

To what extent to which a vocal warm up combining approaches from singing and movement improves the vocal efficiency and confidence of professional and training actors

BMPF7008

Background, Aims, Objectives & Justification

- Actor & Theatre Facilitator for 8 years
- Work based learning informed my knowledge of vocal warm ups
- Theatre industry is arguably inaccessible and information is varied
- Little research available that explore multi-disciplinary approaches for the spoken voice
- Develop the most efficient vocal warm up for actors
- Better understand existing vocal pedagogues
- Clarify which approaches benefit warm ups for the spoken voice for other practitioners

Literature Review

- Pedagogical Texts - Rodenburg (2002), Stanislavski (1989) and Berry (2000)
- Early Research - Stanislavski (1989), Chekhov (1993)
- Recent Research - Rootberg (2013), Melton (2001), Manternach & Manternach (2019), Di Natale (2020)

Methodology

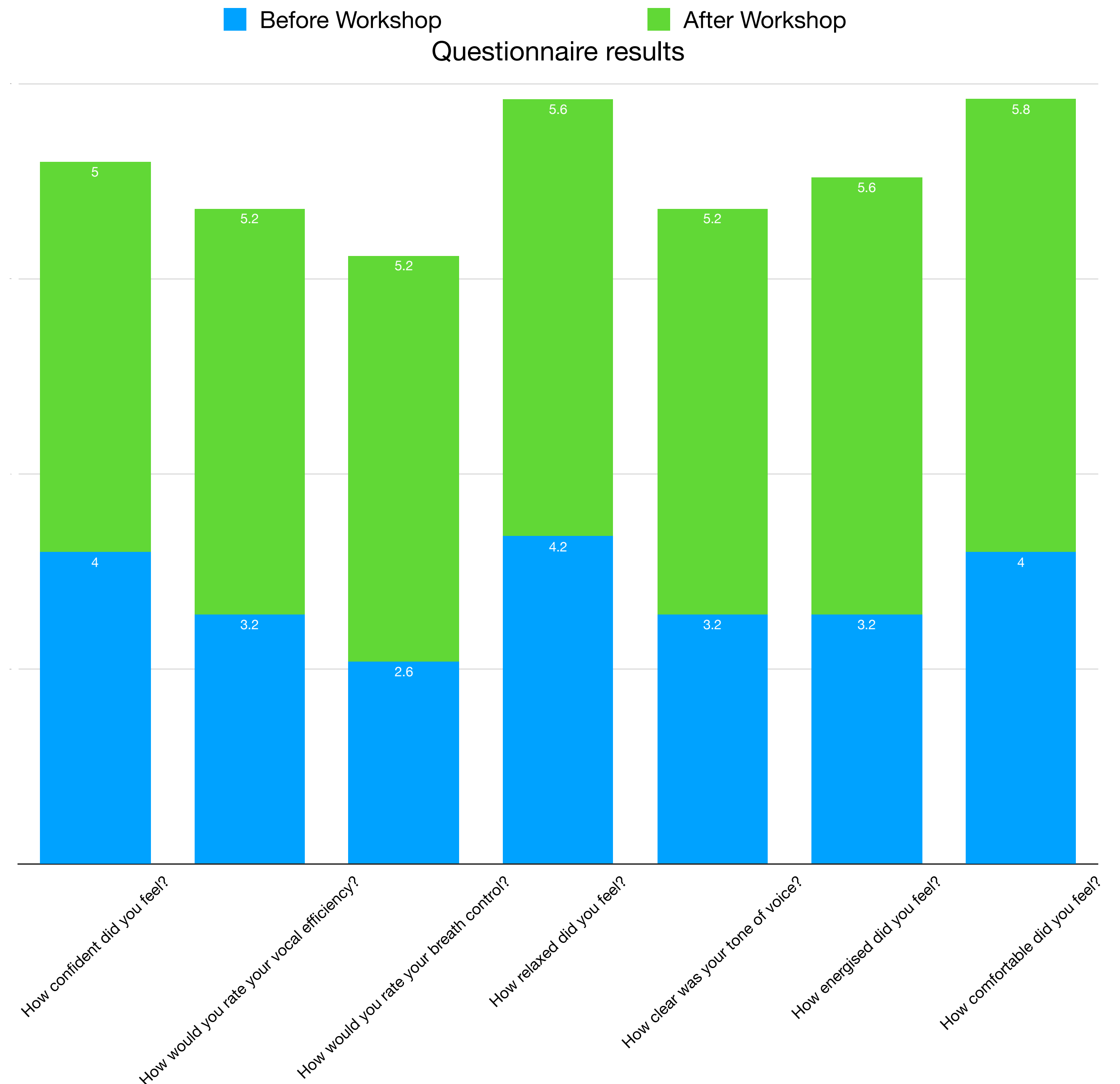
- Exploratory research study collecting both qualitative and quantitative data from myself as well as training and professional local actors
- Pragmatic approach focusing on participant experience
- Research Methods - Questionnaire, Interview & Reflective Notes
- Observing changes in vocal efficiency or confidence in participants
- Insider Research - Ethically collected data and reflected on workshop results

