

Can voice teachers decode the puzzle of poor pitch singers?

PART A	2
PROJECT PROPOSAL	2
<i>Context.....</i>	2
<i>Justification.....</i>	3
<i>Intended Impact</i>	3
<i>Methodology</i>	4
METHODS	4
<i>Literature Review</i>	4
<i>Quantitative Questionnaire</i>	5
<i>Qualitative Interviews</i>	6
<i>Ethical Considerations</i>	6
<i>Expected Learning Outcomes.....</i>	7
LITERATURE REVIEW:	8
<i>Introduction</i>	8
<i>The Role of Auditory Feedback in Music Learning.....</i>	8
<i>Is Auditory Feedback Disorder Relevant to Voice Teachers?</i>	10
<i>Benefits of Musical Training on Cognitive Decline.....</i>	11
<i>Development of an “Inner Ear”</i>	11
<i>What about Visual Feedback?</i>	13
<i>Best Practices for Poor Pitch Students.....</i>	13
<i>How can the Auditory Feedback Loop Help?</i>	14
PART B: RESULTS QUANTITATIVE SURVEY RESULTS.....	15
<i>Introduction</i>	15
<i>Demographic Information</i>	15
<i>Education</i>	16
<i>Professional & Employment Data.....</i>	18
<i>Perceptions on Teaching Tone Deaf/Poor Pitch Students.....</i>	20
<i>Survey Questions on Auditory Feedback Loop (AFL)</i>	26
<i>The Importance of Internal Audiation.....</i>	28
STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE SURVEY	29
<i>Statistical Methods:</i>	29
<i>Results: Summary Statistics.....</i>	29
INTERVIEW RESULTS – QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS	34
<i>Interview Coding and Analysis using Claude AI</i>	35
REFLECTION AND APPLICATION TO PRACTICE:	38
REFERENCES	40
APPENDIXES	43
APPENDIX A: QUALITATIVE CODING FRAMEWORK: VOCAL PEDAGOGY INTERVIEWS	43
APPENDIX B: KEY THEMES FROM IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW ANALYSIS.....	45
APPENDIX C: CODING CHART: VOCAL PEDAGOGY INTERVIEWS	47
APPENDIX D: THEMATIC ANALYSIS RESULTS - VOCAL PEDAGOGY INTERVIEWS	51
APPENDIX E: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM.....	55
APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS	56

<i>Transcript – Participant A –HS/Lower College Musical Theater Director UK</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>Transcript – Participant B –College Voice Faculty in USA</i>	<i>67</i>
<i>Transcript – Participant C – Professional Singer in USA, USA Trained.....</i>	<i>81</i>
<i>Transcript – Participant D – MM and MA Ed, DMA USA trained, 45+ years teaching.....</i>	<i>89</i>
<i>Transcript – Participant E – UK trained singer, recovered from injury.....</i>	<i>109</i>
<i>Transcript – Participant F – Canadian Voice Teacher 15+ years experience – Studio Owner.....</i>	<i>118</i>
<i>Transcript – Participant G – US based Choir Director Trained – now voice teacher</i>	<i>129</i>
<i>Transcript – Participant H –Australian Trained teacher based in Asia</i>	<i>141</i>
APPENDIX G: QUANTITATIVE SURVEY.....	162
APPENDIX H: ETHICS FORM	177

Part A

Project Proposal

Context

Approximately 10% of the population can be classified as a poor pitch singer (Dalla Bella and Berkowska, 2009). Teaching poor pitch singers (PPS) has been shown to be difficult for voice teachers due to lack of pedagogical literature (Waxer, 2024a) and the difficult nature of teaching students to sing on pitch (Turøy, 2018). In a previous pilot study (Waxer, 2024a) which included a questionnaire completed by 25 voice teachers, a strong aversion to teaching poor pitch students was discovered. Additionally, the study found a correlation between increased teacher education being associated with an aversion to teaching poor pitch students. In a literature review conducted by the researcher, (Waxer, 2024b) the auditory feedback loop was examined and proposed as a potential pedagogical method for voice teachers to aid in their understanding of the neurological processes that exist in the process of matching pitch. In Waxer (2024a), leading pedagogical textbooks including Miller (1986), Chapman (2016) and Appelman (1967) were examined and the researcher determined that less than 1% of the textbooks were dedicated to the discussion of pitch or vocal pedagogical methods to help students improve their pitch.

This study was designed to test whether teachers were as averse to teaching PPS as shown in the pilot study and to potentially discover pedagogical solutions that could be helpful to voice teachers. This study is similar in format, in that it is a mixed method study and will include a questionnaire, interviews and a literature review. The participation goal will be over 100 respondents for increased statistical accuracy and a broader literature review which will focus on the role of auditory feedback in both instrumental and vocal

music learning and to also examine auditory processing disorders and whether they could potentially be a factor in poor pitch matching skills.

Justification

The researcher has been pursuing a master's degree from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David and has been keen to gain knowledge in vocal pedagogy to improve her professional practice. The researcher of this study primarily works as a voice teacher and works with children, teens and adults. The researcher has worked with poor pitch singers in her vocal studio which presented a great challenge as the researcher's professional training had not included any guidance in teaching poor pitch students. The research findings of this study could potentially be used to create a methodology that could be useful to voice teachers and singers. Earlier studies such as Waxer (2024a) unearthed a large gap in pedagogical literature regarding students who have trouble matching pitch. The researcher has received positive feedback from the voice teacher community regarding the research on teaching poor pitch students and many teachers have validated the fact that teaching poor pitch students can be challenging in the voice studio.

Intended Impact

In Waxer, (2024a), surveyed teachers showed a strong aversion to teaching poor pitch students. This study will try to determine why teachers have an aversion to teaching poor pitch students. In Waxer (2024a), teacher education was considered a factor. This study will also test potential differences in teacher preferences based on gender, age, country of residence and will study whether voice teachers who intended to be professional singers and fell back onto teaching voice have different preferences than voice teachers who completed university studies with the intention of becoming a voice teacher. Teacher preferences towards teaching various age groups will also be tested to see if there is any correlation to education or other demographic information.

The findings could help determine whether music performance programs should include more pedagogical courses for their students to better prepare singers to work as voice teachers in the professional world. The last section of the survey focuses on teacher knowledge of the auditory feedback loop and teacher's beliefs regarding causes of pitch matching. The researcher hopes to see if the larger participant sample size will show similar

results of Waxer (2024a) in which teachers overwhelmingly expressed an aversion to working with poor pitch students.

Methodology

The research will be conducted through the paradigm of constructivism and will be a mixed-methods study that employs qualitative and quantitative methods. Constructivism is a framework that allows for relativity and allows for multiple realities that could be discovered through qualitative research (semi structured interviews) and qualitative analysis (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The mixed-method approach will combine both interpretivist and positivist paradigms, since positivism can be applied to real life applications through observation analysis (Mackenzie et al., 2006). The results of the quantitative survey data will be analyzed through statistics to test various hypotheses. The literature review will be a scoping review, which according to Mak and Thomas (2022), can determine gaps in literature and determine the range of available and relevant literature.

Methods

Literature Review

A literature review will be conducted to find relevant studies on auditory feedback in music learning which will include studies on instrumental music learning and performance, such as a study conducted on violin learners (Blanco, Tassani and Ramirez, 2021) which tested the importance of auditory feedback in violin learning to determine potential relevance to the field of vocal pedagogy. Additionally, studies which examine musicians improved auditory processing compared to non-musicians will be included. Speech conditions such as stuttering have been linked to auditory feedback disorders (Lincoln, et al., 2006) and therefore searches on auditory processing disorder and auditory feedback disorder will be included as well.

Key Word Searches
Auditory Feedback
Auditory Processing
Auditory Processing Disorder
Auditory Processing Feedback

Vocal Pitch Accuracy
Auditory Processing in Musicians
Inner Hearing
Internal Audiation

Quantitative Questionnaire

The researcher will design and distribute an online questionnaire for voice teachers which will reach a minimum of 100 respondents to gain insight on teacher demographics, educational backgrounds, various teacher opinions and preferences to better understand preferences and/or aversions for teaching poor pitch singers. In the last section of the survey the participants will be asked about their knowledge of the auditory feedback loop and the degree to which they rank their own knowledge. Respondents will be recruited through Facebook groups for Voice Teachers. Summary statistics will be presented as well as detailed statistical analysis.

Question Format	Types of Questions using format
Short Answer open response	Demographic questions.
Multiple Choice – Single Selection	Demographic questions including education and employment information, teaching and professional information.
Multiple Choice – Multiple Selections	Demographic questions including education and employment information, teaching and professional information.
Yes/No Single Response	Stating choice to be interviewed
Single choice ranking questions	Preference for teaching voice to various populations, desired career path, belief of causes of poor pitch
Likert Scale Questions: Allows for respondents to select from a scale of 1-5 indicating a range of responses from strongly disagree to strongly agree.	Questions on teaching attitudes towards tone deaf and poor pitch students. Questions relating to teacher knowledge of the auditory feedback loop

Qualitative Interviews

The researcher will conduct interviews to provide a deeper insight into teacher experience and opinions. In the researcher's previous study only four interviews were conducted so the researcher hopes to conduct 5-10 interviews for a larger sample size. The interview participants will be recruited from the quantitative survey participants who specified interest in participating. Interviews will be conducted on the Zoom video platform. The interviews will be recorded through Zoom and the meeting transcripts will be created through Microsoft Word online and then analyzed with Anthropic Claude AI in order to identify themes and codes. The use of generative AI in academic research has been found to be a helpful tool to aid qualitative research (Ahmed *et al.*, 2024). Harvard University Business School has published guidelines for citing AI in research including a general acknowledgement of AI and recommends indicating verbatim prompts and responses with quotation marks (*Citing Artificial Intelligence, Baker Library, 2024*).

