practices.

To support meaningful change users are then guided to identify actionable next steps for improving VP practices (Figure 30 and 31).

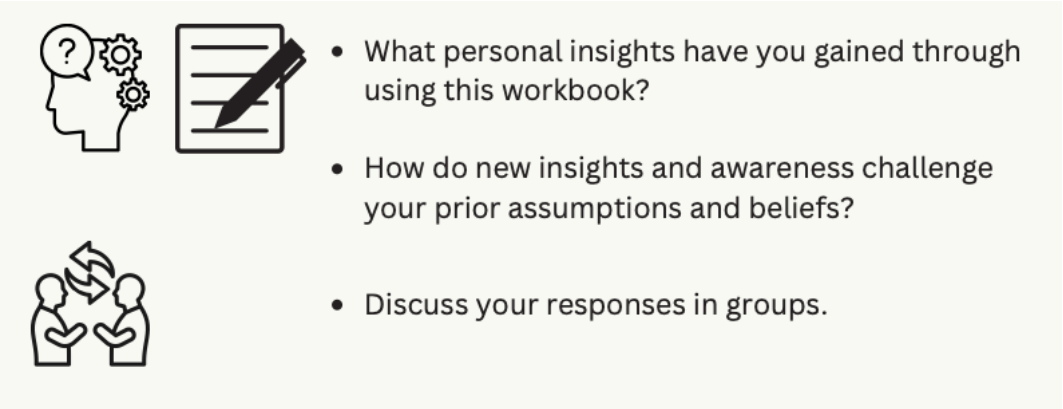


Figure 29. Individual and group critical reflection – p. 58.

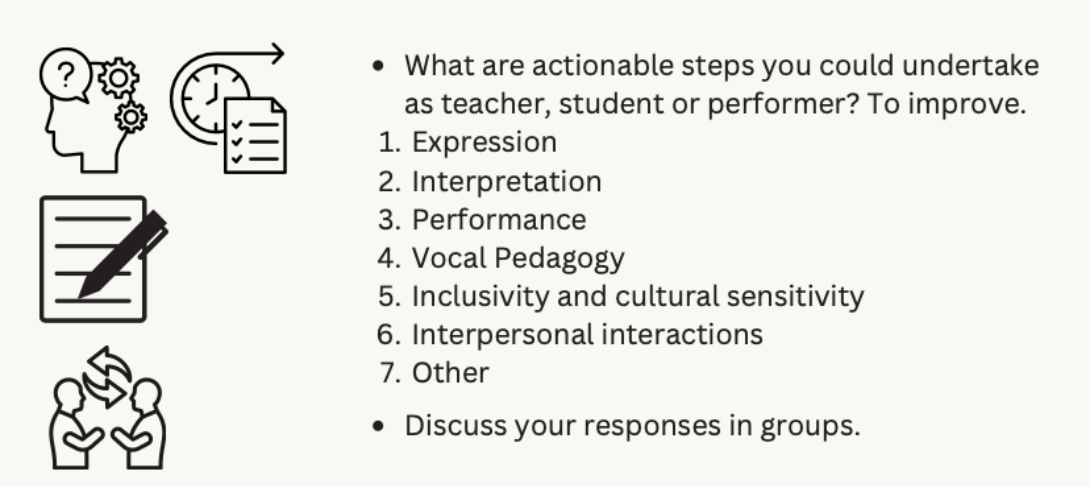


Figure 30. Individual and group planning – p. 60.

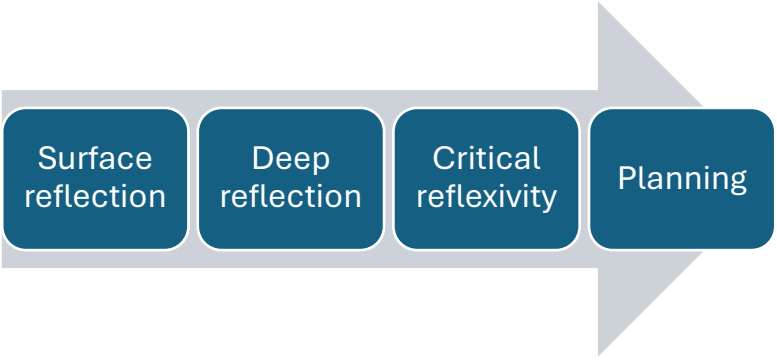


Figure 31. Reflection, reflexivity and planning process.

Summary

Overall, the artefact development process improved my understanding of both pedagogical practices and artefact design. Initially, I approached EE through relatively fixed pedagogical assumptions, while workbook design was viewed primarily as a method of organising and delivering content. Through iterative reflection, peer exchange, and engagement with constructivist-constructionist theory, I now understand emotional learning as embodied, culturally mediated, and collaboratively constructed. Likewise, artefact design is now seen not simply as information presentation, but as the creation of reflective, experiential, and socially responsive learning tools. In line with Nelson's 'Know What' framework, the project generated conceptual knowledge about how culturally responsive VP can be supported through embodied, reflexive, and iterative design processes.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

Although reflective practice is embedded throughout the workbook to encourage reflexivity, the extent to which this translates into measurable learning gains remains unclear. While the design aligns with learner-centred approaches that prioritise autonomy, exploration, and collaborative meaning-making over prescriptive instruction, this may also introduce practical challenges, including managing group dynamics, accommodating varying levels of learner readiness, and addressing time constraints (An and Mindrila, 2020). In addition, the reliance on shared language may shape the types of EE expressed, potentially narrowing the scope of exploration (Wierzbicka, 2012).

The workbook's dependence on facilitation also raises questions of accessibility and scalability. Users may also find it challenging to translate embodied experience into conceptual understanding, while facilitator or peer input may unintentionally influence individual responses and outcomes.

In its current form, the workbook appears more suited to group contexts, with reduced effectiveness for individual use, despite this being an intended design outcome. While the GRC provides a useful structural framework, one reviewer reported difficulties in navigating its stages, suggesting that additional facilitator guidance may be required.

A key strength of the artefact is its use of Emotional Recall Tasks, which enable a broader and more personalised range of self-evaluated emotional concepts through free-choice labelling (Li, Masitah and Hills, 2020). However, this also introduces limitations, as elicited emotions may not reflect authentic, context-based expression and may become exaggerated or over simplified (Jia et al., 2021). Audiovisual and narrative stimuli, originally intended as part of the design, were excluded from this iteration, due to practical constraints associated with a print-based format. Users are instead encouraged to critically reflect on potentially posed or exaggerated expressions and to experiment independently using self-selected stimuli. This remains a key area for future development, particularly through the creation of a multicultural stimulus database to support embodied exploration of EE (Kossaifi et al., 2021).

Although the workbook incorporates free-choice and valence-arousal frameworks to avoid imposing discrete Western emotional categories, some cultural bias may persist due to its development in English by a Western practitioner. Future iterations would benefit from translation and collaboration with contributors from diverse cultural backgrounds to enhance cultural validity and inclusion.

The workbook aims to support user exploration of both individual and collective variation in EE; however, its effectiveness may be limited in culturally and linguistically homogenous groups. Piloting with more diverse participant populations would provide valuable insights

into its broader applicability, although this introduces practical challenges, particularly where participants do not share a common language. In addition, second-language participants may also introduce acculturation effects that influence expression and interpretation, which should be considered in evaluation (Cruz, Rosa and Bem-Haja, 2025).

Further research is needed to examine the relationship between EE, vocal tone, technique, and performance outcomes to support more nuanced developments in VP (Wang, 2022; Koo, 2025; Miccolis, 2025).

It also remains an open question whether the workbook will indeed enhance emotional granularity and support more nuanced understanding of EE, and overall effectiveness cannot yet be fully determined, as the workbook requires evaluation in real-world contexts. Planned Module 6 piloting with culturally diverse participants will provide valuable insights to inform iterative refinement, followed by further peer review.

Next Steps in Production

The next stage of development will explore usability enhancements and production options. One possibility is the use of a laminated (wipe-clean) format with erasable pens to support repeated use of mapping and dimensional model exercises, although its cost-effectiveness and practicality require further evaluation. Alternatively, worksheet templates provided alongside the workbook may offer a more feasible solution, enabling repeated use of the same models across experiential activities. These templates could also be incorporated into a facilitator manual in future iterations.

Following peer feedback, the development of an audio version to support diverse learners, as well as a version adapted for younger users, has also been identified as a potential direction for further development.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the artefact successfully met its aim of creating a reflective-reflexive workbook for vocalists and voice pedagogues that raises awareness of theories relating to individual and cultural variation in EE. It bridges theory and practice through a structured integration of experiential, embodied exercises, reflective-reflexive activities, and theoretical content, resulting in a pedagogically innovative and theoretically grounded resource informed by intercultural, embodied, and reflective learning approaches. Its potential impact is further strengthened through action-planning and 'next step' activities that encourage continued development of culturally responsive practices in VP and performance.

The project also reinforced the value of collaborative, practice-based design. The DBR framework proved particularly effective in supporting iterative refinement, incorporation of peer feedback, and the translation of constructivist-constructionist theories of emotion into an accessible pedagogical resource structured around the GRC model. Inclusion of multimodal experiential activities further supports engagement with individual and cultural variability in EE. The development process also strengthened my reflective practice through engagement with DEBRIEF, Gibbs', Schön, and Nelson models, while fostering new skills in instructional design, project planning and workbook creation.

Although limitations remain, particularly regarding the need for broader multicultural testing, the artefact provides a strong foundation for continued refinement. Consistent with DBR principles, its value lies not only in its current form, but in its capacity to evolve through future piloting, collaboration, research and development.

Critical Reflection

Aligning with DBR, integration of theory and practice within this artefact was supported through ongoing research and structured reflection (Tinoca et al., 2022). Journalling, guided by the DEBRIEF model (Allan, 2011), enabled researcher examination of assumptions, values, and emotional responses throughout iterative phases. Schön's (1983) reflective model further structured this process, tracing development of thinking from problem identification to artefact development and evaluation.

Reflexivity emerged through recognising assumptions during teaching, adapting practice in response to student outcomes, and re-evaluating decisions post-teaching. This extended beyond immediate adjustments towards longer-term insights informing both pedagogical approaches and workbook design.

