

BMPF7008: Work-based Learning Project

Student no: 2116236

Emma O'Reilly, MA, CET

Accent Method in Singing:

A Singing teacher's Reflection on Literature and training

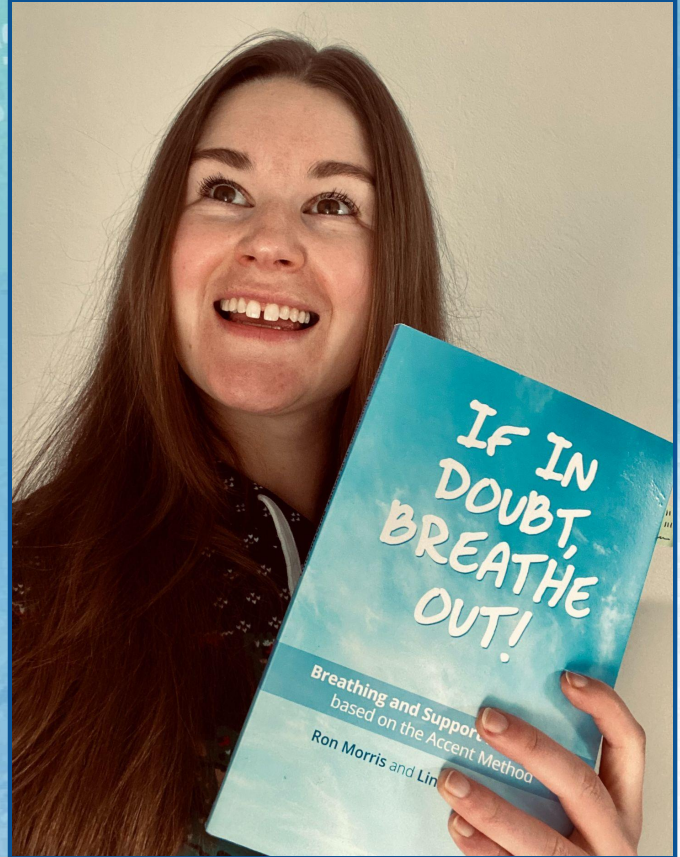
01

Research aims

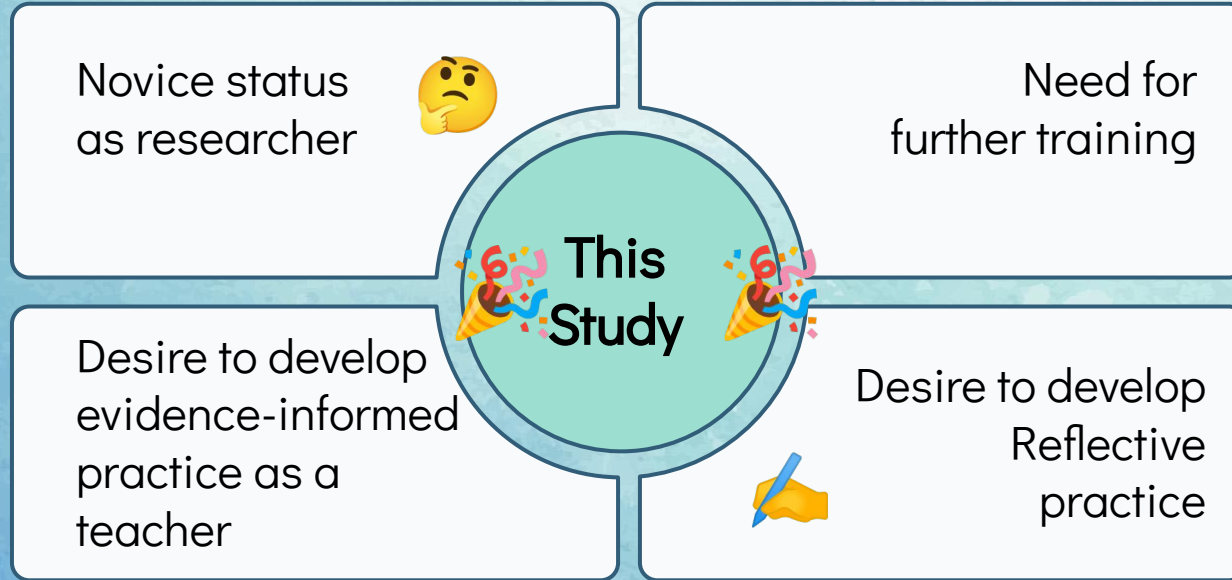
Why Accent Method? Why this study?