Ethical Considerations

The subjects of the study will be adult voice teachers. Written consent will be obtained from each survey participant before the survey is administered. Participation in the survey is voluntary and participants are instructed that they can withdraw from the study at any time. Privacy concerns will be honored by keeping names and emails and other sensitive information completely anonymous. Additionally, the research follows the guidelines established by the UWTSD Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice and the UWTSD Research Data Management Policy.

Participants will be recruited through international voice teacher Facebook groups of which the researcher is also a member. Due to the researcher being a voice teacher, the survey and interviews will be considered insider research. Hermann (1989) identified potential shortcomings with insider research, such as the researcher lacking the ability to see the larger picture, but the researcher will consult with her academic advisor in order to attempt to remedy any potential challenges.

Expected Learning Outcomes

- To examine broader music pedagogy to see if previous auditory feedback studies on instrumental musicians has relevance to vocal pedagogy.
- To survey a larger sample group of voice teachers to determine if pilot study results are aligned with broader study and to discover more statistical conclusions based on extended study.
- To identify level of knowledge of the auditory feedback loop held by a population of voice teachers.
- To assess teachers' views of their knowledge, training, ability and willingness to teach poor pitch students and to potentially identify factors which alter these views.
- To take research findings to potentially improve pedagogical teaching tools for teachers.
- To show improved research skills and academic writing skills compared to earlier research and papers.
- To conduct an improved work-based research project in comparison to the researcher's first pilot study and to apply lessons learned from pilot study which collected and analyzed data on human subjects.

Project Phase	July	August	September	October	November
Project Proposal					
Research					
Literature Review					
Designing Questionnaire					
Collect questionnaire responses					
Conduct Interviews					
Transcribe Interviews					
Analyse & Code Interviews					
Write Draft					
Write Final Draft					

Literature Review:

Introduction

This study was designed to further vocal pedagogy research on the topic of teaching poor pitch singers but also to provide information to professional voice teachers. This literature review will provide a scoping overview of the importance of the auditory feedback loop in music learning and music performance and how auditory feedback is particularly important for students learning to sing. Waxer (2024a) showed a gap in the research in vocal pedagogical textbooks, so this review will broaden to include studies in the field of instrumental music. Waxer (2024b) focused on the auditory feedback loop and its potential application in the voice studio, therefore this study will examine studies in which the importance of auditory feedback has been applied to music learning.

The Role of Auditory Feedback in Music Learning

Musicians rely on auditory feedback to sing and maintain accurate pitch. The vocal instrument is adjusted as needed based on auditory feedback (Keller, Novembre and Hove, 2014). Auditory feedback also allows for timing precision which is necessary to sing or play in rhythm whether solo, accompanied, or as part of a musical ensemble. Auditory feedback enables singers to control their dynamics and self-identify how emotion is conveyed in their performances (Juslin and Laukka, 2003).

Auditory feedback also plays an important role for instrumental musicians. In Pfordresher and Palmer (2006), three experiments were conducted on pianists during piano musical performances in which auditory feedback was altered in the form of prelays and delays in keypresses of the piano. These prelays and delays altered perceived feedback as different pitches than played on the keyboard (Pfordresher and Palmer, 2006). The findings can be summarized into four outcomes of altered feedback:

1. Performance Disruption. Due to the altered feedback, pitch accuracy decreased, due to the proximity of the sequence events.
2. Anticipatory Bias: The anticipation of future events created issues in the process resulting in less accuracy.

3. Planning: Planning was compromised by the presence of non-current events in the sequences.
4. Compensatory Changes: pianists adjusted their planning due to the disruptive feedback and increased errors in the opposite direction of the feedback.

Finney and Palmer, (2003) studied the role auditory feedback alterations would make on piano performance pitch accuracy. Pitch accuracy was more impacted than timing by the altered feedback. Additionally, prelays and delays led to increased errors in pitch production highlighting the importance of auditory feedback in musical performance. Ultimately, auditory feedback during music learning had a significant impact on proper learning but when feedback was removed from memorized performance the pianists were able to still properly play their pieces without great error, showing that memory for music recall is primarily motoric. If this also applies to singing it would imply that singers could rely on motor coordination to maintain proper pitch when exposed to environments in which auditory feedback may be masked or removed.

Highben and Palmer (2004) conducted a study on pianists in which pianists had to perform unfamiliar music without auditory or motor feedback. Pianists with the highest self-ratings of ability to play by ear scored the highest on an administered aural skills test and were able to better perform from memory without auditory feedback. These results showed that pianists with stronger aural skills could better compensate for the lack of auditory feedback during practice (Highben and Palmer, 2004). Their success was due to the ability to form an accurate auditory image in the absence of auditory and motor feedback.

In addition to the piano, studies were conducted on violin learners to test the role of auditory feedback versus visual feedback alone. In Blanco, Tassani and Ramirez (2021), researchers created a system that provided different types of feedback to violinists as they played. The provided sound feedback that consisted of normal violin sounds and motion feedback that would show the player how their bow was moving with a visual representation on a screen. The study found that visual motion feedback did improve pitch accuracy even for less experienced players, however sound feedback was still very important for pitch accuracy. Additionally worth noting is that sound feedback of an actual violin generated more accurate results compared to synthesized sound. Similar to the study of pianists,

trained musicians can compensate for lack of auditory feedback through use of motor and visual feedback, therefore voice teachers can implement more visual feedback to help their students maintain proper pitch and also focus on a student memorizing “placement” or motor coordination rather than just auditory feedback.

A similar finding regarding the importance of sound source in pitch matching was found in Granot *et al.* (2013) when singers were asked to sing pitches generated by a recorded human voice compared to a live human voice. Singers were more accurate in pitch matching when matching the live voice, similarly to the finding in Blanco *et al.* (2021), that violinists were more accurate when expected violin sounds were heard versus synthesized sounds of expected pitch. This could be a good argument for why “in person voice lessons” could be superior to online or prerecorded lessons as its easier to match a live voice especially for those who struggle with pitch.

Is Auditory Feedback Disorder Relevant to Voice Teachers?

Surveyed teachers in this study were asked to choose between five causes of poor pitch singing and overwhelmingly selected “Lack of ability in hearing pitches & interpreting sound in brain” as the number one cause followed by “Registration issues (i.e. head voice/chest voice changes)” implying that the inability to sing on pitch is more of a brain interpretation issue than a motor control issue. Jones and Strierner (2007) studied whether visual feedback would improve speech disruption such as stuttering. Stuttering has been shown to be caused by a misalignment of auditory feedback, in which the rate at which the speaker hears they own voice causes them to stutter (Howell, 2004). Devices such as the SpeechEasy™ were designed to enhance fluency in stutterers by delaying the rate at which the speaker heard their own voice and by shifting the frequency of the feedback to make it easier for the speaker to hear, however in Howell’s (2004) review he questioned the reliability of these devices and whether they treated the underlying cause of stuttering in the first place.

Auditory Processing Disorder (APD) is defined as a difficulty in listening despite having normal hearing (Alanazi, 2023). People with APD are diagnosed by having issues with auditory discrimination, sound localization, auditory pattern recognition, temporal

discrimination, temporal ordering and other similar issues regarding the brain's ability to process sound (Alanazi, 2023). Only 2-3% of children are reported to have APD whereas some studies find up to 70% of older adults qualifying for the diagnosis (Alanazi, 2023). Children with APD can have problems understanding language or struggling to understand speech or sound in noisy environments or when masked by music, for example. Suggested environmental modifications to improve comprehension in APD are to use sound amplification systems, reduce background noise and manage echo reduction through use of soft furniture, installed wall boards and acoustic ceiling tile.

Perhaps mitigation efforts for APD could be mimicked in the voice studio. Loud ambient noise such as fans and air conditioners could make it more difficult for students to isolate desired pitches and could lead to improvement in pitch accuracy. (Parbery-Clark *et al.*, 2011). Interestingly, there is no “gold standard” test for APD which could add to the frustration of voice teachers trying to find a cause of poor pitch in their students. Voice teachers could administer the Montreal Battery of Evaluation of Amusia (MBEA) which can diagnose amusia and is available free of cost online (Nunes-Silva and Haase, 2012). However, teachers do not have access to the further range of testing used by audiologists and speech pathologists to diagnose APD which would limit a voice teacher's ability to make any formal diagnosis.

Benefits of Musical Training on Cognitive Decline

Musicians are shown to have increased auditory processing skills compared to non-musicians and is explained by increased neuroplasticity thought to be a product of training rather than biology (Kyrtsooudi *et al.*, 2023). Trained musicians have been shown to have greater speech-in-noise perception compared to non-musicians which seems to minimize the effects of age-related auditory decline (Parbery-Clark *et al.*, 2011).