Key Insights

Context and Pedagogical Assumptions

Working in a multicultural voice studio revealed culturally specific variations in FE and VE influencing expressive performance and interpersonal communication. Given links between FE and vocal production, these differences may also affect timbre, resonance, articulation and perceived performance success (Thompson, Russo and Quinto, 2008; Miccolis, 2025; Hirsch, 2025).

Reflection-on-action (Schön, 1983) revealed that my teaching practice was grounded in largely unexamined Western 'basic emotion' assumptions, risking the reinforcement of dominant expressive norms. Reflection-in-action enabled these assumptions to be questioned during teaching. Drawing on voice pedagogy, emotion theory, and acting methods, I shifted from didactic instruction towards student-led exploration, informed by Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivism. Fixed emotion labels were replaced with open-ended approaches, including 'Actioning' (Morgan, 2025b), resulting in increased variation in responses and self-determined expressive choices.

Engagement with Barrett's (2006b) constructionist theory, and Wierzbicka's (2012) work on language and emotion challenged my assumption that EE should be taught employing universal discrete categories. These perspectives highlighted how fixed labels may obscure cultural variability and restrict inclusive expressive exploration. Post-teaching evaluation therefore reinforced the need for a structured reflective-reflexive workbook supporting emotional granularity and cultural awareness, supporting a move towards culturally responsive constructivist-constructionist practices in VP (Cespedes-Guevara and Eerola, 2018; Hoemann et al., 2025).

Theory and Reflective Framework

Following DBR, artefact development began with identifying relevant theories and pedagogical practices before considering how they could inform workbook design. Documentation proved essential in translating abstract concepts into practical design decisions.

This process exposed gaps in my understanding of learning theory and reflective practice. In response, I engaged with SDT (Ryan and Deci, 2000), Kolb's Experiential Learning Model (Kolb and Kolb, 2022), embodied cognition and learning theories (Glenberg, 2008; Kontra, Goldin-Meadow and Beilock, 2012; Sullivan, 2018, Mayer, 2024), Vygotskian constructivism (1978), and neuroscience informed pedagogy (Moss-Erickson, 2026). SDT proved particularly influential in design, supporting autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

Initially perceived tensions between emotion theories emphasising bodily experience versus socio-linguistic meaning-making were later reframed as complementary dimensions of EE, enabling the workbook's holistic view of emotional experience.

For reflective practice, DEBRIEF (Allan, 2011), Schön (1983), Nelson (2013) and GRC (1988) were explored. Schön supported researcher reflection in- and on-action, while DEBRIEF encouraged examination of values, assumptions and emotions. GRC was selected to structure the workbook due to its cyclical and experiential nature, while Nelson's framework supported layered critical evaluation of the artefact itself.

Design and Workflow

Initial design work revealed an overly ambitious scope driven by the assumption that more content equated to higher quality. Reflection identified perfectionist tendencies contributing to overwhelm, prompting a shift towards a more focused, 'less is more' approach aligned with SMART principles (Bahrami, Heidari and Cranney, 2022).

Writing became an important cognitive tool aligned with my visual learning preferences (Fahim et al., 2021), clarifying workbook structure and reducing cognitive load. Drafting directly in Canva proved inefficient, leading to a revised workflow using Word before transfer into design software, improving both efficiency and coherence.

Process and Professional Development

Early mission and vision workshopping revealed a tendency to prioritise external outcomes over personal developmental needs. Reflection prompted statement revision and increased awareness of this tendency, which aligns with SDT (Ryan and Deci, 2000), suggesting that reduced autonomy and competence may negatively impact wellbeing and motivation.

Although lectures clarified structural expectations, inconsistencies in written guidance caused delays. Reflection highlighted a reluctance to seek clarification, reinforcing the need for more proactive communication.

Initial task-based planning proved poorly aligned with DBR's iterative cycles (Wang and Hannafin, 2005), prompting a shift towards process-orientated approaches and revised Gantt planning. Frequent revision due to external commitments further highlighted the need for flexible planning tools.

Iteration and Reflection

Peer feedback was essential in identifying blind spots, highlighting inconsistencies between content and intended users, and highlighting the need to simplify material and reduce cognitive load. This resulted in restructuring of the workbook to improve usability. Positive feedback also increased researcher confidence and reinforced DBR's iterative value (Wang and Hannafin, 2005). Feedback, however, was drawn from a small, relatively homogeneous group, highlighting the need for broader multicultural piloting to avoid overestimating inclusivity and cultural responsiveness (McKenney and Reeves, 2021).

Maintaining reflective depth and consistency in journalling remained challenging, with entries sometimes being sporadic or becoming descriptive or emotional rather than analytical. Nevertheless, comparison of reflective models highlighted important differences: Schön (1983) supported reflection in- and on-action, while DEBRIEF' (Allan, 2011) and GRC (1988) more effectively supported exploration of values, emotions, assumptions and evaluation. This reinforced the importance of aligning reflective frameworks with the intended purpose of reflection.

Personal Learning

Journalling revealed anxiety, overwhelm, and avoidance linked to workload, perfectionism, and peer comparison, all of which affected confidence. Moving forward, I aim to improve workload management, planning flexibility, and reflective consistency, while prioritising wellbeing alongside academic and professional development.

Conclusion

This module deepened my understanding of emotional learning as socially mediated and collaborative, best supported through student-centred rather than teacher-led practice (Wibowo, Wangid and Firdaus, 2025). It also challenged assumptions about universal EE, reinforcing the importance of culturally responsive and inclusive approaches to VP. Moving forward, I commit to embracing a shifting from didactic, Western-centric pedagogical approaches towards culturally responsive constructivist-constructionist pedagogy informed by Barrett (2017) and Vygotsky (1978).

A key insight was the value of integrating reflective practice throughout both workbook design and experiential learning (Gibbs, 1988; Kolb and Kolb, 2022). Furthermore, consistent with DBR, it highlighted the value of learning emerging through the iterative balancing of theory, pedagogy (Wolcott et al., 2019), alongside critical reflection on assumptions.

The project highlights the need for continued research and practical tool development to support culturally responsive approaches to EE in VP. Future testing and refinement will determine the extent to which the workbook can contribute to this aim.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Abbreviations

DBR	Design-Based Research
EE	Emotional Expression
GRC	Gibbs Reflective Cycle
FE	Facial Expression
SDT	Self-Determination Theory
UWTSD	University of Wales Trinity St David
VE	Vocal Expression
VP	Vocal Pedagogy
VSC	Voice Study Centre

Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms

Acculturation

The process of adapting to and adopting aspects of another culture through sustained contact, while often retaining elements of one's original cultural identity. Acculturation can influence values, behaviours, language use, and emotional expression.

Action Research

A reflective research methodology in which practitioners investigate and improve their own practice through iterative cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection. It is commonly used within educational settings to support localised change and professional development.

Affect / Affective

Relating to emotions, feelings, or emotional experience.

Arousal

The level of physiological or psychological activation associated with an emotional state, ranging from low to highly activated.

Basic Emotion

A theory proposing that a small number of universal emotions (such as happiness, anger, fear, sadness, disgust, and surprise) are biologically innate and expressed similarly across cultures.

Circumplex Model

A specific type of dimensional model of emotion, most commonly associated with James Russell, in which emotions are mapped in a circular space defined by to core dimensions: valence (pleasant–unpleasant) and arousal (low–high activation).

Constructionist Emotion Theory

A theory proposing that emotions are constructed through the interaction of bodily sensations, prior experience, language, culture, and context rather than existing as fixed universal states.

Constructivist Emotion Theory

An approach suggesting emotional understanding is actively shaped through learning, interpretation, and social interaction.

Cultural Dimensions

A framework used to describe and compare how cultural values influence behaviour, communication, and perception across societies.

Design-Based Research (DBR)

An iterative research methodology in which theory, design, implementation, and evaluation are continuously refined in real-world educational contexts.

Didactic

A teacher-centred instructional approach focused primarily on direct explanation or transmission of knowledge.

Dimensional Model

A framework for understanding and describing emotions along continuous dimensions, most commonly valence and arousal, rather than as fixed discrete categories.

Dyadic

Involving interaction or exchange between two people.

Embodied Learning Theory

A theory proposing that learning is shaped through bodily experience, movement, perception, and interaction with the environment.

Emotional Recall Tasks

Activities that involve remembering and revisiting past emotional experiences to explore the associated thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and behaviours. Emotional recall tasks are commonly used in research, education, therapy, and performance settings to deepen emotional awareness, understanding, and expression.

Interoception

Awareness and perception of internal bodily sensations such as heartbeat, breathing, temperature, or tension.

Meaning-Making

The process through which individuals interpret experiences, emotions, or events to construct personal or shared understanding.

Narrative Synthesis

A method of combining findings from multiple studies through descriptive and interpretative summary rather than statistical analysis. It is typically used when studies are too diverse for statistical synthesis and aims to identify broader patterns, themes, and relationships across research.

Reflective–Reflexive Practice

A process of critically examining one's experiences, thoughts, emotions, and actions (reflection) while also considering how personal assumptions, cultural background, values, and social positioning influence the interpretation and expression of those experiences (reflexivity).

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

A motivational theory proposing that autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fundamental psychological needs supporting wellbeing and intrinsic motivation.

Sense-Making

The process of organising and interpreting information, experiences, or bodily sensations to understand situations or construct meaning.

Tension

A relationship between differing or partially conflicting theories, concepts, or perspectives that do not fully align but, when considered together, generate deeper insight. Rather than requiring resolution, tensions are used analytically to highlight different assumptions, emphases, or explanatory limits, strengthening interpretation and understanding.

Thematic Analysis

A qualitative method used to identify, organise, and interpret recurring themes or patterns within data. It involves coding data segments, grouping related ideas, and developing broader thematic categories that capture meaning across a dataset. It is particularly useful for analysing diverse practical and applied sources, as it supports flexible identification of recurring patterns relevant to design and practice rather than statistical analysis.

Valence

The positive (pleasant) or negative (unpleasant) quality of an emotional experience.

Vocal Burst

A short nonverbal vocal sound expressing emotion, such as laughter, sighing, crying, or gasping.

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Vygotsky’s concept describing the gap between what a learner can achieve independently and what they can achieve with guidance or collaboration.