Me, Myself and Accent method

- Early career teacher
- No experience of long-term singing teaching (as a student or as a teacher) - Search for frameworks
- **Accent method** is recommended by Janice Chapman as a framework to teach breathing, and is supported by the evidence base. (Chapman, 2017; Morris and Hutchison, 2017))



Considerations for study



02 Methodology

Methodology



Literature Review

Learn about the Accent Method and breathing from Peer-reviewed literature, Pedagogical literature, and Grey literature, Online
(Addressed in findings)



Training

Seek out a Speech and Language Therapist (SLT), registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) to provide training



Research Journal

Keep a Journal to gather my observations about the learning process - ethnographic, subjective (Dey, 1993; Coen et al., 2018)

Analysis



Training

Initial Code

Open coding of entries 1-30, tentative categories based on frequency (Denscombe, 2010; Saldaña, 2016)

First Cycle

Holistic coding, open coding, comparison (Dey, 1993; Creswell and Creswell 2018)

Second Cycle

Eclectic: Pattern coding (InVivo), Subcoding, Analytic memos and frequency (Denscombe, 2010; Saldaña, 2016)



Research Journal

Analysis

Initial Cycle

Video log and notes from training, open coding (Jewitt, 2012; Saldaña, 2016)

First Cycle

InVivo, Axial Coding, Analytic memos (Denscombe, 2010; Saldaña, 2016; Creswell and Creswell 2018)

Second Cycle

Axial coding, holistic coding, creating diagrams (Dey, 1993, Saldaña, 2016; Creswell and Creswell 2018)

Third Cycle

Analytic Memos, subcoding, diagrams, theoretical coding (Coen et al., 2018)

03 Findings



Literature Review



Breathing

Abdomino- diaphragmatic breathing is natural, can be used in different genres of singing, directives can impact on breathing patterns



The Accent Method

A series of well-ordered, structured exercises that cultivate abdomino-diaphragmatic breathing.



Pedagogical Literature

Many Modern practitioners advocate for and recommend Accent Method. (although breathing types vary)



Literature Review

Phase 1: Ease, increased awareness, breath and fricatives through different postures

Phase 2: The Accent introduced for different breath pressures with fricatives and closed vowels. Building stamina and more refined control. With specific exercises.

Phase 3: Moving towards speech (Less related to singing)

Figure 1. Phase 1: Breathing
Adapted from Chapter 8 & 9,
Thyme Frøkjær & Frøkjær-Jensen
(2001)