Development of an “Inner Ear”

Many people and scholars are amazed that Ludwig von Beethoven was able to continue to compose music while experiencing hearing loss and eventually the total loss of hearing. (Markel, 2019). The concept of “inner hearing” is essential to understand how hearing exists

in the brains of musicians as an interpretation of sound in the lack of auditory feedback (Covington, 2005). Musicians gain the ability to “play by ear” through development of mental aural templates allowing them to visualize and mentally manipulate sound, improving aural skills and musical performance (Haston and McPherson, 2022). Success in sight singing, the ability to sing sheet music notation without hearing the example first, is determined by prevalence of a higher working memory capacity and the initial age that music study began, regardless of the number of years of musical training (Pomerleau-Turcotte *et al.*, 2021). The discovery of the importance of music learning in early childhood led to a study analyzing ten choral textbooks which found that the majority of the textbooks focused on sight-reading and singing techniques but most neglected to address the challenge of teaching students to hear internally (Floyd and Haning, 2015). Waxer (2024a) came to similar conclusions from reviewing vocal pedagogy textbooks to find prevalence of guidance on teaching pitch accuracy and found the concept of teaching students to sing on pitch completely missing. Audiation, as defined by Gordon (1989) is defined as “when we are hearing in our minds music for which the sound is no longer or never has been physically present”. The majority of choral conductors and educators felt their undergraduate music education did not properly prepare them to teach students to sight-read (Floyd and Haning, 2015). The Kodaly Method of music education places an important emphasis on developing the “inner ear” and does so by emphasizing the importance of teaching children to sing by using local folk melodies (Göktürk-Cary, 2012).

Perhaps the most confusing concept for voice teachers instructing poor-pitch singers would be that the voice teachers must emphasize the student’s development of their “inner ear”, or implementing ear training, to teach them to sing on pitch. The job of the voice teacher, music educator or choral conductor should be to teach the concept of inner hearing to students who likely did not develop this skill in early childhood leading to their labeling as a “poor pitch singer” in adolescence or adulthood. Renown vocal pedagogists and their publications such as (Appelman, 1967), (Doscher, 1988), and (Vennard, 2018) do little in teaching voice teachers how to teach singers to sing on pitch. Most of traditional vocal pedagogy is focused on the mechanical application of singing which involves controlled and coordinated breathing, steady pressure of air through the larynx and specific vocal tract shaping to produce the desired pitches. While auditory feedback is essential for students to learn to sing with others in a choral setting or to sing with live or recorded accompaniment,

trained singers often rely on physical sensations of “placement” and feeling resonance in certain parts of their face and bodies in order to sing with a consistent voice. (Bottalico, Graetzer and Hunter, 2017). In Bottalico et. al. (2017) trained singers who were evaluated before and after three years of advanced vocal training improved their pitch accuracy when presented with a number of masking conditions, showing an increased reliance on internal auditory feedback.

What about Visual Feedback?

Many studies have been conducted on singers to test the impact of visual feedback on pitching accuracy. Starting in 1902 at the University of Iowa with the invention of the Tonoscope, a device that displayed pitch accuracy on a screen and allowed researchers to study visual feedback’s impact on ear training (Seashore, 1940). Welch (1984) tested how real-time visual feedback and the variety of activity improved pitch-matching skills in children and found both to be impactful. An important aspect of a few studies (Welch, 1985, Welch, 1984, Hutchins and Peretz, 2012) was that knowledge of results (KR), for example, participants being aware of their accuracy while singing, was an important indicator of success in improvement in pitch matching tasks. Therefore, visual aids may be a helpful tool for voice teachers trying to help students especially when positive knowledge of result is provided.

Best Practices for Poor Pitch Students

Based on the studies cited above a voice teacher could aid PPS in the voice studio by minimizing background noise, providing real-time visual feedback by helping students hear themselves better through studio conditions or amplification (Fadel *et al.*, 2018). Improved musicianship skills have also been shown to increase pitch accuracy but ultimately the development of the “inner ear” through ear training and building aural skills will help students improve their internal audiation (Welch, 1985)

Hutchins and Peretz (2012) emphasized the importance of motor learning and mapping for pitch accuracy as students were able to match pitch more accurately with a slider tool than when asked to match pitches with their own voices. Therefore, voice teachers must continue to help their poor pitch students improve the motor skills used in singing such as

breath control, coordination of larynx, and forming of the vocal tract in addition to extensive ear training exercises.

How can the Auditory Feedback Loop Help?

Voice teachers can use the auditory feedback loop as a checklist to check where their poor pitch students have deficits.

AFL Stage	Definition	Implication for the Voice Studio
Auditory input	Braun Janzen and Thaut (2019) dedicate a chapter in the Oxford Handbook of Music and the Brain to the “Cerebral Organization of Music Processing” and describe that auditory feedback begins when acoustic signals reach the ear.	Are students able to properly hear the sound input? Is there any background noise masking the sound? Are their ears impacted by any congestion or sickness?
Perception	The brain translates acoustic signals into sound, the predominant theories Place Theory and Volley Theory (Yost, 2008)	Do students have a sense of internal audiation? Have they developed their inner ear? Teachers can spend more time playing or singing pitches to their student and giving the student time to perceive the sound internally.
Auditory Motor Mapping	How the brain tells the voice how to produce a sound (Chenausky <i>et al.</i> , 2023).	Training motor mapping would be exercises and practice that students must repeat to properly coordinate their bodies to sing. This would include breathing, control of the larynx, tongue position and tension and vocal tract shaping.
Memory	The brain must remember a set of melodic pitches, rhythms and words before it can coordinate to sing.	Helping students train their ability to remember pitches and melodic sequences. A similar concept to perception but memory must happen once an input pitch is no longer played or once a song has been learned and the student must sing from memory.
Motor Planning and Implementation	The auditory motor-brain connection that coordinates body to sing (Braun Janzen and Thaut, 2019).	Teachers aid students in motor planning and implementation through repetition and visualization.
Motor Output	The final product, the produced voice.	The motor output is the end product of the AFL but all of these steps happen at once in a loop while a student is actively singing, as they are receiving auditory feedback of their own singing voice while actively planning the next pitches and rhythms.

Conclusion

Upon completing the literature review section of my study, I designed my questionnaire to include questions about auditory feedback to gauge level of teacher knowledge. By gauging the current knowledge level, and interest level in learning more about AF I hope to see if interest in auditory feedback follows any teacher preference towards teaching poor pitch

students. Do teachers who have been successful with poor pitch students have a better understanding of auditory feedback?

Part A Word Count: 4290

Part B: Results

Quantitative Survey Results

Introduction

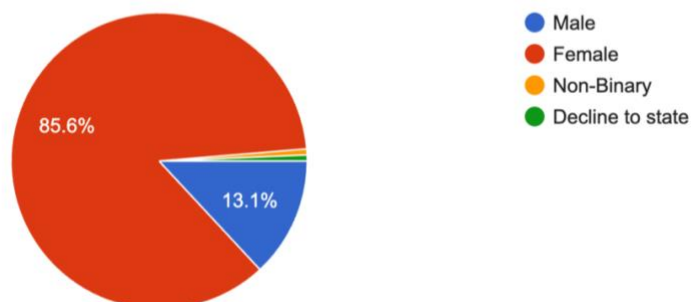
The survey was designed to follow up on results from Waxer (2024a) in which a pilot study of 25 voice teachers was conducted. Waxer (2024a) delivered the jarring result that voice teachers strongly preferred not to work with poor pitch students and their aversion increased with greater education. For this study, the quantitative survey was designed to reach a minimum of 100 participants for the results would have greater statistical significance. Questions were divided into several categories: demographic information, teaching experience and career preferences and then finally a section regarding poor pitch students

Demographic Information

Participant Gender

153 participants completed the quantitative survey. 85.6% of survey respondents reported to be female, 13.1% male and 1.3% either declined to state or selected non-binary as their gender.

Gender
153 responses



Location

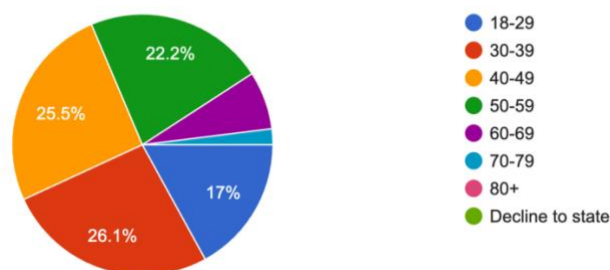
Two participants did not disclose country of residence. 71.9% of respondents lived in North America, 17% live in the UK or Ireland, 4.6% live in Continental Europe, 4.6% reside in the Asia Pacific Region and just 1.3% of respondents reside in Africa.

Region	Number of Respondents
Africa	2
Asia/Pacific	6
Continental Europe	6
North America	110
UK and Ireland	27

Participant Age

The largest age group represented by survey respondents was age 39-39 which made up 26.1% of the survey respondents, followed by 40-49 year olds accounting for 25.5% of total respondents. 22.2% of the respondents reported to be 50-59 years old and 17% reported to be 18-29 years old. Only 9.2% of survey respondents were older than 59 years old.