Outline of Methods

- Researched similar studies and noted relevant benefits of movement or singing based exercises
- Rootberg (2013) - asked participant's to measure self-perceived vocal changes before and after study
- Cook-Cunningham (2017) - use of basic physical movements
- Moorcroft (2012) - collected qualitative and quantitative data to triangulate results

Findings

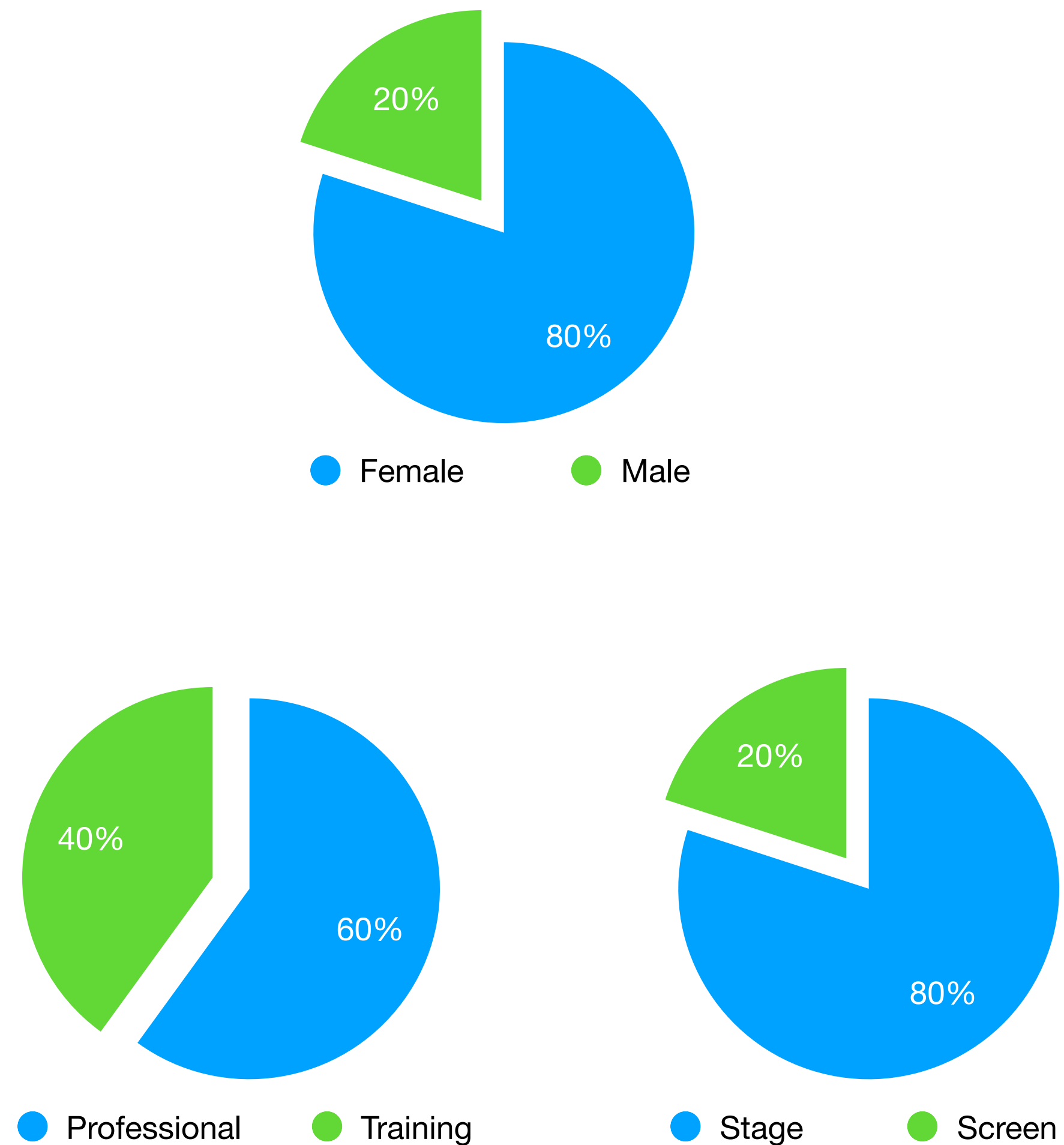
- Greatest increase - Breath Control
- Smallest increase - Confidence
- Anomaly - One participant had no increase in confidence