Appendix 3: Miscellaneous

1. Peer Exchange

After sharing a digital version of the first iteration of the artefact with peers from education, design, technology, copywriting, and vocal pedagogy, I discussed their feedback with them, focusing on potential improvements and whether they felt the workbook met the assessment criteria established in component 1.

Overall, feedback was highly positive. The workbook was described as visually appealing, engaging, professionally presented, accessible, and well structured, and effective use of colour and layout. It was also considered fit-for-purpose, with strong potential for use in voice studio and workshop settings.

Key strengths identified included its ease of use, clear and engaging structure, and capacity to support meaningful reflection. Peers noted its accessibility across a broad demographic and its sensitivity to cultural and emotional variation. Open-response tasks were particularly valued for encouraging deeper insight, while the flexible design was seen to support learner autonomy.

Suggestions for improvement focused on clarity and usability. Feedback indicated the need for more explicit guidance on whether the workbook is intended for individual or group use, alongside a clearer definition of the facilitator's role. Some sections were seen as dense and potentially cognitively demanding, suggesting a need for condensing information and activities, and improving structuring. Minor refinements were also suggested, including improving accessibility (for example, formatting and font choices), clarifying key terminology, and strengthening navigation.

Due to time constraints within this module, not all suggested changes could be implemented. However, peer feedback will be taken into consideration during the next iterative development of the workbook.

2. AI Use

AI was used for the following tasks in the creation of the workbook and assignment:

Canva AI

- Creating workbook (images and design) and component images.

ChatGPT

- Summarising reflective DEBRIEF journal originally created in Excel.
- Identifying potential academic papers for further research.
- Assistance in creating brief glossary descriptions.
- Identifying repetition.

3. Voice Study Centre Courses

Identification of best pedagogical practices was in part gained through research-based practical strategies presented in workshops by leading practitioners:

- Neuroscience and the Voice (Moss-Erickson, 2026)
- Acting Approaches for Singing Teachers (Morgan, 2025a)
- Coaching Emotional Vocal Expression (Morgan, 2025b)
- Public Speaking Coach Qualification (Henny 2025)
- Implementing VoceVista in the Pedagogy Classroom! Dr Christoper Besch (Besch, 2025)

4. Project Outline

Problem Being Addressed

Bridging a gap in vocal pedagogy by fostering awareness of diverse individual and expressions of affect, challenging the overreliance on Western 'basic' emotion models and value assumptions.

Target Audience

Adults but could be used for adolescents 15+ with parental consent. The workbook can be used in a teacher/individual or group environment but should be led by a facilitator who understands the structure and can help mitigate risks for the user.

Theories

- **Gibbs Reflective Cycle** (Gibbs, 1988) providing a structured approach to reflection.
- **Self Determination Theory** (Ryan and Deci, 2000) – supporting learning wellbeing and motivation through autonomy, competence and relatedness.
- **Social Constructivist Learning Theory** (Vygotsky, 1978; Wibowo, Wangid and Firdaus, 2025) facilitating student-centred learning, employing scaffolding through guidance and collaboration to support effective learning in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).
- **Constructivist and Constructionist Emotional Concepts** (Barrett, 2006a, 2006b; Wierzbicka, 2012; Barrett, 2017)
- **Granularity Learning Theories** (Hoemann, Barrett and Quigley, 2021) finding individuals have differing granularity in emotional perception and expression, but that this can be improved through learning.
- **Embodied Learning Theory** (Niedenthal, 2007) finding that mimicry can increase learning and empathy.
- **Moss-Erickson Theories of Applied Neuroscience in Voice Pedagogy** (2026) informing evidence-based approaches to voice learning and teaching.

How it solves the problem

Through reflective and reflexive practices and collaborative intercultural exchange, this workbook cultivates awareness of the variation and nuance in affective expression across individuals, especially those influenced by language and culture in multicultural contexts. By engaging in mindfulness, play, and experiential exercises, users develop a more nuanced understanding (granularity) of both their own expressive modes and those of others. The teacher acts as a facilitator, guiding student-centred learning, while the workbook supports deeper understanding and skills development through collaboration and structured reflection. Using the Gibbs Reflective Cycle, the process culminates in identifying insights and creating an actionable plan, with particular focus on applications in vocal pedagogy. This approach ensures that lessons learned are actively be integrated into voice work by both students and the teachers.

Effectiveness Considerations

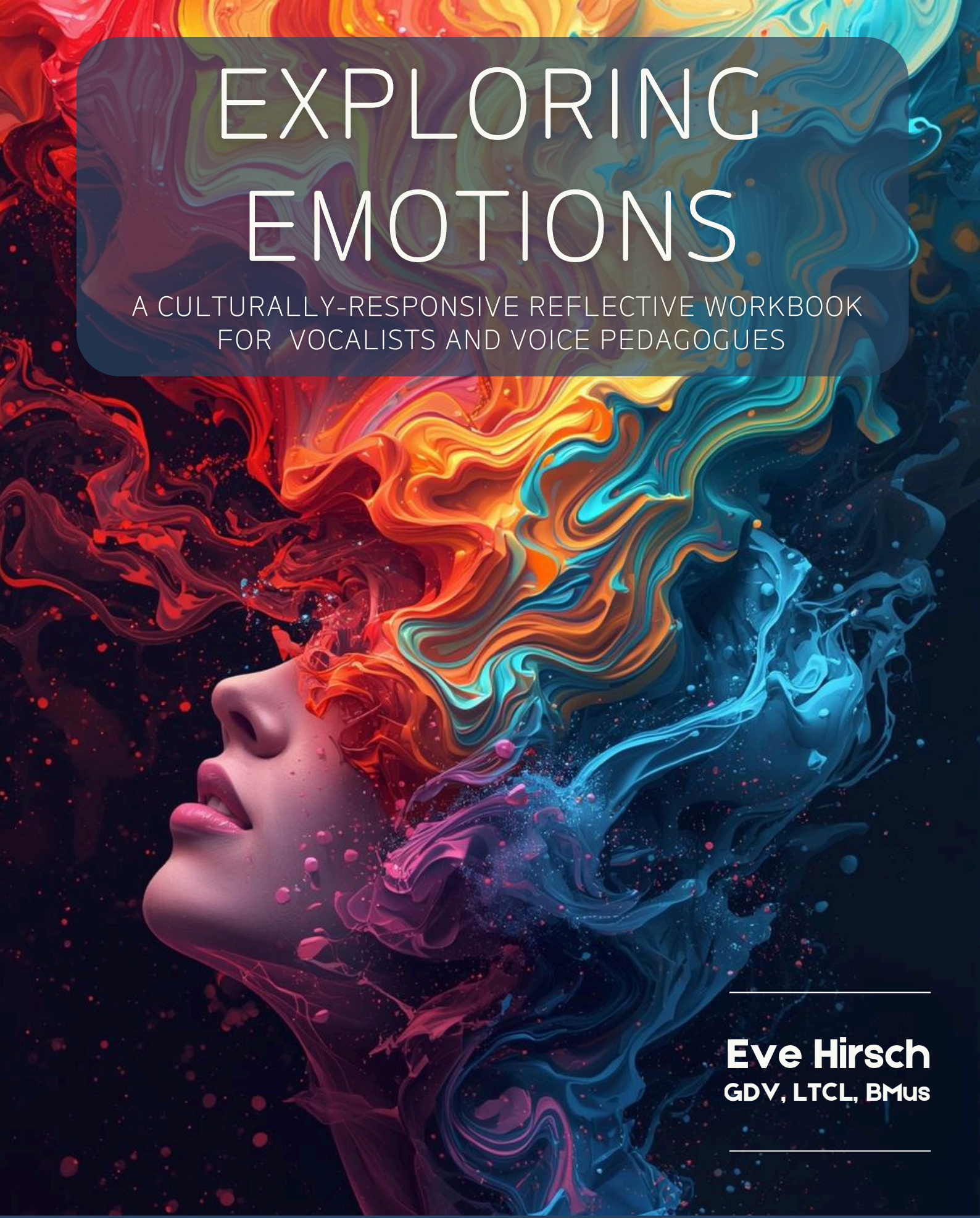
The workbook should be inclusive and user friendly. Where possible, length wording will be avoided to ensure that second language users are not unduely disadvantaged. Reflection will be embedded throughout the workbook to gradually build awareness and skills and to promote a feeling of competence for the learner. Autonomy will be supported through a structure which allows flexibility of use. A facilitator will need to be trained in its use to ensure risks are mitigated and to facilitate group exchange. A later iteration could be simplified for use without a facilitator and an audio version could be created for impaired learners.

Researcher Values

Inclusive, open-minded, culturally sensitive and responsive. Continued learning should be supported and encouraging reflection is one of the first steps in this process.

Appendix 4: Artefact

Figure 1. Exploring Emotions workbook.



EXPLORING EMOTIONS

A CULTURALLY-RESPONSIVE REFLECTIVE WORKBOOK FOR VOCALISTS AND VOICE PEDAGOGUES

Eve Hirsch
GDV, LTCL, BMus

ENGAGING WITH NUANCED AFFECT ACROSS CULTURAL AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

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DISCLAIMER AND CONSENT

This workbook is designed to help vocalists and teachers reflect on their personal emotions, enhancing granularity of expression and interpretation. It also aims to foster awareness of individual differences in expression and perception of emotion, shaped particularly by culture and language.

It is not intended as a therapeutic tool for psychological evaluation or intervention. Its use should be closely monitored by a facilitator, who maintains an ongoing dialogue with the learner to mitigate potential risks.

Participant anonymity must be maintained, and written consent is required before engaging in the practical exercises and reflective activities. Learners should review the identified risks (see Appendix: Risk Mitigation) and discuss them with the facilitator prior to starting.

I have read and discussed the possible risks of using this workbook with the course facilitator and understand that, while all reasonable efforts will be made to mitigate risks, a small risk may still exist.

Understanding this I consent to participation in this course

Name _____ Date _____

Signed _____

This workbook is designed primarily for adult use. It may be used with adolescents 15+ only with consent from a parent or guardian.