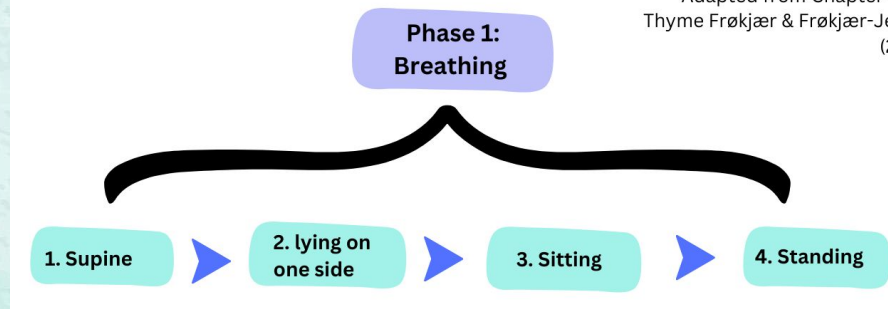
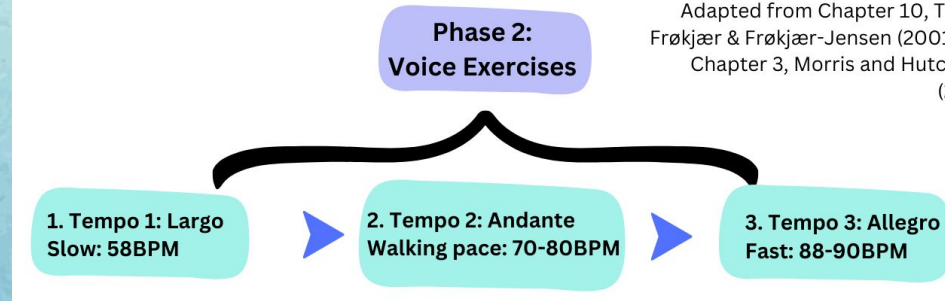


Figure 2. Phase 2: Voice Exercises
Adapted from Chapter 10, Thyme
Frøkjær & Frøkjær-Jensen (2001, and
Chapter 3, Morris and Hutchison
(2016)



Thyme-Frøkjær and Frøkjær-Jensen, 2001

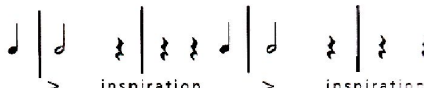


Literature Review

Phase 2: The Accent introduced for different breath pressures with fricatives and closed vowels. Building stamina and more refined control. With specific exercises.



Tempo I, Variation 2

Clinician: 3/4 

Client: 3/4 



Tempo III, Variation I

Clinician: 4/4 

Client: 4/4 

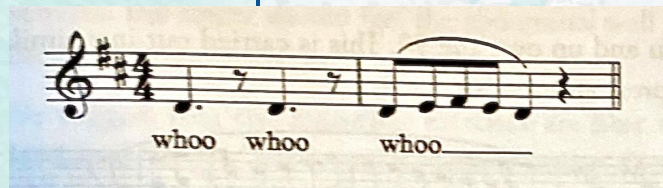
Tempo I and Tempo III examples taken from Thyme-Frøkjær & Frøkjær-Jensen, 2001, p.106 and 116.



Literature Review

Phase 3, modified
for singing:

Commencing with a
focus on airflow and
fricatives in modal
register.



**Janice Chapman's "Hey, Ha" series of
exercises** (Chapman, 2017, p. 314)



Training



The Participant

- 26 years of experience as a singing teacher, 10 as an SLT (HCPC Registered)
- Registered with British Association for Performing Arts Medicine (BAPAM).
- BA and PGcert in Music
- Published work used to inform clinical practice, Lectured with many singing, teaching and Speech and Language Therapy organisations
- Trained in The Accent Method with Sarah and Dinah Harris through the BVA.



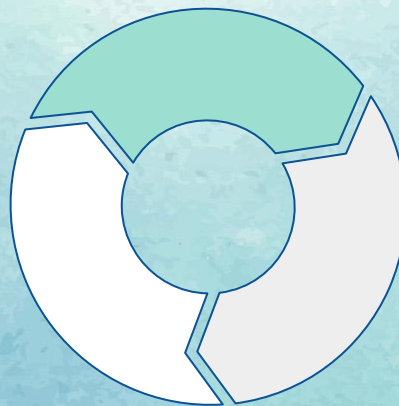
Training

The SLT's Underlying approach

Feedback

- Through observation of exercises
- Through direct reporting
- Making feedback loops in the body explicit to the student

Meet them where they are



- Trauma informed care
- Lifestyle - what can they reasonably incorporate?
- Pre-existing issues
- Success vs. Failure
- “Listen to their rhythm”.