Findings

- 80% predominantly worked on stage
- 60% professional actors
- 80% female

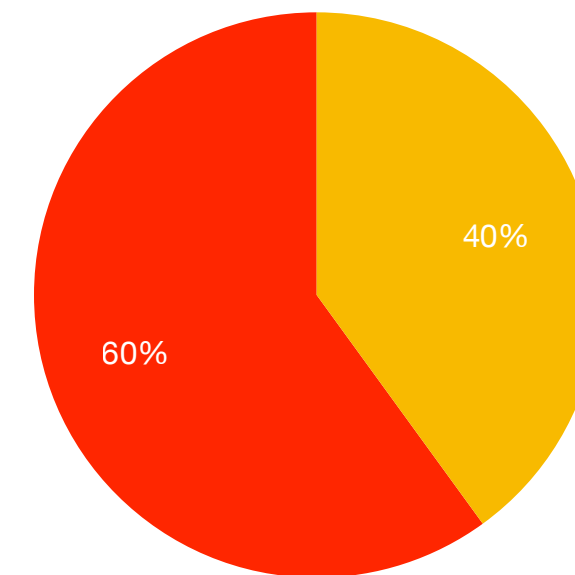
Fig 2. Participant data



Findings

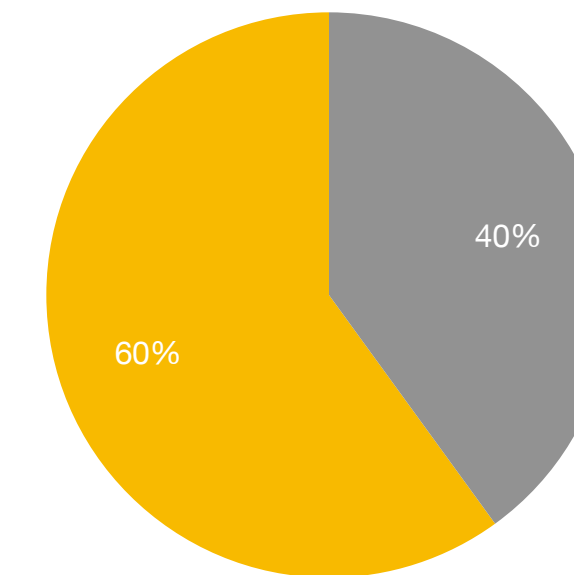
- Personal confidence questions showed higher results than confidence in vocal technique or caring for their voice
- One anomaly in Fig. 6 with one participant scoring low understanding of their voice compared to other high responses.

Fig. 3 On a scale of 1-6, how confident do you feel as an actor?



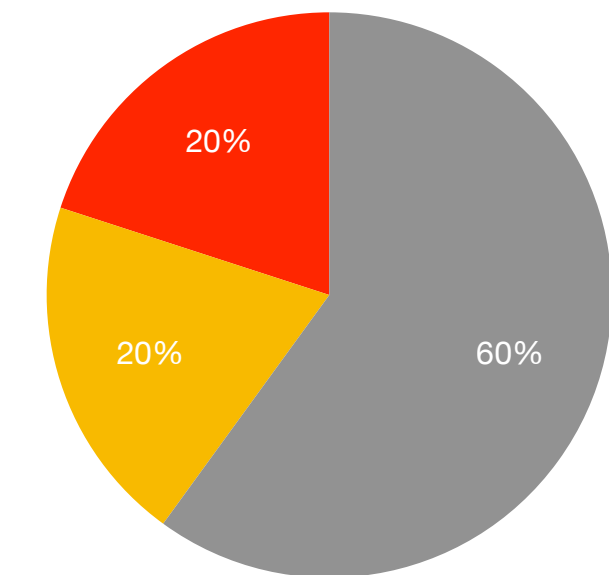
1 2 3 4 5 6

Fig 4. On a scale of 1-6, how confident do you feel managing your own vocal warm up?