INTRODUCTION

Emotions are shaped by both individual experience and cultural context. This workbook guides you to explore, reflect on, and develop awareness of nuanced individual and cultural variations of expression. Through practical and reflective activities, you will increase your emotional granularity, enhancing your ability to recognise and understand others' modes of expression – or at least question your assumptions of them. Additionally, you will gain insights on the impact of these variations on vocal expression and technique.

Engaging with this workbook will support the development of culturally-responsive practices, while enhancing personal interactions, vocal performance, and pedagogical practices. You will also be guided to create a forward-looking action plan, helping to ensure that lessons learned are actively applied in future practice.

Collaborative and Open Response

This workbook invites exploration and discovery through open-response activities. Designed as a collaborative journey between learners and facilitators, it encourages open-minded reflection and discussion, supporting richer insights through the co-construction of emotional meaning. It is primarily intended for group work but can be adapted for individual settings.

It is not intended to be the final step in your learning, but rather an awakening to possibilities, challenging traditional frameworks in vocal pedagogy.

Embodied Learning

Exercises which engage both the mind and the body are included to support learning and foster empathy.



Structured Reflection

This workbook is structured, on both a macro and micro level, by a modified version of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle

Macro Level



Step 1: Practical Activities

Exploration and Description - Expressive modes.
Reflection – Evaluation and collaborative exchange.

Step 2: Knowledge - Analysis

Gaining theoretical knowledge to aid analysis.

Step 3: Insights - Conclusion

Identifying key insights gained throughout the reflective process.

Step 4: Action Plan

Planning actionable strategies for application in voice work.

Micro Level

Within Step 1, learners follow a further micro-level reflective process accompanied by key facts to facilitate learning.



Wellbeing and Motivation

Three key components of the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Ryan and Deci, 2000) ensure your basic psychological needs are met for optimal learning.

Autonomy

You can customise this workbook, undertaking the Practical Activities (step 1) in any order and timeframe that best fits your needs. You may work through all sections or focus only those most relevant to your goals. This fosters the feeling of choice and free will in your actions.

Competence

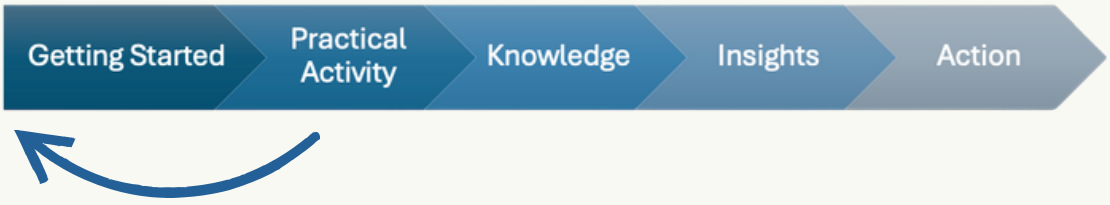
Exercises are designed to be simple and enjoyable, with reflection at each stage helping you gauge your progress and supporting the feeling of mastery and effective learning.

Relatedness

Collaborative exchange and learning is encouraged through shared experiences and dialogue to promote connection and belongingness.

How To Use This Workbook

The diagram below explains the order for using this workbook. Each Practical Activity should be preceded by the *Getting Started* section, which increases focus, is relaxing, and gauges how you are feeling each day. For optimal use, you should complete the practical sections before continuing on to *Knowledge*, *Insights,* and *Action*.



Repeat the first two phases as often as needed, selecting different practical activities each time, before progressing sequentially through the remaining phases. Exercises that may cause discomfort or distress can be skipped.

Symbols

Symbols have been used to enhance the accessibility and usability of this workbook in multicultural contexts, while supporting neurodiverse learners and diverse learning styles. These are listed in the Symbol Guide (p 6).

Visual tools are similarly favoured for practical activities, facilitating both open-ended responses and the identification and recording of individual variations in expression and emotional concepts.

Making Notes

Spaces have been left for written reflection, and note pages have been added to the end of the book for additional insights you might like to record.



SYMBOL GUIDE



Rest



Breathe



Reflect



Exchange



Valence-Arousal Model



Play



Fact



Materials



Written Exercise



Plan



Practical Activity

GETTING STARTED



Box Breathing

Purpose: To calm your mind and body, and increase concentration, relaxation, and learning.

1. Sit or stand comfortably
2. Close your eyes and soften your gaze
3. Inhale slowly through nose for 4 counts
4. Hold your breath for 4 counts
5. Exhale gently through your mouth for 4 counts
6. Hold again for 4 counts
7. Repeat the cycle 4 to 6 times





Rest and Consolidate

Breathe and rest symbols will appear throughout this workbook to remind you to repeat the above box breathing exercise.



Fact

Box breathing helps calm the nervous system, reducing stress and improving focus, allowing your brain to process and retain information more effectively.

Rest is when the brain consolidates what you've learned, strengthening memory and connections.

This combination will support concentration, increase your learning, and improve skill acquisition.



How Do I Feel Today?

Mindful Body and Mind Check-In

Purpose: To monitor your current physical and mental state before exploring emotional expression.

- Sit or lie comfortably with your eyes closed.
- Take slow, deep breaths and concentrate on your breathing.

What do you notice today? Observe without judgement.

- Continue to take slow, deep breaths and scan your body from head to toe.

Do you notice areas of tension, relaxation, or particular sensations today?

- Still breathing slowly, turn your attention to your mental and physical state. Note your thoughts, your 'emotions', and your energy level.

How are you feeling today?

- Slowly open your eyes and return to the present moment.
- Mark your base state on the scale below.



Reflection

What physical sensations do you bring with you into this session today?

What underlying feelings do you sense currently?

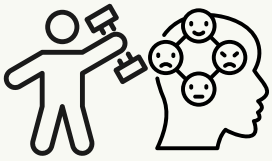
How might this influence how you express yourself vocally or emotionally today?

Are you ready to start work or do you need to breathe again or move for more energy? Consider using breathing to re-establish calm, or movement to activate and awaken the nervous system.

Reflection Notes

Write your responses to the questions from page 8 below.

AROUSAL-VALENCE



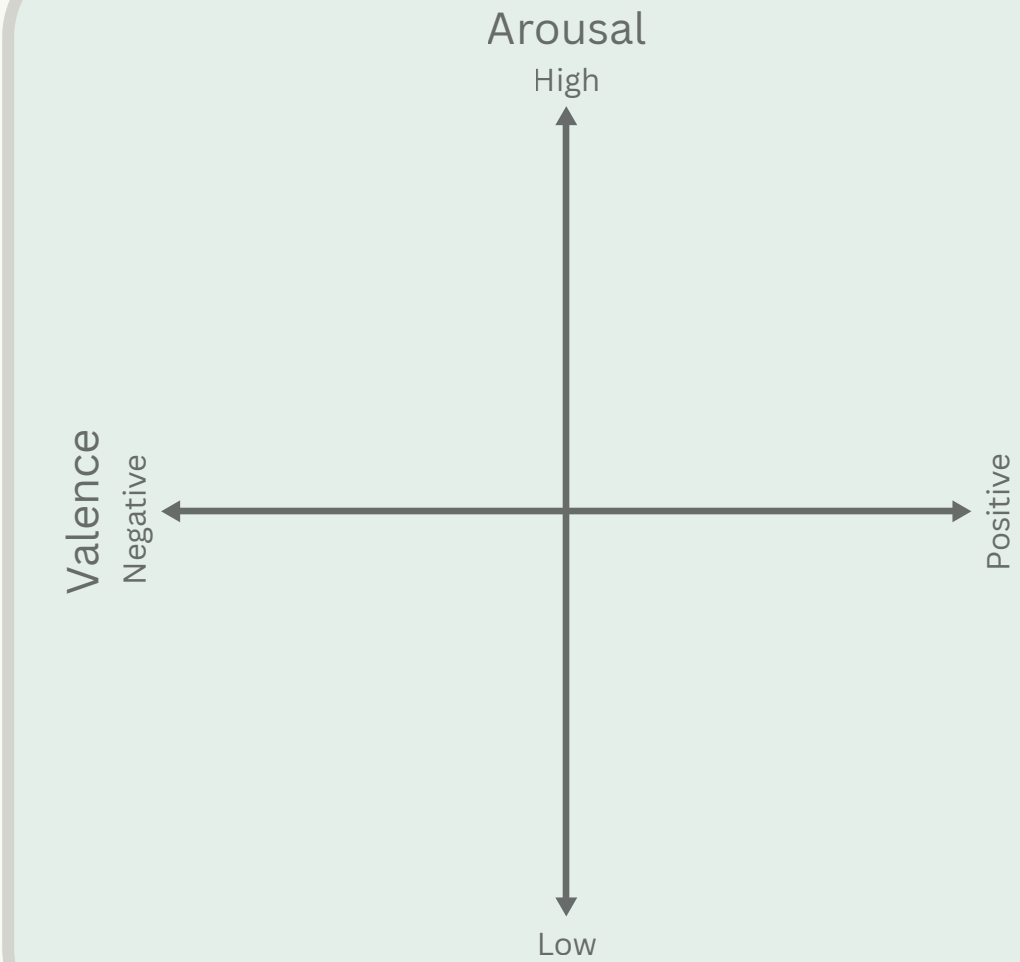
Map Your Emotions



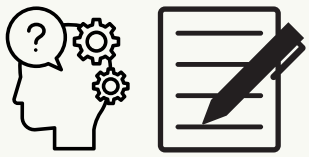
Pencil
Eraser



1. Reflect on your current emotional state
2. Recall your personal past emotions
3. Map and label these emotions on the **Affect Model** below in terms of valence (positive-negative) and arousal (high-low energy)



Record where your personal emotion concepts appear on this scale, marking the location in pencil. You may then erase markings on subsequent reflections, relocating them if you wish.



Feelings

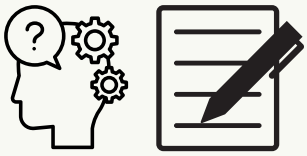
- How do you feel about your placement of emotions?
- Did you notice any feelings which arose when reflecting on your current state or recalling your personal past emotions?
- Are there some emotions which are more difficult to categorise? Why might this be?
- How do you feel about potentially sharing your emotional map with others?





Exchange

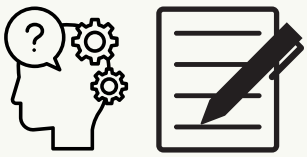
You are now encouraged to exchange maps and discuss similarities and differences with others in the session.