Purpose

- Linked to the individual's aims and abilities
- Considering evolution through practice



Training

Insights from
SLT relevant to
Accent Method

Vocal issues

Applications of Accent Method in speech and singing

Demonstrations

Practice vs. Literature

Exercises and Advice



Training

Main takeaways

- The Accent method is not used in practice the way it appears in literature.
- All aspects and stages of The Accent method should be relevant to the individual.
- Clarification on parameters for healthy singing, consent, demonstrations of sound and movements
- Affirmation around touch, and procedures for consent.
- SLTs in the UK are not all trained in this method; many recommendations offered to me were for singing teachers rather than SLTs (even by experienced SLTs themselves).
- SLT working culture is different to the music industry.
- Many aspects of Accent method are already present in my practice.

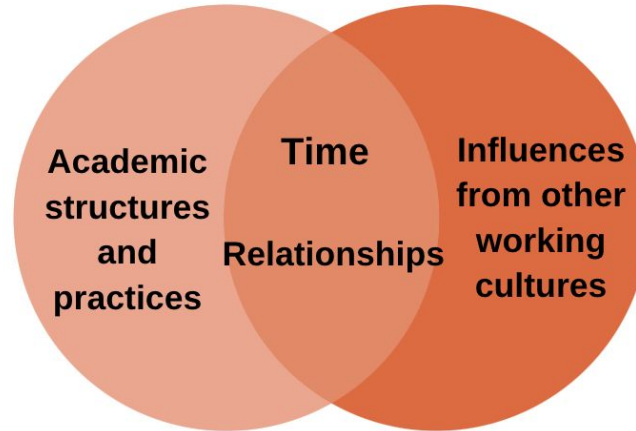


Research Journal

Practical concerns

Planning and
Reporting

Reflective Concerns





Research Journal

“The cart goes before the horse sometimes, because when you don’t know what a cart or a horse is, it’s understandable that you’d get them in the wrong order.”

“Trying to focus my reading on understanding the subject at hand...trying to find additional time to read more on reflection makes me want to cry. There is just too much I don’t know already.”

“I worry about my twin careers as teacher and artist - the money I need to put into making my own music, vs. the money I need to take courses and grow as a singing teacher.”

“I was not expecting to be treated with kindness, or frankly, respect, by anyone I communicated with”.



Research Journal

Time

“A big part of my trepidation with time...is that as a novice, I don't feel I have the experience to assess how long it will take.”

“I have so little time tomorrow; an appointment in the morning, a tutorial in the afternoon, teaching,...and a Patreon song to get done into the mix. I - again - feel under confident about this.”

Relationships

“It's so helpful to be able to ask about those [communication] boundaries and see someone model how to look into them.”

Linked to concerns with CPD, Kennedy (2011)

04 Conclusion

References

Chapman, J., (2017) *Singing and Teaching Singing: A Holistic Approach to Classical Voice*. San Diego: Plural Publishing.

Coen, L., Mannion, L., Morrison, K., (2018) *Research Methods in Education*. 8th Ed. Abington: Routledge.

Dey, I., (1993) *Qualitative Data Analysis: A User-friendly guide for social scientists*. New York: Routledge.

Jewitt., C., (2012), *An Introduction to using Video for Research*, London: National Centre for Research Methods

Kennedy, A., (2011), 'Collaborative continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers in Scotland: aspirations, opportunities and barriers', *European Journal of Teacher Education*. 34 (1), pp. 25-41.

Morris, R., Hutchison, L., (2017) *If In Doubt, Breathe Out!: Breathing and Support for Singing based on the Accent Method*. Oxford: Compton Publishing

Saldaña, J. (2016), *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. 3rd Ed. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Thyme- Frøkjær, K., Frøkjær-Jensen, B. (2001), *The Accent Method: A Rational Voice Therapy in Theory & Practice*. Bicester: Speechmark.