Age
153 responses

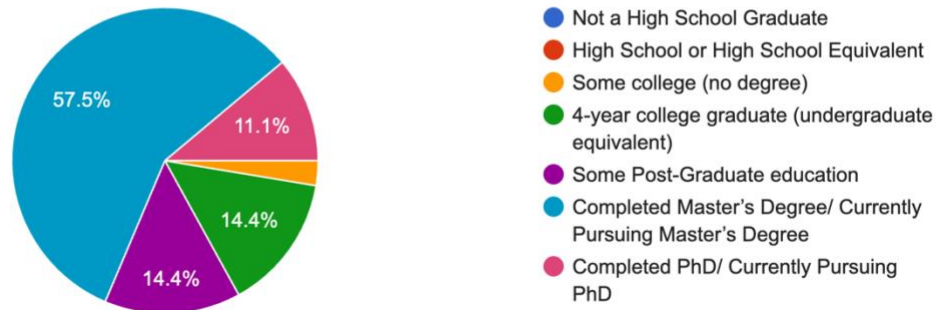


Education

The majority of survey respondents, 57.5%, have either completed a master's degree or are currently in pursuit of a master's degree. 14.4% have completed an undergraduate degree and 11.1% have either completed a PHD or are pursuing a PHD. 14.4% of respondents reported to have some non-specified post-graduate education.

Which of the following best describes your highest education achieved?

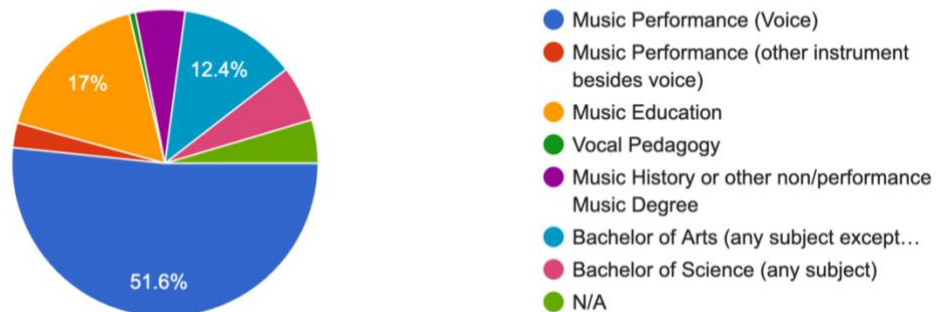
153 responses



The majority of survey respondents (51.6%) reported having majored in vocal performance for their undergraduate education. The second largest group (17%) studied Music Education and the third largest demographic represented, 12.4% reported to have a bachelor of arts degree in a non-music field.

Which of the following best describes your Undergraduate University Major

153 responses

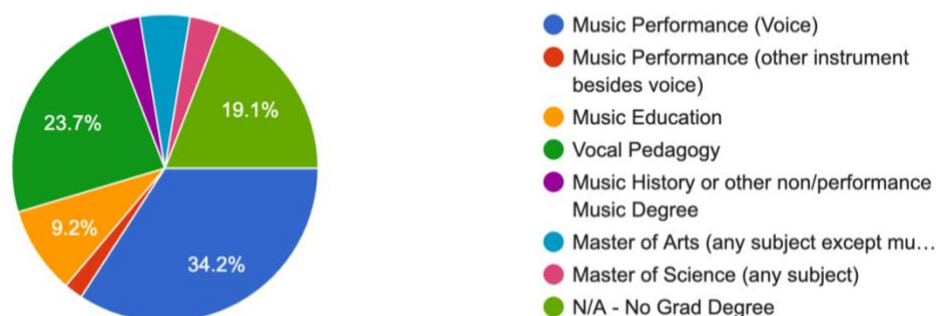


Graduate Degree

Of 152 responses (one was left blank), 29 did not have a graduate degree. 52 respondents reported studying vocal performance with 36 studying vocal pedagogy. 14 studied music education and 5 studied music history.

Which of the following best describes your Graduate Degree (Earned or in Progress)

152 responses



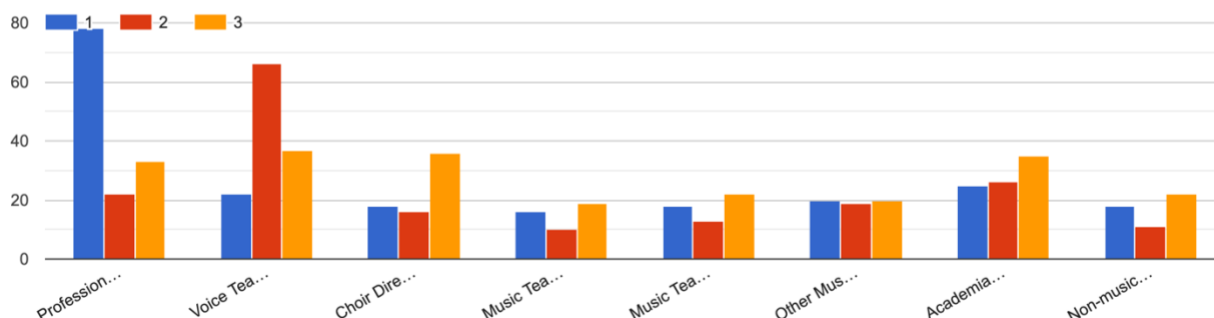
Professional & Employment Data

Desired Career at onset of higher education

Teachers were asked to rank their three most desired careers from at the time their musical training and/or secondary education began. 78 of the 153 respondents (50.9%) stated professional singer as their top career choice compared to only 22 of 153 respondents selecting voice teacher (14.3%) as their top career choice. More respondents (25, 16%) chose academia as their top career choice over voice teaching, choir directing (18, 11%) and music teaching in either primary (16, 10.4%) or secondary schools (18, 11.7%).

This question was important because I wanted to test whether teachers who wanted to be teachers like teaching poor pitch students and whether they have a greater understanding of vocal pedagogy and the role of auditory feedback in pitch matching.

What was your desired career when you began your musical training and/or post-secondary education?: (Rank top 3, with 1 being your most desired career path)

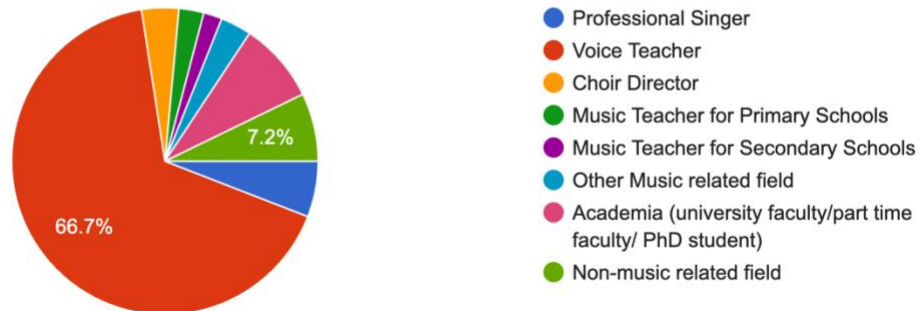


Current Primary Employment

Teachers were asked to state their primary employment. This question gives us information to test if current employment type changes one's preference for teaching poor pitch students.

Which best describes your primary employment?

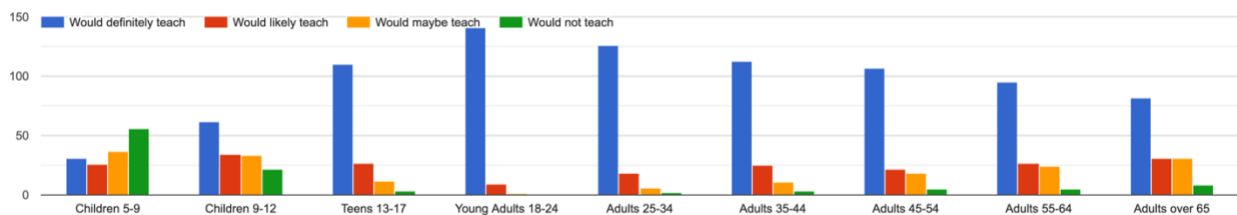
153 responses



Ages of Students Teacher Would Teach

Only 31 of respondents would definitely teach children ages 5-9 years old only making up 20% of total respondents. Exactly double, 62, or 40% of respondents would teach children ages 9-12. However there is a big discrepancy between those who would teach children under 13 and those who would teach adults, such as 94% of surveyed teachers stating that they would definitely teach young adults ages 18-24.

Please Rank your preference for teaching voice lessons to the following populations:

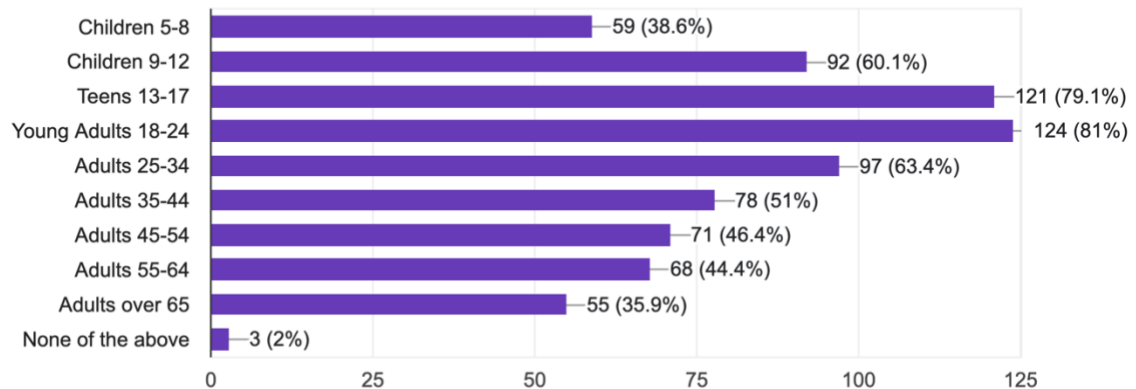


Populations Currently Taught

Interestingly 59 respondents stated that they are currently teaching or have taught within the past 6 months children 5-8 years old, but only 31 of respondents stated that they would definitely teach that age group.