Evaluation

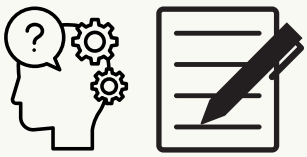
- Reflecting on mapping your emotions: What felt easy or intuitive? What felt challenging or ambiguous?

- During exchange and discussion: How did your emotional map compare with others? Were there overlaps or striking differences? Did cultural, linguistic, or personal factors seem to influence these differences?



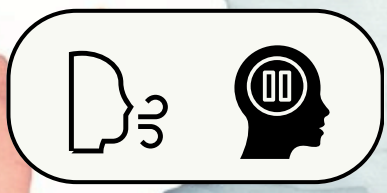
Analysis

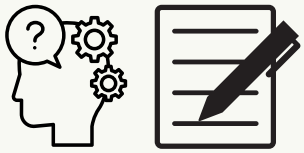
- Why might your emotions lie where they do on the valence-arousal map?
- Do you view your emotions as clearly separated (discrete) or more on a continuum?
- How might your language for labeling emotions shape your understanding of them?
- Consider patterns: do certain valence-arousal combinations appear more frequently in your experience than others?
- Comparing across the group: do cultural or linguistic backgrounds influence similarities and differences?



Conclusion

- How has mapping your emotions helped you understand your own emotional landscape? How might this affect your vocal expression and technique?
- What insights have you gained from comparing your map with those of others?
- How might this reflection change your perception of emotions in yourself and in others?
- How might expressive variation across individuals affect your performance or interpersonal interactions with others in voice work?





Action Plan



- How can you use this awareness in your future experiences in voice work?
- How might the *Affect Model* map be useful to you for vocal expressive work or in voice teaching?
- How could regular use of the *Affect Model* map help develop your or students' emotional expression over time?
- How might you employ *Affect Model* mapping and labelling of emotions for better communication, understanding, or self-reflection? What actionable plans could you set in motion for yourself or your students?

Continue on next page

Action Plan

You may continue with your action plan notes here

Fact

Originating from James Russell's Circumplex Model of Affect, valence-arousal models enable individuals to map emotions on a spectrum using open-ended responses. Research shows this approach is more reliable across cultures than using discrete 'basic' emotion labels, and according to Lisa Feldman-Barrett, it facilitates pan-cultural nuanced reflection on emotion and avoids imposition of pre-selected linguistic concepts which could bias responses.

FACIAL EXPRESSION



Identify Muscles



Pen/pencil
Mirror/camera
Coin
Affect model

Identify the following muscles on your face using a mirror or camera:

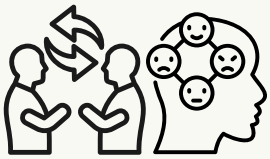
1. **Orbicularis oculi** – encircles the eye; closes eyes, squinting
2. **Zygomaticus major and minor** – lifts the corners of the mouths
3. **Corrugator supercilii** – draws the eyebrows together; frowning
4. **Frontalis**– raises the eyebrows
5. **Procerus** – pulls skin between eyebrows down
6. **Orbicularis oris** – puckers lips
7. **Levator labii superioris** – raises upper lip
8. **Depressor anguli oris** – pulls mouth corners down

Use the diagram on page 19. Muscles chosen are those most important in the expression of emotion. The image has been simplified for ease of use, but if you would like a more detailed image showing the muscles themselves there are many resources you can find on the internet.



Expression

Considering your personal prior emotional experiences, try to express your personal emotion concepts with your face. Using a mirror or camera, define which muscles you are using.



Exchange

Display your expressions to other participants. They should consider your expressions on this map. Discuss where they would place your expression on the *Affect Model*.

Game



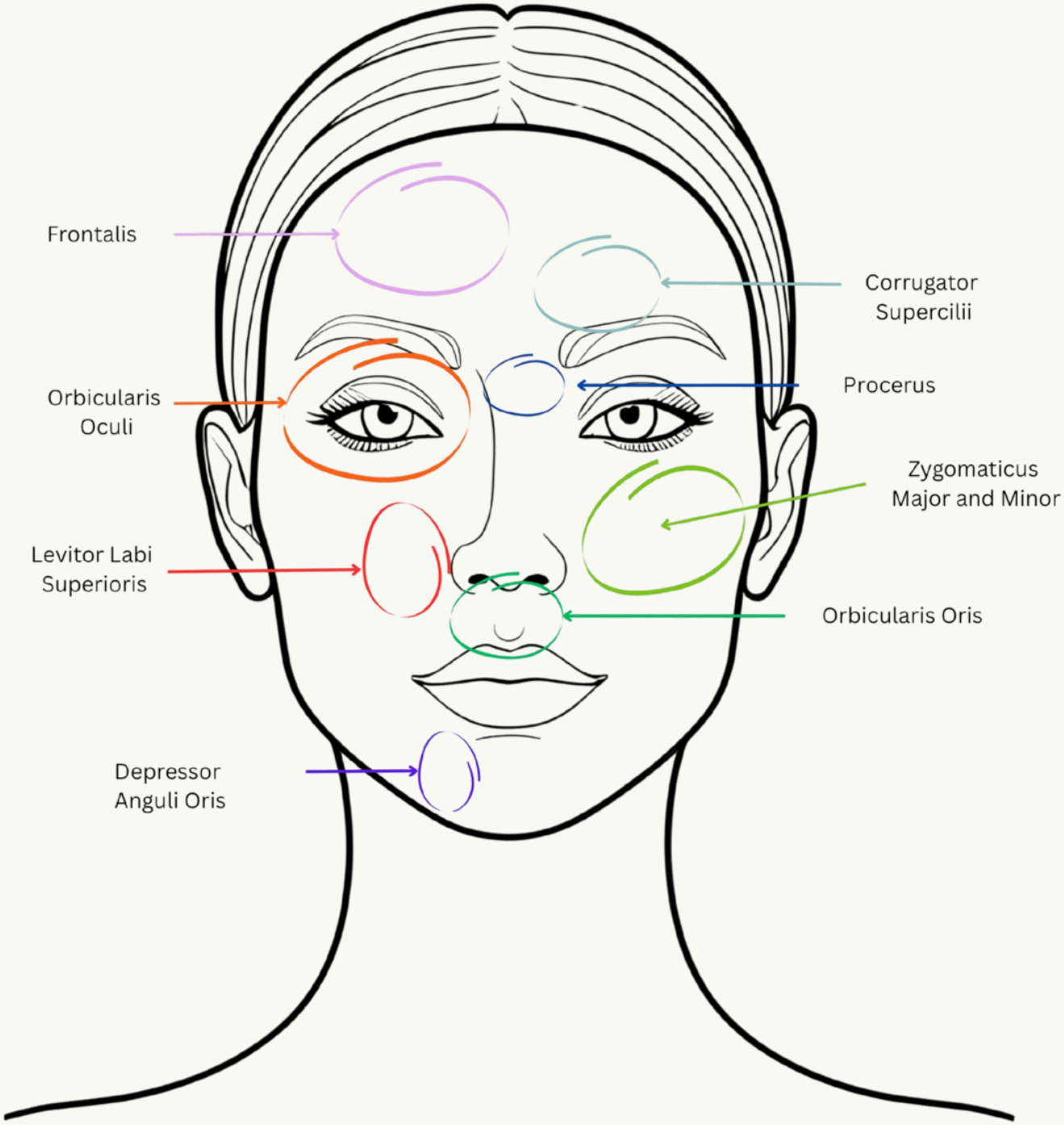
Experiment with facial expressions:

- Gently drop a coin on this image to randomly select two muscles based on where the coin lands.
- Map the arising expressions using muscle numbers on the *Affect Model* (p. 10).

Exchange

Display your muscle combination expressions which you have noted on the *Affect Model* to other participants. The group should consider each other's expressions and discuss where they would place the expressions of one another on the model.

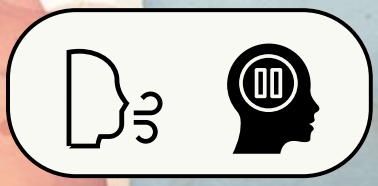
Facial Muscles

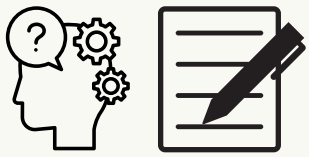




Exchange

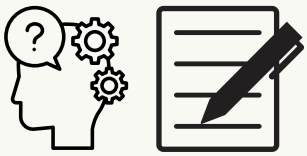
Compare your facial expression *Affect Model* to those of the other participants.





Feelings

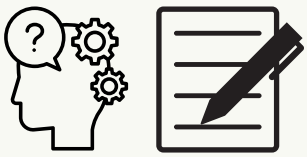
- How do you feel about using facial muscles in this way?
- Did you notice any changes in your personal emotions when doing this?
- Were there some combinations that are more difficult to categorise or execute? Why?
- How did you feel about sharing your facial expressions with others?
- Did you feel understood by others when you were expressing your own affect concepts?



Evaluation

- Reflecting on isolating your facial muscles: What felt easy or intuitive? What felt challenging or ambiguous?

- During exchange and discussion: How did your facial expression *Affect Model* compare with others? Were there overlaps or differences? Did cultural, linguistic, or personal factors seem to influence these differences?



Analysis

- Why might your facial expressions be interpreted similarly or differently by others?
- Do you view your facial expressions of emotions as clearly separated (discrete) or more on a continuum?
- Did language or culture affect the way you interpreted the facial expressions of others?
- Can you identify specific differences between your and others' facial expressions of emotion by considering individual muscles?





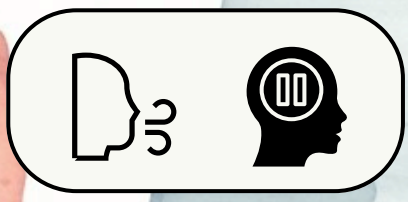
Conclusion

- How has identifying individual facial muscles helped you understand your own facial expressions of affect? How might this affect your vocal expression and technique?

- What insights have you gained from comparing your facial expressions with others?

- How might this change your perception of facial expressions in yourself and in others?