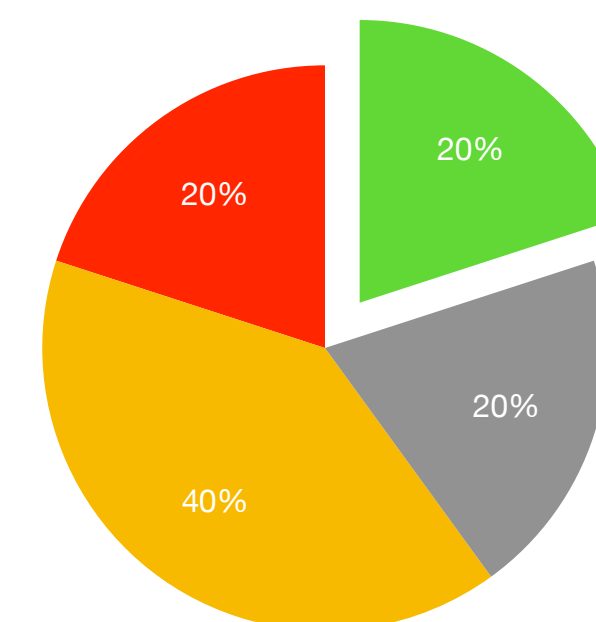
1 2 3 4 5 6

Fig 5. On a scale of 1-6, how confident do you feel taking care of your voice during rehearsals/ productions?



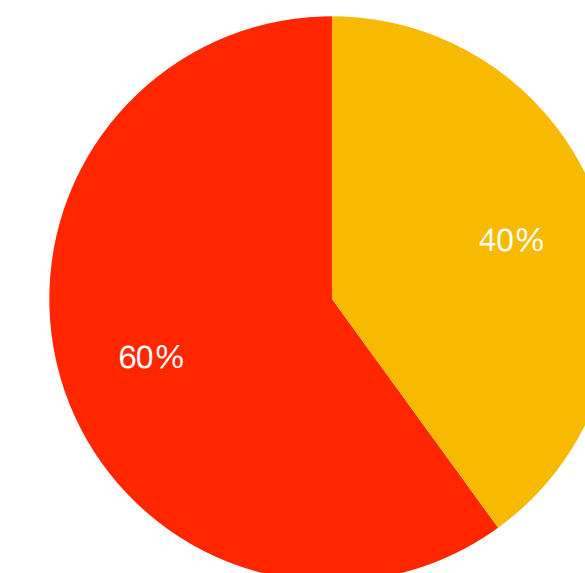
1 2 3 4 5 6

Fig 6. On a scale of 1-6, how well do you understand your voice and how it works?



1 2 3 4 5 6

Fig 7. On a scale of 1-6, on average, how confident do you feel after a vocal warm up?



1 2 3 4 5 6

Findings

- Aside from one anomaly, positive responses about the value of vocal warm ups
- Similarly to the previous slide, the lowest responses were recorded for questions concerning their personal understanding of looking after their own voice

Fig. 8 On a scale of 1-6, how efficient do you think vocal warm ups are for actors?