Which Populations do you currently teach/taught music lessons within the last 6 months (select all that apply):

153 responses

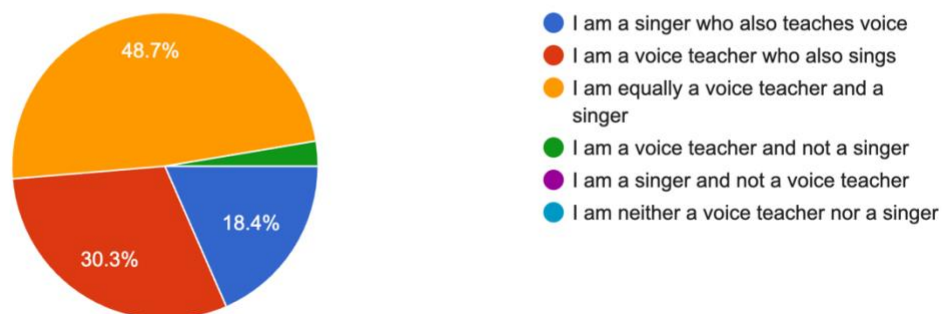


Do respondents consider themselves singers or teachers?

Respondents were asked if they identify as a teacher, a singer or both. Interestingly 48.7% of respondents considered themselves equally a teacher and singer, whereas 30% considered themselves a voice teacher who also sings and 18.4% considered themselves singers who also teach voice. 2.6% considered themselves neither singers or voice teachers.

Please select the statement you most identify with

152 responses



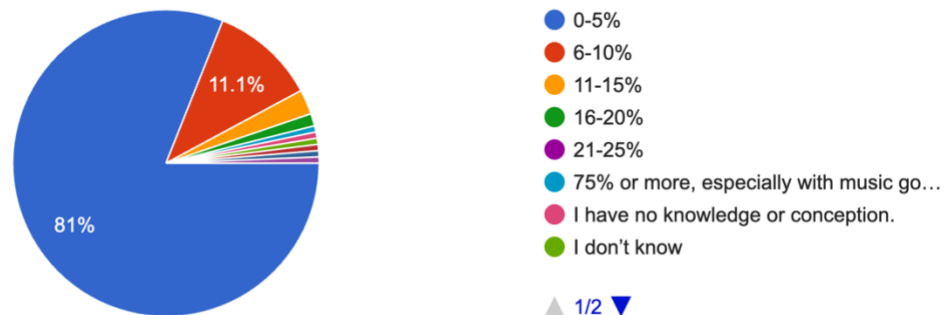
Perceptions on Teaching Tone Deaf/Poor Pitch Students

4% of the general population is thought to have congenital amusia (Dalla Bella and Berkowska, 2009). 81% of my survey respondents currently identified this statistic and 19%

of the respondents either answered incorrectly or that they did not know. The goal of this question was to determine if there was any correlation from incorrect knowledge and teacher education and/or attitudes towards teaching poor pitch students.

Based on your own understanding, what percentage of the population is tone deaf (has congenital amusia)

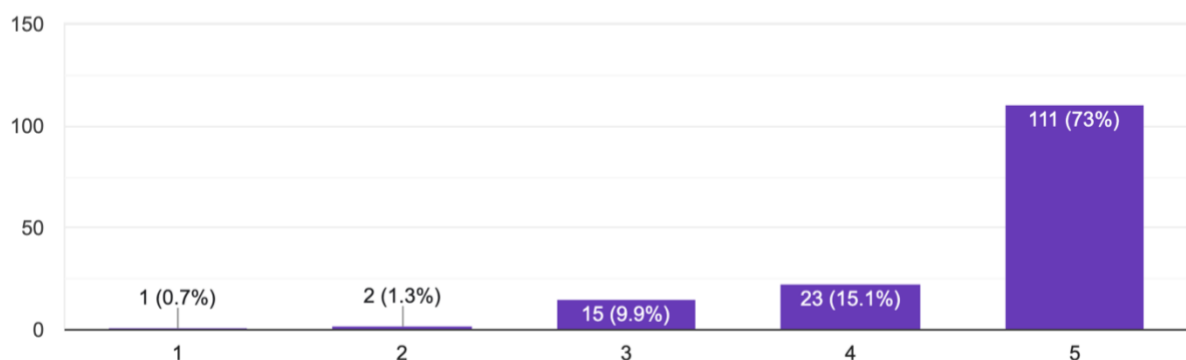
153 responses



The Apgar scale of 1 to 5 was used to indicate a range of Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). I will share the results of the survey and then explain how they relate to one another.

Poor Pitch Singers without congenital amusia can learn to sing with more accurate pitch

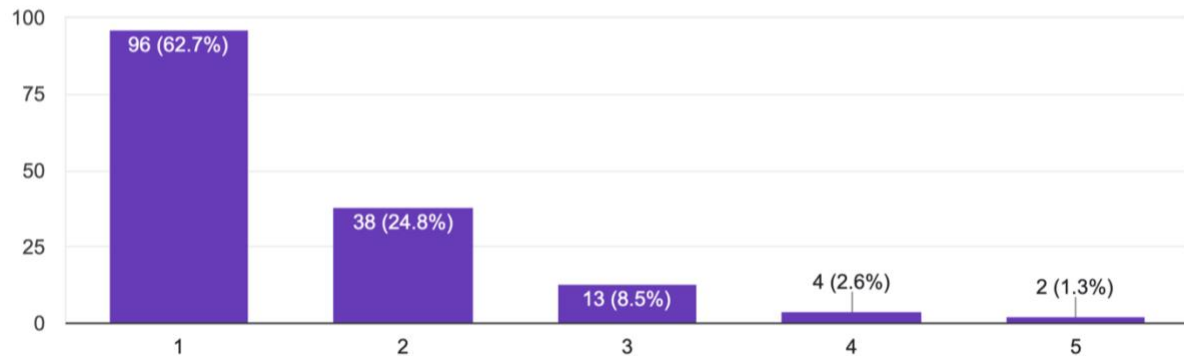
152 responses



The large majority of surveyed teachers (73%) strongly agreed that poor pitch singers without congenital amusia could learn to sing with more accurate pitch. A slightly lower percentage (62.7%) strongly disagreed with the statement that they believe there's nothing I can do to help a tone deaf student improve their pitch matching ability, implying that teachers believe they can even help those who are tone deaf.

I believe there's nothing I can do to help a tone deaf student improve their pitch matching ability.

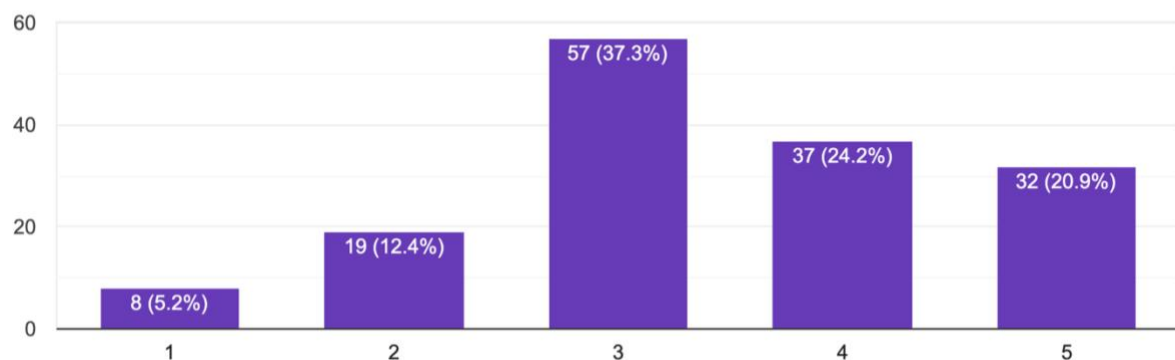
153 responses



When asked if most teachers could help a tone deaf student, I received a more even distribution with the majority choosing 3, the neutral option. This would seem to imply that surveyed teachers had a greater view of their own abilities compared to other teacher's abilities.

I believe that most voice teachers can help a tone deaf student

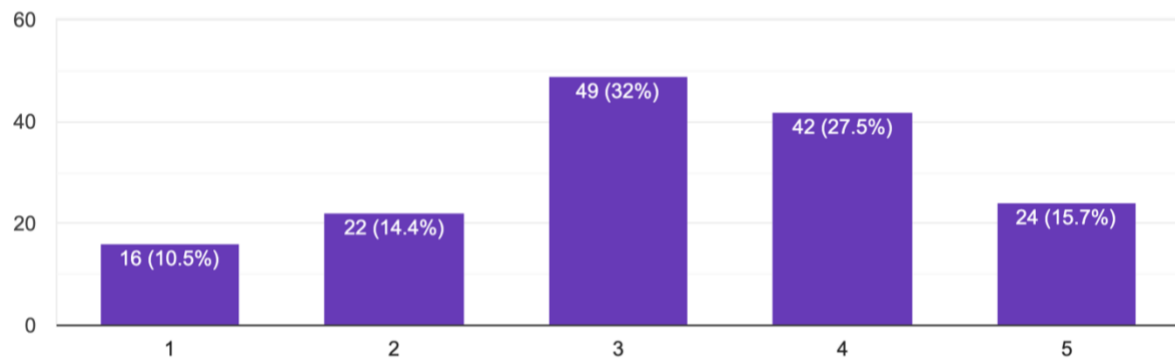
153 responses



Only 15.7% of surveyed teachers “strongly agreed” with the statement “I enjoy teaching voice students who struggle with pitch matching”. 27.5% selected 4 as an option which is agree, but not strongly and the majority (32%) selected 3 neither agree or disagree with the statement. These findings do sharply contrast with my previous pilot study (Waxer 2024a) in which teachers preferred working with students who had other vocal issues in comparison to teaching poor pitch students.