- How might facial expression variation across individuals affect your vocal performance, pedagogy, or interpersonal interactions with others in voice work?







Action Plan



- How can you use this awareness in your future experiences in voice work?
- How might this knowledge of facial muscles be useful for you in your vocal expressive work or in voice teaching?
- How could understanding facial muscles help develop your or your student's emotional expression over time?
- How might this knowledge be implemented in vocal pedagogy, performance, or interpersonally?
- What actionable plans could you set in motion for yourself or your students?

Continue on next page

Action Plan

You may continue with your action plan notes here

Fact

Facial Action Units (FACs), as defined by Ekman and Friesen in 1978, can be used to help evaluate facial expressions in a structured way. The number game in this workbook has been inspired by the FACs system labelling muscles individually, and analysing how the combination of various muscle groups creates expression. Western 'basic' emotion labels have, however, been avoided to capture nuanced individual and cultural variation.

VOCAL EXPRESSION

Experience

Pen/Pencil,
Acoustic Measurement
Optional:
Software or App
(Praat/VoceVista or similar)

If you have already entered emotions on your *Affect Model* (p. 10) you could use your map as a starting point for the exercises below.

Play

- Play with producing a variety of affective vocal expressions based on your personal emotion concepts while speaking a sentence in gibberish.
- Mark the location of these vocal expressions on the *Affect Model* (p. 10) and label them with your personal affect concept labels.
- Describe each expressive vocalisation in your own words, noting for example pitch, loudness, brightness/darkness of tone, attack/decay, rate of speech, pauses, and stress. Write your observations on the notes pages at the back of this book.

Exchange

Share your playful affect expressions in gibberish with one another. See if the group can guess the intended expression of the each vocalist.



Optional Acoustic Analysis

If you have experience with acoustical analysis software or apps, you may like to analyse your vocal expressions more accurately using VoceVista, Praat, or similar.

Research the following parameters of your affective vocalisations:

1. Pitch: Fundamental Frequency (F0)
2. Loudness: dB
3. Jitter: Frequency variation between cycles
4. Shimmer: Amplitude variation
5. Formants: Bands of resonance
6. Attack/Decay
7. Speech rate, pauses, stress



Exchange

Share your vocal expressions with each other. Describe the vocal qualities of each other's expressions verbally.
If you choose to use acoustic software/app to gain real-time feedback on your expressions, discuss how your perceptions differed from the acoustical measurements.



World's Worst Musical

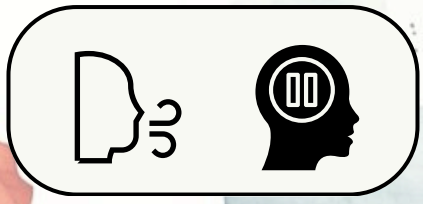


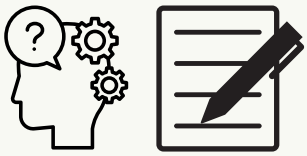
Adapting a game from John Henny, improvise a lively emotional musical as a group. Use only gibberish nonsense sentences and try to respond vocally to each other's affective expressions. Allow yourself to be ridiculous without judgement, the aim is to create the "World's Worst Musical", not a perfect performance.



Exchange

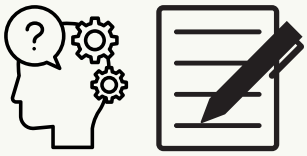
Discuss variations in prosody and paralanguage, identifying musical variations in speech and non-speech based vocalisations which you noticed during this exercise. Reflect on: pitch, tempo, volume, pauses, stress, rhythm, attack, and decay.





Feelings

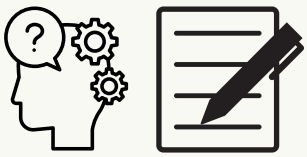
- How do you feel about expressing emotion concepts through your voice in this way?
- Did you notice any changes in your personal emotions when doing this?
- Were there some expressions that were more difficult to categorise? Why?
- How did you feel about sharing your vocal expressions with others?
- Did you feel understood by others when you were expressing your own affect concepts?



Evaluation

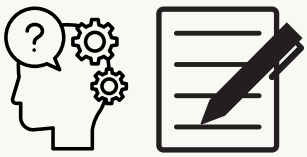
- Reflecting on vocal expression: What felt easy or intuitive? What felt challenging or ambiguous?

- During exchange and discussion: How did your vocal expression map compare with others? Were there overlaps or differences? Did cultural, linguistic, or personal factors seem to influence these differences?



Analysis

- Why might your vocal expressions be interpreted similarly or differently by others?
- Do you view your vocal expressions as clearly separated (discrete) or more on a continuum?
- Did language or culture affect the way you interpreted the vocal expressions of others?
- Can you identify specific differences between your and others' vocal expressions of emotion?



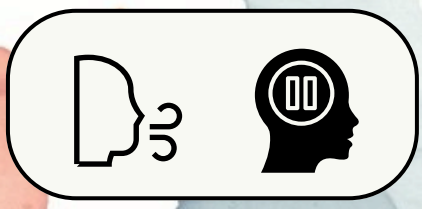
Conclusion

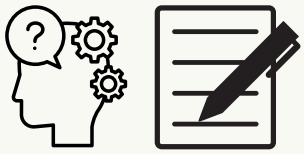
- How has analysing parameters of vocal expression helped you understand your own vocal expressions of affect? How might this affect your vocal expression and technique?

- What insights have you gained from comparing your vocal expression with others?

- How might this reflection change your perception of vocal expressions in yourself and in others?

- How might vocal expression variation across individuals affect your vocal performance, pedagogy, or interpersonal interactions with others in voice work?





Action Plan



- How can you use this awareness in your future experiences in voice work?
- How might this knowledge of vocal affect characteristics be useful for you in your vocal expressive work or in voice teaching?
- How could understanding vocal expression variations help develop your or student emotional expression over time?
- How might this knowledge be implemented in vocal pedagogy, performance or interpersonally?

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Action Plan

You may continue with your action plan notes here

Fact

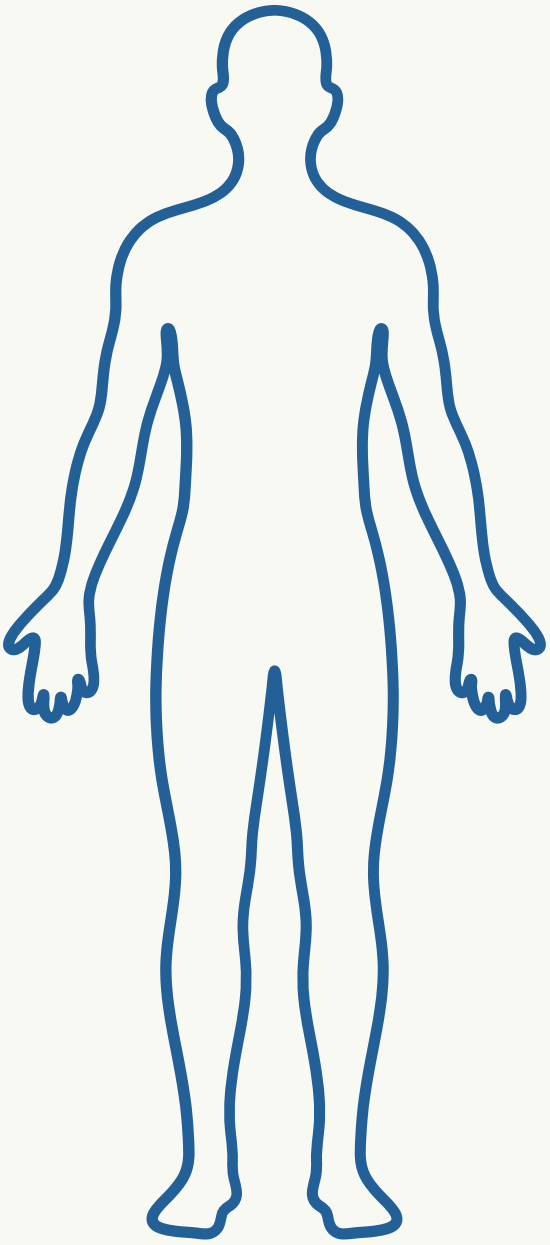
Using acoustic software to analyse vocal expressions of emotion in voice work can be a useful tool, providing real-time biofeedback while developing granularity of vocal expression and understanding.

BODY MAPPING

Experience

Pen/Pencil

Using your own personal affect concepts, express your choice of a range of emotions combining vocal and facial expressions. Mindfully scan your body as you do so and use the image below to help you map your observations.



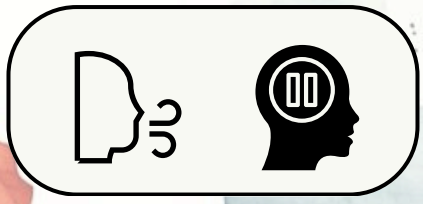
Consider

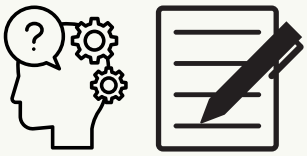
1. Heart rate
2. Breathing
3. Movements
4. Tension/relaxation
5. Temperature
6. Posture

Record your observations as descriptive notes for example: "Jaw tight, shoulders raised, heartbeat fast, hands warm, smile broad".

Exchange

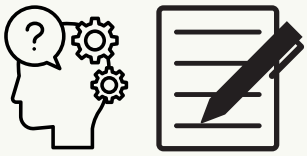
Share your body map observations now with each other comparing and discussing similarities and variations.





Feelings

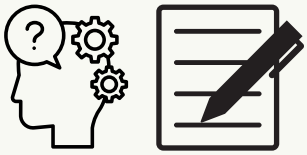
- How did you feel physically expressing emotions in this way?
- Did you notice any changes in your base emotions when doing this exercise?
- Were there some emotions that were more difficult to analyse? Why?
- How did you feel about sharing your physical sensation notes with others?
- Did you feel understood by others when explaining your physical reactions to your own emotion concepts?



Evaluation

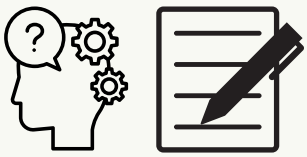
- Reflecting on the physiological changes noted: What felt comfortable? What felt challenging or ambiguous?