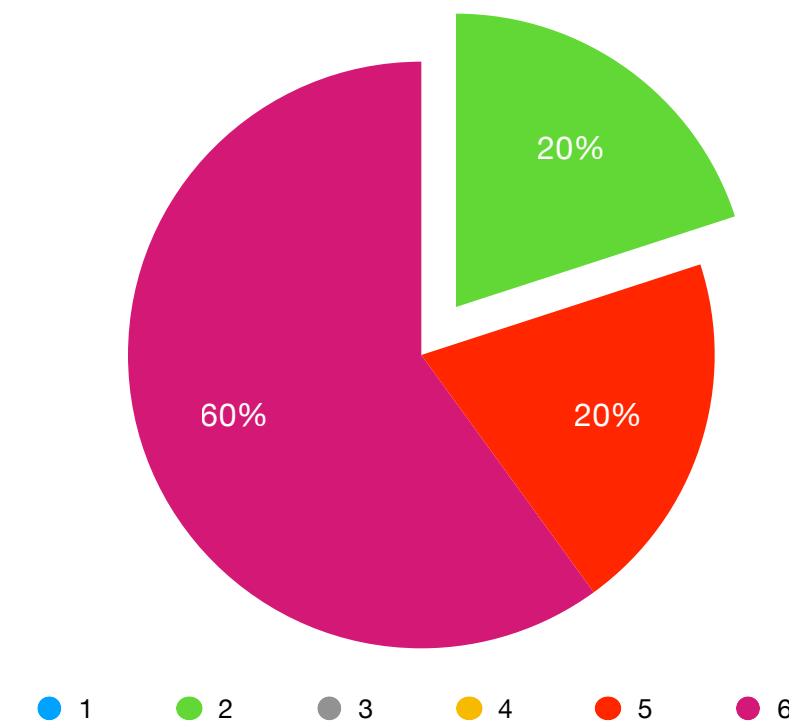


Fig. 9 On a scale of 1-6, do you think there is potential for vocal warm ups to improve?

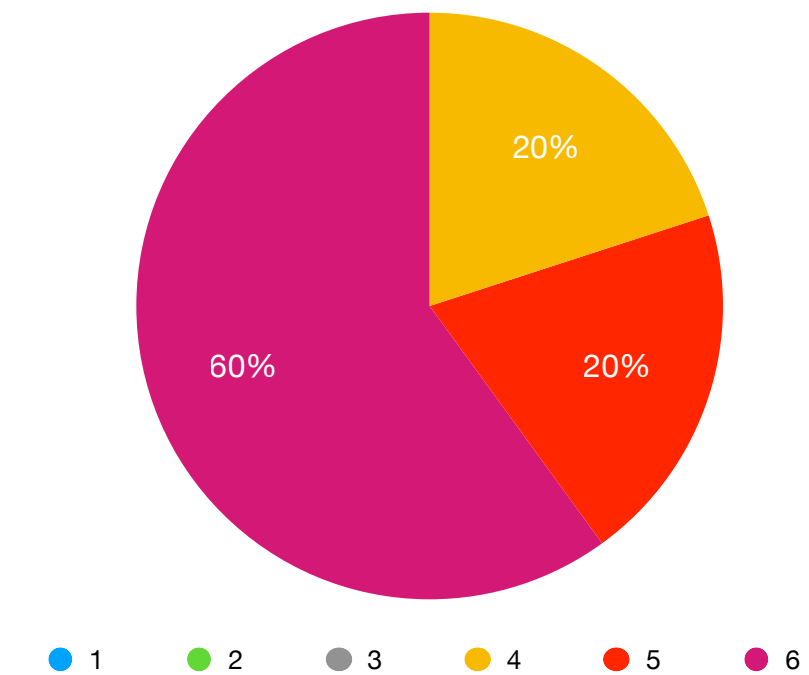


Fig. 10 On a scale of 1-6, how well do you understand why particular exercises are used in a vocal warm up?