I enjoy teaching voice students who struggle with pitch matching.

153 responses

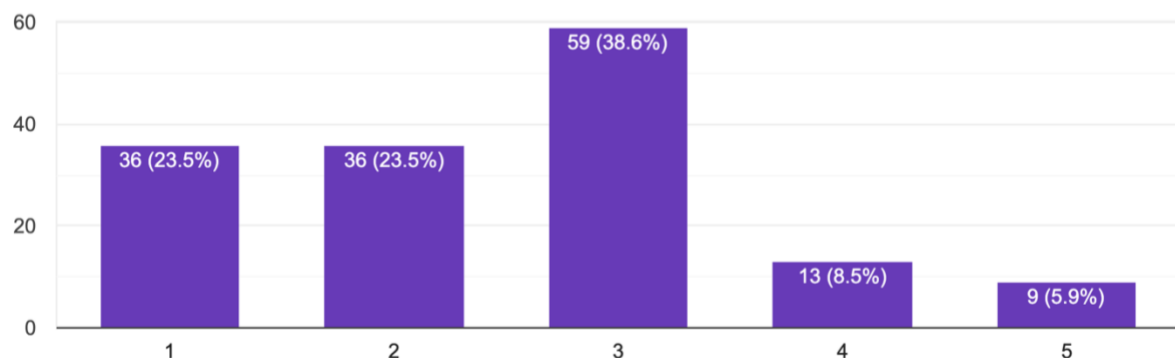


When asked if they enjoyed teaching voice students who struggled with pitch matching, only 15.7% strongly agreed and 27.5% agreed. Negative responses totaled 24.9% of the survey respondents, with the majority of participants choosing option 3, indicating neutrality. From this result I conclude that although teachers believe they have the ability to help poor pitch students, it does not mean that they enjoy the work.

The question of “I specialize in teaching voice to singers than have trouble matching pitch or are considered poor pitch singers”: yielded the following responses: 47% of respondents either strongly disagreed or disagreed. 38.6% were neutral and only 22 of the total responses (14.4%) indicated that they had a specialty in the area of poor pitch students by selecting option 4 or 5 which correspond to “agree” and “strongly agree”.

I specialize in teaching voice to singers that have trouble matching pitch or are considered “poor pitch singers”

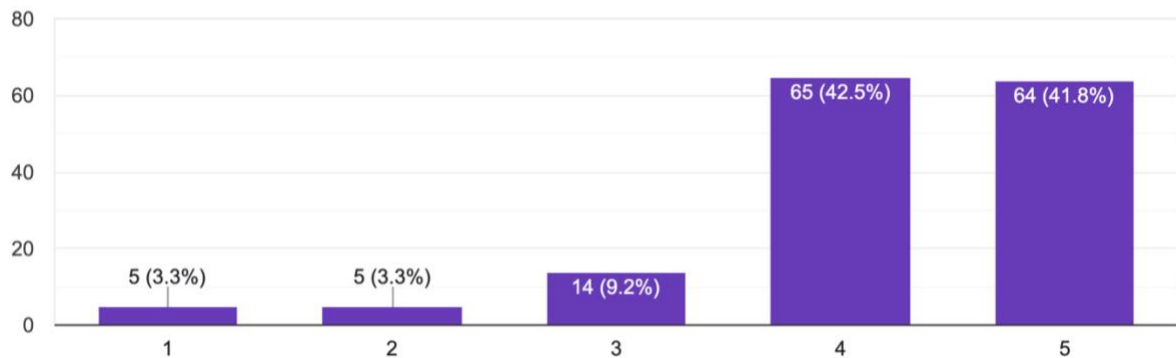
153 responses



A striking majority of respondents believed they had the skills necessary to help a poor pitch student (84.3%), showing a strong self-confidence compared to their views of the abilities of their voice teacher peers.

I believe I have the skills necessary to help a non amusic poor-pitch singer improve their ability to sing pitch accurately

153 responses

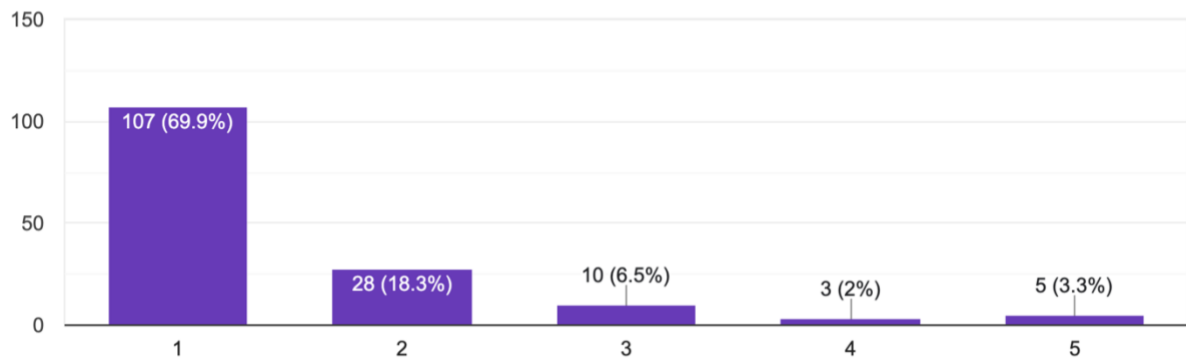


Only 15 respondents of 153 stated that they disagreed with the statement of “*I would like to improve my ability to help students with pitch matching deficits*”, indicating no desire for improvement.

Only 5.3% of survey respondents agreed with “*I usually will not teach students who have poor pitch matching abilities*”, the majority of respondents (88.2%) disagreeing, implying they would teach students with poor pitch matching abilities.

I usually will not teach students who have poor pitch matching abilities

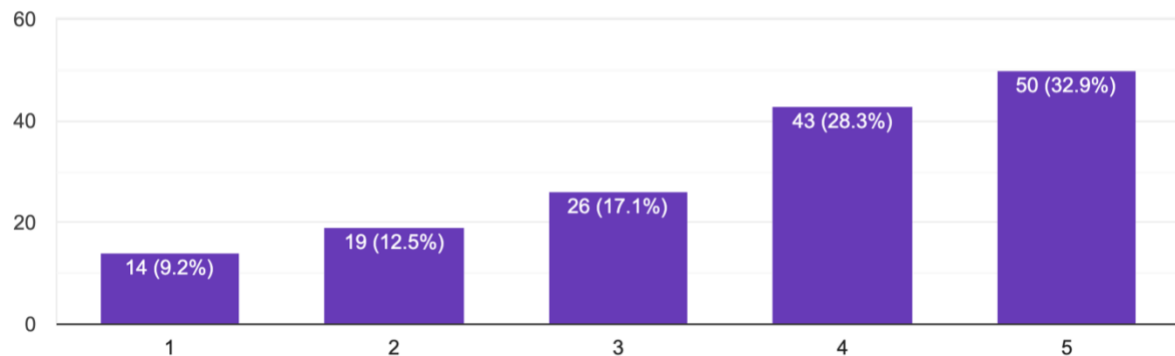
153 responses



61.2% of survey participants indicated that they would teach a tone-deaf student.

I would teach a voice student who is a tone deaf

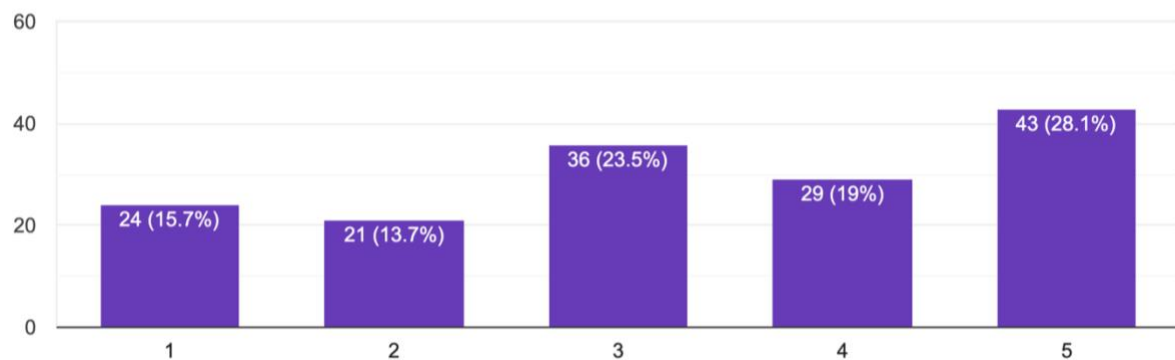
152 responses



A greater number of surveyed teachers indicated that they would teach a poor pitch singer without congenital amusia (83.5%). The data seems to suggest that an overwhelming majority of teachers would teach poor-pitch students and a small majority would teach tone-deaf students. However, that does not mean that the teachers enjoy it. When asked if teachers would still choose to work with poor-pitch students if they had a long waiting list of clients and no financial incentive to, only 47.1% indicated that they would still be willing to work with poor pitch students if money was not an issue.