- During exchange and discussion: How did your physiological reactions compare with others? Were there overlaps or differences? Did cultural, linguistic, or personal factors seem to influence these differences?



Analysis

- How did your base emotional state today affect your physiological reactions to your personal emotion concepts?
- Why might your physiological reactions be interpreted similarly or differently by others?
- Do you view your physiological reactions as clearly separated (discrete) or rather a continuum?
- Did your language or culture affect the way you experienced physical changes in yourself or interpreted those of others?
- Can you identify specific differences between your and others' physiological reactions to affect concepts?



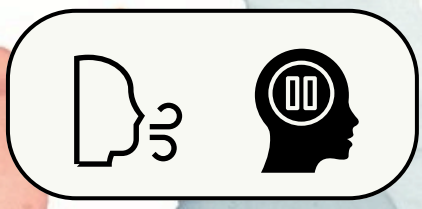
Conclusion

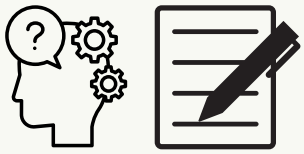
- How has analysing physiological responses helped you understand your own expressions of emotion? How might these responses affect your vocal expression and technique?

- What insights have you gained from comparing your physiological reactions with others?

- How might insights gained change your perception of emotional expression in yourself and others?

- How might physiological response variation across individuals affect vocal performance, pedagogy or interpersonal interactions with others in voice work?





Action Plan



- How can you use this awareness in your future experiences in voice work?
- How might this knowledge of physiological reactions to affect be useful for you in your vocal expressive work or in voice teaching?
- How could understanding physiological reactions help improve your or student emotional expression over time?
- How might this knowledge be implemented in vocal pedagogy, performance or interpersonally?
- What actionable steps for implementation in your voice work could be planned?

Continue on next page

Action Plan

You may continue with your action plan notes here

Fact

In considering individual variation in emotion, using stimuli such as stories, music, images, or mimicry can be useful tools for evoking ‘real’ as opposed to ‘posed/acted’ emotions. Posed emotions tend to be exaggerated and therefore produce expressions which are more universally recognised. You might like to explore the exercises in this book using stimuli to gain more nuanced insights into individual and cultural differences.

MULTIMODAL EXPRESSION



Affect & Actioning

Putting It All Together



Pen/Pencil
Mirror/Camera

Complete the following sentence "I ____ you" with action verbs, such as those suggested below. State the completed action verbs sentence followed by an expression of intent using tongue twisters or gibberish sentences. Real sentences with meaning avoided as they may influence the expression.

Note how intent changes your vocal and facial expressions as well as your physiological reactions.

1. Mark where your expressions lie on the *Affect Model* (p. 10).
2. Note how each action verb affects you physiologically using the body map (p. 34).
3. Using a mirror or camera, employ muscle numbers to structure the analysis of your facial expressions (p. 18).

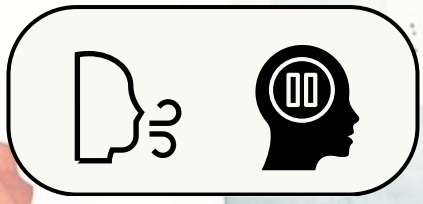
Sample Action Verbs

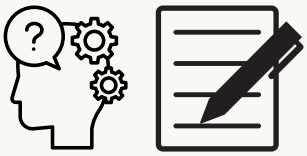
Admire, Tease, Warn, Worry about, Thank, Trust, Surprise, Support, Scold, Respect, Reject, Reassure, Question, Protect, Persuade, Motivate, Joke with, Lie to, Comfort, Challenge. Cheer, Confess to, Blame, Criticize, Convince, Forgive, Defend, Encourage, Help, Invite, Insult, Impress, Ignore, Provoke, Overpower.



Exchange

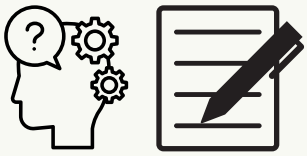
Work in pairs or small groups to express intent through action verbs to each other. How are these perceived by the decoder? Do your perceptions from encoder to decoder match? Now compare your mapped observations with one another comparing variations and similarities.





Feelings

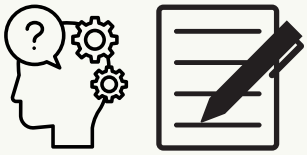
- How did you feel expressing emotions in this way?
- Did you notice any changes in your base emotions when doing this exercise?
- Were there some action verbs that were more difficult to analyse? Why?
- How did you feel about expressing affect to others using this method?
- How did you feel about sharing your written observations with others?
- Did you feel understood by others when expressing intent?



Evaluation

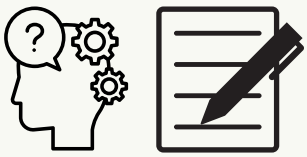
- Reflecting on the action verb exercise: What felt comfortable? What felt challenging or ambiguous?

- During exchange and discussion: How did your perceptions compare with others? Were there overlaps or differences? Did cultural, linguistic, or personal factors seem to influence these differences?



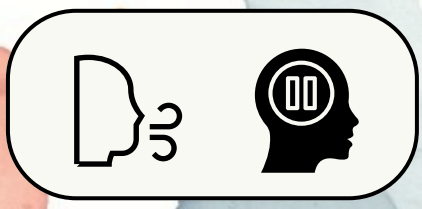
Analysis

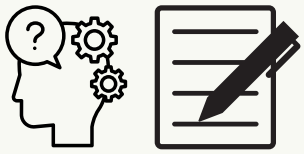
- How did your base emotional state today affect your ability to express affect using action verbs?
- Why might your intent be interpreted similarly or differently by others?
- Do you view your expressions arising through intent as clearly separated (discrete) or more on a continuum?
- Did language or culture affect your expression of intent or the interpretation of others' expressions?
- Can you identify specific differences between your and others' expressions based on intent?



Conclusion

- How has employing this exercise led to insights about your own emotional expressions through intent? How might this change your vocal expression and technique?
- What insights have you gained from comparing your intent expressions with those of others?
- How might this reflection change your perception of emotional expression through intent in yourself and others?
- How might expressive variation through intent across individuals affect vocal performance, pedagogy, or interpersonal interactions with others in voice work?





Action Plan



- How can you use these insights in your future experiences in voice work?
- How might this exercise be useful for you in your vocal expressive work or in voice teaching?
- How could understanding expression through intent help improve your or student emotional expression over time?
- How might this knowledge be implemented in vocal pedagogy, performance or interpersonally?
- What are actionable steps to implementing your insights?

Continue on next page

Action Plan

You may continue with your action plan notes here

Fact

Actioning was created in the 1970s by the Joint Stock Theatre Company, particularly through the work of Bill Gaskill and Max Stafford-Clark. It is a practical tool that complements other approaches, especially Stanislavskian techniques such as the exploration of given circumstances. It is a useful technique for exploring emotional expression in both speech and song.

MIMICRY

Facial, Vocal & Gesture

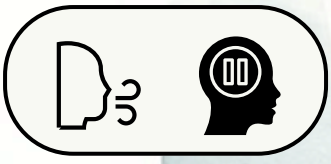
Pen/Pencil

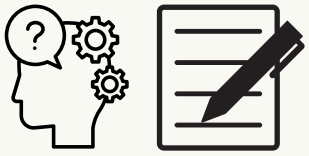
Face a partner and express an emotion of your choice based on prior experience. After you express your emotion your partner should attempt to mimic you. You should follow the process below.

1. Facial expression only.
2. Then add vocal expression of either vowels, sounds, or gibberish. Avoid using recognisable words which may influence expression.
3. Complete your expression with your natural body response to each emotion such as changes in posture or gesture.

Fact

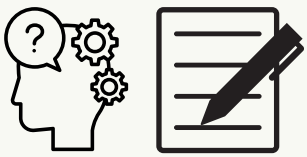
Copying another person's facial expression, vocalisations, or behaviour through mimicry helps the brain "simulate" their emotional state, leading to a better understanding of how others feel.
Audiation is the starting point in the brain's vocalisation process. A sound is first heard by the ear and processed in the auditory region of the brain. Its pattern is then interpreted in speech-related areas and used to guide motor planning for speech and song production. Mimicking others' sounds, therefore, strengthens social connection by reinforcing both interpretation and expression of affect within the brain.





Feelings

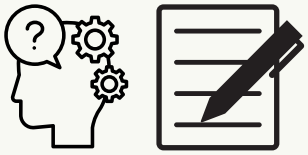
- How did you feel expressing emotions in this way?
- Did you notice any changes in your base emotional state when doing this exercise?
- Were there some modes of expression that were more difficult to analyse? Why?
- How did you feel about expressing emotions to others using this method?
- How did you feel about mimicking the expressions of others?
- Did you feel understood by others when they mimicked your expressions?



Evaluation

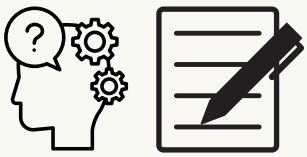
- Reflecting on the mimicry exercise: What felt comfortable? What felt challenging or ambiguous?

- During exchange: How did your expressions vary from others' interpretations? Were there overlaps or differences? Did cultural, linguistic, or personal factors seem to influence these differences?



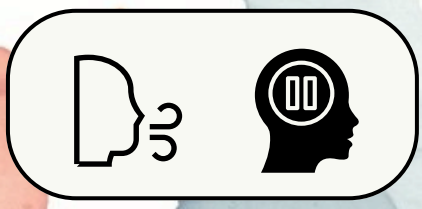
Analysis

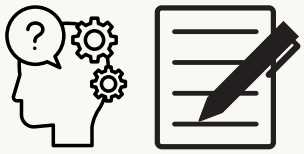
- How did your base emotional state today affect your ability to interpret emotions through mimicry?
- Why might your expressions be interpreted similarly or differently by others?
- Did language or culture affect the expression or interpretation of affect when mimicking one another?
- Can you identify specific differences between your and others' affective expressions when mimicking each other?



Conclusion

- How has employing this exercise led to insights about your own expressions of affect? How might this change your vocal expression and technique?
- What insights have you gained from the mimicry exercises?
- How might this reflection change your perception of emotional expression in yourself and others?
- How might variations in interpretation across individuals affect vocal performance, pedagogy, or interpersonal interactions with others in voice work?