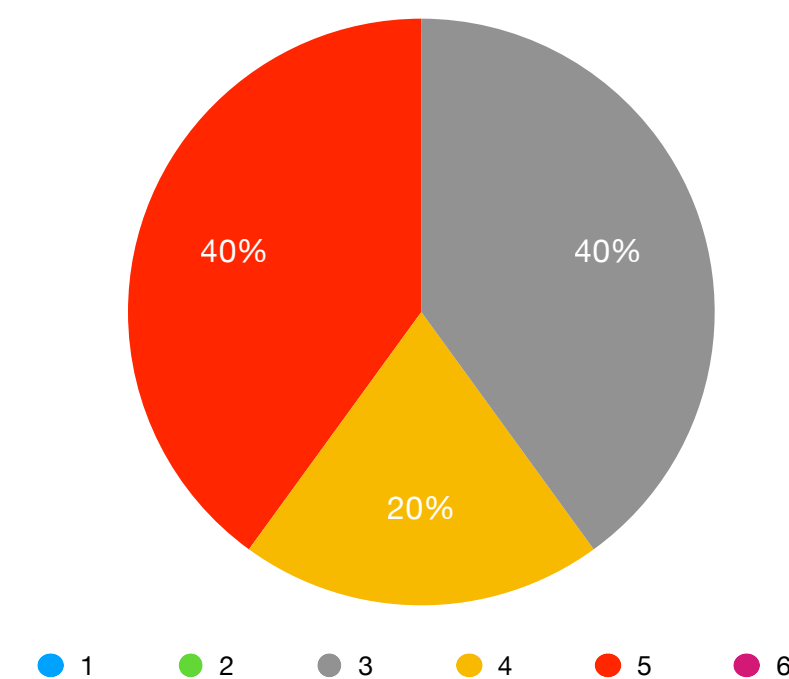
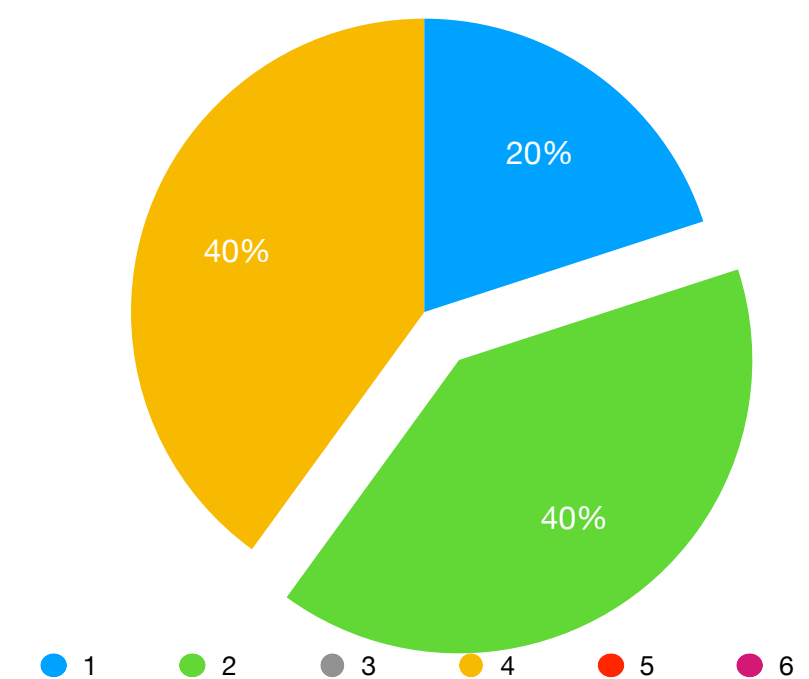


Fig. 11 On a scale of 1-6, how well do you understand which vocal exercises are most effective for you personally?



- Both myself and the participants noted an improved body to voice connection
- We both also showed interest in exploring vocal warm ups further
- A change in emotions, or mood, in participants was also noted
- Participants noted new discoveries about their voice, improving their technical understanding

Themes from Questionnaire Open Questions

Themes from Open Questions in the Questionnaire

Development - Made aware of personal difficulties, recognising changes in their voice

Engaged - 'I feel very relaxed and comfortable'

Interview Themes

Themes from follow up interview

Development - ready to step onto the stage, more confident

Connection - improved body to voice connection, feeling more grounded

Energised

Ongoing Research - plan to research more techniques, daily practice

Reflection

Reflective Note Themes

Themes from Reflective Notes

Emotions - Participants seemed more focused and calmer, happy and healthy, very relaxed

Connection - Psychological impact, vocal ease impacted the feeling of readiness

Ongoing Research - Break down what exactly is beneficial about this discipline, furthering their training

Health - Participants hadn't warmed up prior to the workshop, is it appropriate for those with pre-existing medical conditions?

Comparing my study to other research

- Current research agrees that body greatly impacts the voice (Loth & Pensalfini, 2021).
- Importance of meditative breathing (Curpan, 2020)
- Importance of psychological effect of warm up (Adelio, 2019)

Conclusions & Recommendations

- Data isn't conclusive but encouraging towards multi-disciplinary vocal warm ups
- Validity has been questioned due to small sample size
- Movement based exercises seemed to receive the most positive feedback
- Further study needed to explore the effects of singing and movement warm ups on the voice separately
- Achieved personal goals of developing understanding of vocal warm ups and theatre pedagogues

Further Considerations

- Is a multi-disciplinary approach suitable for participants with pre-existing medical conditions?
- Would a greater understanding of vocal warm ups inspire more research made for, and by, actors?
- Would a multi-disciplinary approach at drama schools make industry education more accessible?

Reflective Examination of Learning Experience

- Different approach to vocal warm-ups which improved my teaching
- Develop knowledge of theatre and vocal pedagogues
- Broadened understanding of how different performance disciplines connect
- Discovered new areas that affect the vocal warm up ie. meditative breathing
- Will apply new found knowledge to teaching and continue using a flexible facilitation style

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