If I already had enough clients and a long waiting list of clients I would still choose to work with poor-pitch singers

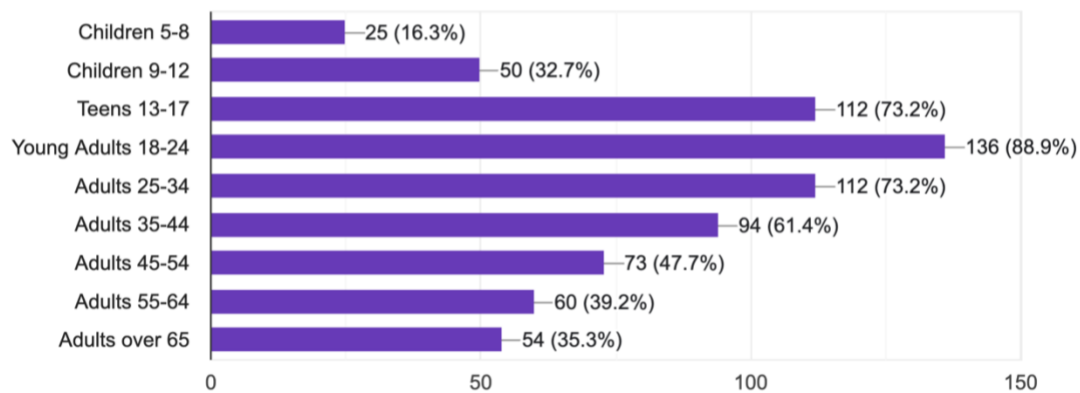
153 responses



When money or procuring clientele is not a consideration, age group preferences became very clear. The smallest amount of surveyed teachers, just 25 and 16.3% would be willing to work with young children ages 5-9. 50 respondents. 32.6% of respondents would teach older children ages 9-2.

If money/income was not a consideration I would prefer to work with the following populations
(check all that apply)

153 responses



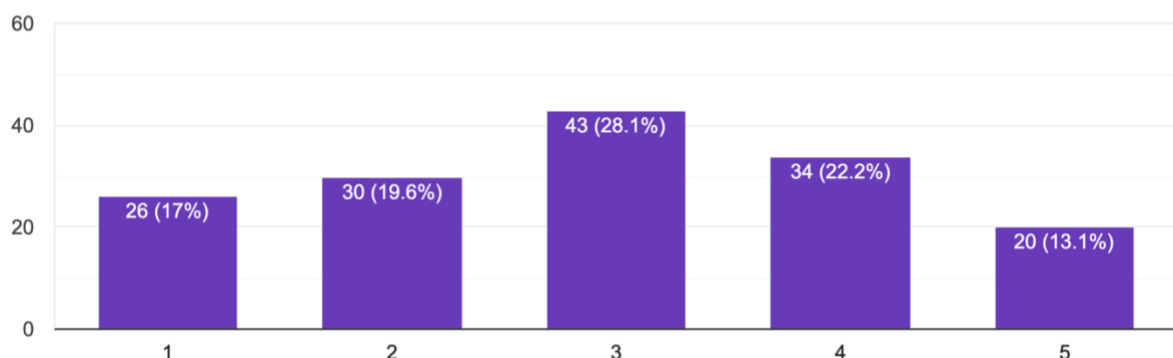
88.9% of respondents would teach young adults ages 18-24 and equal percentages of 73.2% would teach both teens 13-17 and adults 25-34. Each sequential decade saw a drop off in the number of teachers willing to work with that age group, however more respondents were willing to teach the oldest age group of adults over 65 than any age group below the age of 13.

Survey Questions on Auditory Feedback Loop (AFL)

My original intention was to examine the role of auditory feedback in pitch matching through literature review and to gauge teachers' level of understanding. Of my survey respondents, an almost equal amount of people indicated they agreed or strongly agreed with having "a strong understanding of the auditory feedback loop" to the amount of people who disagreed about having a strong understanding of the AFL.

I have a strong understanding of the auditory feedback loop.

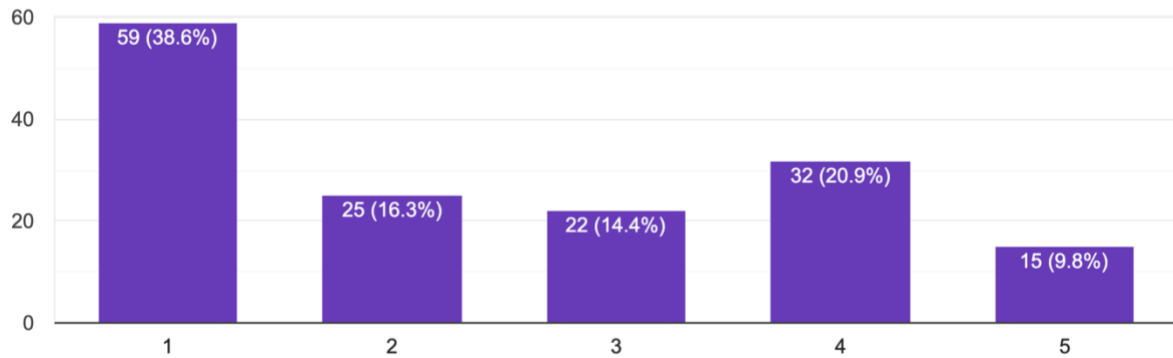
153 responses



Most respondents indicated that they have not received training on the auditory feedback loop (44.9%), yet 51% indicated that they had a strong understanding of the “neurological and motor processes involved in singing”

I have received training and/or education on how auditory feedback affects pitch matching.

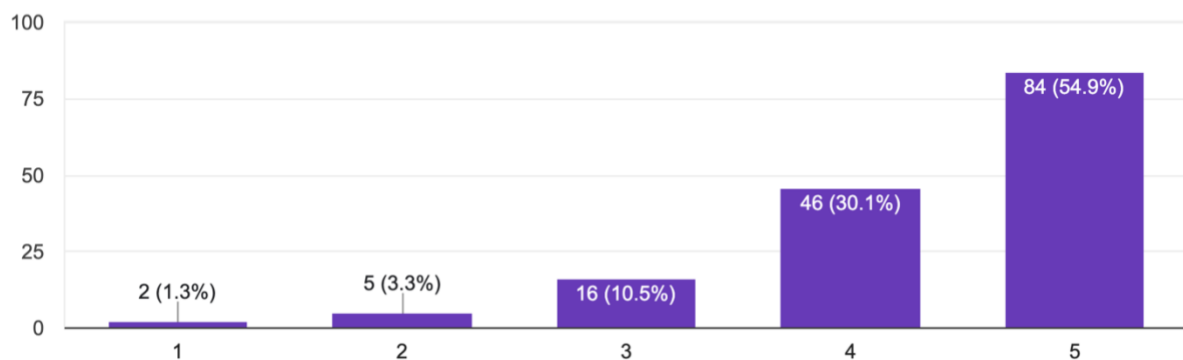
153 responses



The overwhelming majority of respondents (85%) indicated that voice teachers should receive more training in the hard sciences

Voice teachers should receive more training in “hard sciences” as they relate to teaching voice and singing.

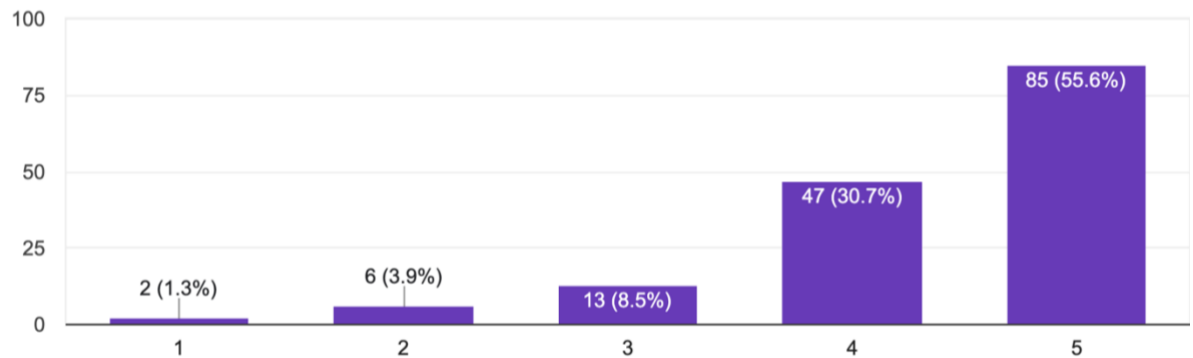
153 responses



and a strong majority 86.3% of respondents would like to learn more about the auditory feedback loop.

I would like to learn more about the auditory feedback loop as it pertains to singing.