Action Plan



- How can you use these insights in your future experiences in voice work?
- How might mimicry be useful for you in your vocal expressive work or in voice teaching?
- How could mimicry exercises help improve your or student emotional expression over time?
- How might this knowledge be implemented in vocal pedagogy, performance, or interpersonally?
- What are the next actionable steps in voice work?

Continue on next page

Action Plan

You may continue with your action plan notes here

Fact

Research shows that brain regions involved in control and regulation of emotions are active when you watch someone else expressing an emotion, and the ability to mimic others expressions supports empathy. Additionally, your brain and body are partners in cognition, and mimicking expressions, vocal, facial and gestures, has been found to increase learning by connecting observation with physical experience, known as embodied learning. Practicing mimicry can, therefore, foster increased intercultural understanding and support emotional learning.



Emotion in Voice Work

Cultural, Linguistic and Individual Influences

A vocalist's emotional expression is shaped by individual factors including cultural background, language and personal experience, and therefore varies from person to person.

While some aspects of emotional expression may have biological foundations, the ways in which emotions are expressed and interpreted are influenced by culture. Constructivist perspectives propose that emotions are not fixed, universal categories, but are constructed by the predictive brain through learned emotion concepts. These 'emotions' are organised along a continuum dimension of valence (positive–negative) and arousal (high–low energy), rather than discrete "basic" categories.

Cultural groups develop emotional 'dialects', and individuals often show greater accuracy in recognising emotions expressed within their own group. Cultural variation in vocal expression is commonly conveyed through prosody and paralanguage, including pitch, rhythm, timing, volume, and tone quality, as well as non-linguistic vocalisations such as grunts or gasps. The individual expression of these elements, coupled with facial and gestural display norms can contribute to cross-cultural misunderstandings, both interpersonally and in vocal performance contexts. In voice, these cues may be interpreted differently depending on the performer's or listener's cultural framework.

Cultural frameworks shape both expression (display rules) and interpretation (perceptual frameworks).

- **Collectivist** cultures prioritise emotional restraint, context sensitivity, and group harmony and well-being.
- **Individualist** cultures encourage open personal expression and focus on individual goals.

Language plays a key role in categorisation. Some emotional concepts do not translate directly across languages, and vocal expression can shift when singing or speaking in a non-native language.

Granularity

Individuals vary in their ability to perceive and describe emotional nuance, a skill called emotional granularity. This skill however can be developed through training and reflection. Increased granularity supports more precise emotional expression and accurate interpretation of others' emotions, making its development highly relevant to vocal pedagogy.

Implications for Voice Work

Miscommunication

Differences in expression and interpretation may lead to misunderstanding between teachers, students, and colleagues. Furthermore, miscommunication between performers and audiences may affect performance perception and, therefore, career success.

Vocal Technique

Owing to the relationship between facial expression and vocal tone, cultural norms of expression can subtly shape vocal production, in particular resonance.

Addressing the Issue

Voice pedagogy must move beyond a "one-size-fits-all" Western model to:

- Recognise diverse expressive frameworks.
- Adapt pedagogy to be responsive to individual and cultural differences.
- Increase inclusivity and cultural sensitivity.
- Acknowledge non-Western values in music and expression.

Reflection and intercultural exchange enhance emotion recognition, empathy, and nuanced expression. Teachers, students, and performers should, therefore, reflect on personal assumptions about emotion and organise and engage in collaborative, intercultural learning experiences.

Key Takeaway

Emotion in voice is affected by culture. While biological mechanisms exist, the expression, perception, and meaning of emotion are shaped by culture, language, and individual experience. Culturally responsive pedagogy, therefore, should view emotional expression as flexible, learned and co-constructed, helping vocalists increase their impact, refine technique, and embrace and express their own cultural diversity.

Emotion as a Continuum

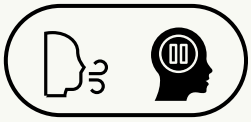
Research increasingly views emotions as a spectrum defined by Valence (pleasant - unpleasant) and Arousal (low - high energy) rather than discrete categories. Emotional experiences are interpretations of shifting internal states, and the same physiological state can be categorised differently depending on context and culture.

This challenges traditional voice pedagogy, which often views emotions through the lens of fixed, Western-based 'basic' categories. Adopting a constructivist approach would encourage teachers and students to consider blends, overlaps and gradual shifts rather than rigid labels.

Key Takeaway

Emotions are better understood as a continuum. Labels like 'sad' or 'excited' are used to describe categories shaped by experience rather than fixed states. Vocal expressive exercises should therefore avoid rigid categories, instead encouraging students to self report and label their experiences using valence-arousal frameworks.

"If we want to know if a person is experiencing an emotion, we have to ask them" (Barrett, 2006).



REFLECTION

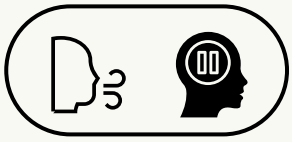




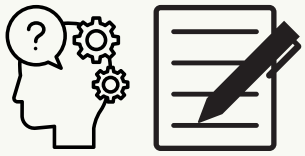
- What personal insights have you gained through using this workbook?
- How do new insights and awareness challenge your prior assumptions and beliefs?



- Discuss your responses in groups.



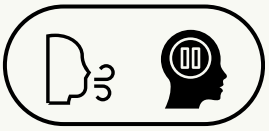
ACTION



- What personal steps could you take following these insights?
- How could you improve your vocal expression going forward?
- How could you improve your vocal pedagogy going forward?



- Discuss your responses in groups.



NEXT STEPS



- What are actionable steps you could undertake as teacher, student or performer? To improve:
    1. Expression
    2. Interpretation
    3. Performance
    4. Vocal Pedagogy
    5. Inclusivity and cultural sensitivity
    6. Interpersonal interactions
    7. Other
- Discuss your responses in groups.

NOTES



NOTES



NOTES



NOTES



NOTES



APPENDIX

SUGGESTED READING - BOOKS

- Barrett, L.F. (2018) *How emotions are made: The secret life of the brain*, Pan Macmillan: London. ISBN 978-1-5098-3752-6
- Campeggiani, P. (2023) *Theories of Emotions: Expressing, Feeling, Acting,* Bloomsbury Academic: London. ISBN 978-1-3502-9792-0
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- Wierzbicka, A (1999) *Emotions Across Languages and Cultures: Diversity and Universals*, University Press: Cambridge ISBN 0 521 59971 7

SUGGESTED READING - PAPERS

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- Niedenthal, P. M., Winkielman, P., Mondillon, L., & Vermeulen, N. (2009) 'Embodiment of emotion concepts', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96(6), pp. 1120–1136. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015574
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GLOSSARY

Affect
A general term for the experience and expression of emotion, often encompassing both feeling states and their outward manifestation.

Arousal
The level of physiological and psychological activation, ranging from low (calm, sleepy) to high (excited, alert).

Basic emotion
A small set of biologically innate, universal emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, fear) proposed to be shared across all humans.

Biofeedback
A technique that uses real-time data (e.g. heart rate, breathing) to help individuals become aware of and regulate physiological processes.

Circumplex Model of Affect
A model that organises emotions along two continuous dimensions: valence (positive–negative) and arousal (high–low energy).

Discrete emotion
The theory that emotions are distinct categories with specific neural and physiological patterns (e.g. anger, joy, disgust).

Facial Action Units (FACs)
A system for categorising facial movements based on underlying muscle activity, used to analyse emotional expression.

Formants
Resonant frequency bands of the vocal tract that shape vowel sounds and contribute to voice quality.

Frequency
The rate of vibration of a sound wave, measured in Hertz (Hz), perceived as pitch.

Fundamental Frequency
The lowest frequency of a sound, determining the perceived pitch of the voice.

Jitter/shimmer
Measures of vocal stability: jitter refers to small variations in frequency, while shimmer refers to variations in amplitude.

Prosody
The patterns of rhythm, stress, and intonation in speech that help convey meaning, emotion, and emphasis beyond the words themselves.

Paralanguage
The non-verbal elements of speech, such as tone, pitch, volume, pace, and vocal quality.that communicate emotion and attitude alongside spoken words.

Valence
The emotional value of a stimulus or experience, ranging from positive (pleasant) to negative (unpleasant).

RISK MITIGATION

Facilitators of this workbook must undergo training and becoming licensed before use. Training will include guidelines to mitigate the following risks to users:

Emotional vulnerability

Reflecting on personal emotional experiences may bring up difficult or unexpected feelings. Faciliators should supply adequate support to guide participants where needed to avoid users becoming overwhelmed or distressed.

Privacy and confidentiality concerns

Writing down and sharing personal experiences carries a risk that sensitive information could be exposed, especially if group boundaries are unclear or not respected. For this reason, writing in the journal is optional, although recommended, and written notes will remain in the possession of the participant.

Misinterpretation or judgement

Participants may feel misunderstood or judged when sharing culturally-shaped emotional experiences, which could lead to discomfort or reluctance to engage. To mitigate this, facilitators should provide a debrief after each section, encouraging discussion, open-mindedness, and tolerance among group members.

Cultural sensitivity risks

Discussions of cultural differences may unintentionally reinforce stereotypes or lead to oversimplification of complex identities. The facilitator must carefully guide group discussion, reiterating the complexity of individual expression of emotion even within cultural groups.

Power dynamics in groups

Differences in confidence, language ability, or social status may influence who feels able to speak, potentially silencing some voices. The facilitator must monitor this carefully, encouraging all participants to feel able to openly contribute.

Re-triggering past experiences

Reflective writing and discussion could unintentionally re-activate past trauma or negative experiences. Questions have been kept intentionally non-specific to avoid discussion of actual emotional events. Should negative reactions arise, workbook facilitators must ensure referral to a qualified professional.

Pressure to disclose

Participants might feel obliged to share more than they are comfortable with, particularly in structured group settings. The facilitator will reiterate with each exercise that sharing is optional.

Emotional carryover

Participants may leave sessions with unresolved emotions that affect their well-being beyond the session. To mitigate, this an extended mindful breathing exercise will be conducted by the facilitator before finishing the session.