153 responses

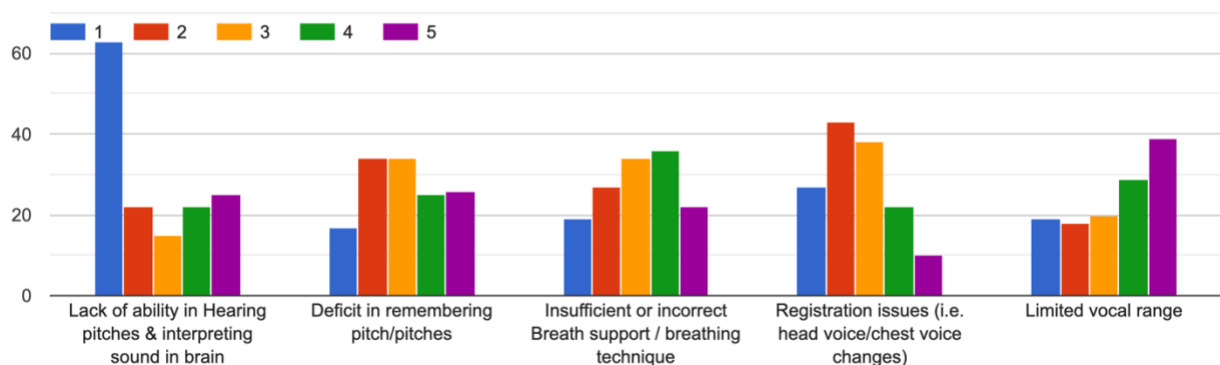


Only 6 respondents indicated that they did not want to learn more about the AFL which implies that teachers are interested in the topic and developing pedagogical resources in this area could be useful to voice teachers.

The Importance of Internal Audiation

The majority of surveyed teachers indicated that the number one cause of poor pitch is caused by “lack of ability in hearing pitches and interpreting sound in brain” which is essentially the idea of internal audiation (Gordon, 1989), and is a skill emphasized in early childhood music education methods such as the Kodaly method (Göktürk-Cary, 2012). The second most indicated cause of poor pitch by respondents was “registration issues” which is a motor control issue.

Rank the following causes of poor pitch production in poor pitch singers based on your knowledge (there are no right or wrong answers): Use the scale 1-5 (1 greatest cause of issues)



This finding corresponds to finding in the literature about the importance of developing internal audiation as a means of generating accurate pitch (Welch, 1985, Gokturk Cary, 2012, Welsh, 2022, Phillips, 2013). Some interview subjects also emphasized the importance of internal audiation, implying that to teach a student to sing on pitch is teaching a student how to hear.

Statistical Analysis of Quantitative Survey

Statistical Methods:

The main outcome variable for statistical analysis was engagement with the auditory feedback loop. This was operationalized by summing the scores for questions 1-5 in section seven, asking participants how strongly they agree or disagree with statements about auditory feedback and motor processing in singing. Higher scores represent greater engagement with auditory feedback methods (scale 0-25). Dependent variables used to analyze the total score include: 1) sociodemographic variables; 2) education; 3) employment and desired career path; 4) teaching; and 5) perceptions of tone deafness (including potential causes).

Since a sample size of 153 participants was reached, and distributions follow assumptions of normality, parametric statistical methods were utilized to: 1) test differences in means and 2) build predictive linear regression models -with the aim of identifying factors that most contribute to engagement with auditory feedback methods. Statistical tests utilized include, 1) Pearson correlation coefficient, and 2) linear regression modeling. Statistical significance is set at 0.05, and when relevant, the r correlational coefficient, and R -squared will be reported. All statistical tests were performed in IBM SPSS version 26.

Results: Summary Statistics

Turning first to socio-demographic variables, we had 153 survey participants. Most were female ($n=131$), and reside in North America (U.S. or Canada) (71.9%, $n=110$). 3.3% are from Australia ($n=19$), 4.6% live in Continental Europe ($n=7$), 17.0% are from the UK or Ireland ($n=26$), and only 2% ($n=2$) reside in Asia. There was a relatively even distribution of ages represented in the survey that did not have overrepresentation of single age category,

with 17% ages 18-29, 26.1% ages 30-39, 35.5% ages 40-49, 22.2% ages 50-59, 7.2% ages 60-69, and 2% ages 70-79.

Turning to education, most participants (54.9%, n=84) reported more than 10 years post-high school vocal study, and most participants (n=88, 57.5%) reported having, or currently working on, a Master's degree. Everyone in the sample reported at least having some college education. The majority of participants reported having a music-related major in their undergraduate education (n=118, 77.1%) as well as their graduate education (including MA/MS and PhD) (n=110, 71.9%).

Looking at employment, when asked about their desired career path when beginning musical training, most (51.0%, n=78) said that they originally aspired to be a professional singer. Looking at current employment, most (66.7%, n=102) said that they were primarily employed as a voice teacher, while only 4.6% (n=7) said that they were primarily employed in professional singing. When asked to assess their preferences for teaching different age groups, there was no clear trend when asked about children 5-9, with a slight majority of people stating that they would not work with children in that age group (n=56, 36.6%). When asked about children aged 9-12, most (n=62, 40.5%) said that they 'definitely would' teach children in that age group, while a vast majority (n=110, 71.9%) said that they 'definitely would' teach teens aged 13-17. Even more, n=141 (92.2%) said they 'definitely would' teach young adults, while no one said they 'definitely would not' teach adults in that age group. Most participants n=126 (82.4%) said they 'definitely would' teach adults aged 25-35, and n=113 (73.9%) said that 'definitely would' teach adults aged 35-44, while 70% (n=107) said they 'definitely would' teach adults aged 45-54, the 'definitely woulds' take a slight dip when considered older adults, 62.1% (n=95) said they 'definitely would' teach adults 55-64, and 53.6% (n=82) said they 'definitely would' teach adults 65+. Additionally, most participants 98.0% (n=150) said that they have taught voice lessons in the past 6 months. Additionally, participants were asked about their identity as either a singer and/or teacher, a majority of participants (n=74, 48.4%) said that they identify equally as a singer and a teacher, while 48.4% (n=46) identified as 'primarily a teacher' who also sings, 18.3% (n=28) said they identify 'primarily as a singer' who also teaches, and 2.6% (n=4) said they identify as a 'voice teacher and not a singer.' Turning to perception of tone deafness, the vast majority (81.0%, n=124) said that only 0-5% of the population is tone deaf.

Summary Stats: Perceptions of Tone Deafness and Engagement with Tone Deaf Students

As part of the current study, I created a novel survey instrument to assess teachers' engagement with tone-deaf students as well as auditory feedback loops. The measure is broken up into five questions with individual scores ranged 0-5 (higher scores indicate more engagement). Here I will summarize the findings according to the majority responses of participants. Turning first to question 1, 28.1% (n=43) were neutral about their knowledge of auditory feedback loops, 38.6% (n=59) said that they 'strongly disagreed' that they received any training in auditory feedback; 33.3% (n=51) said they were neutral about their knowledge of neurological and motor processes involved in singing; 54.9% (n=84) said they 'strongly agreed' that voice teachers should require more training in the hard sciences, and finally 55.6% (n=85) said they 'strongly agreed' that they desired to learn about auditory feedbacks.

Looking at a summary of the main outcome of interest, the mean auditory engagement score (scale 0-25) was 17.6, with a range of 9-25, and minimal skewness (0.05) and Kurtosis (-.247), which suggests that normal parametric statistics can be used (see figure 1)

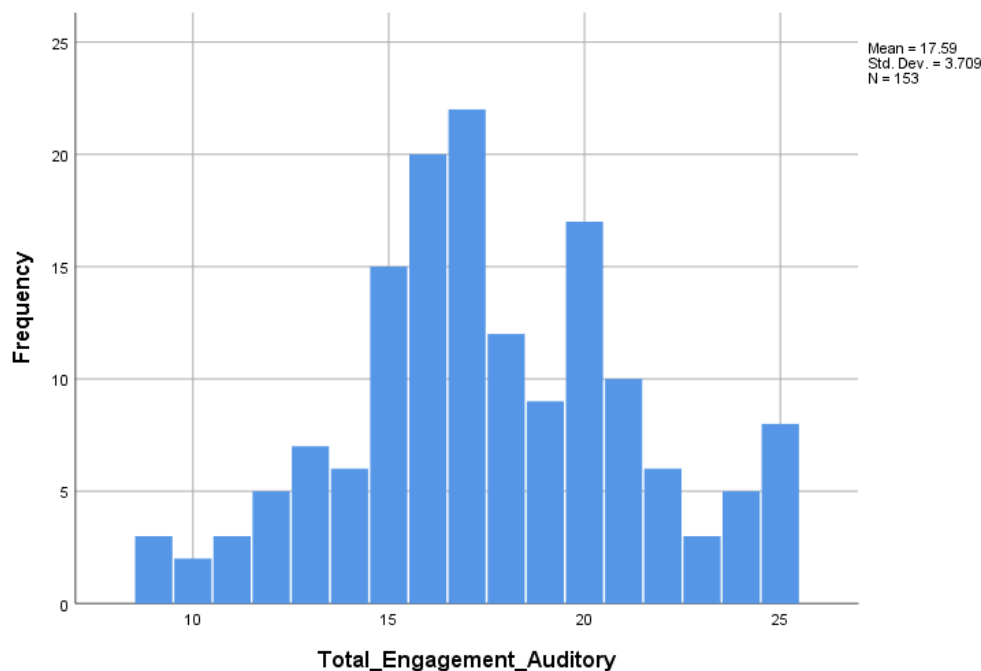


Figure 1: Histogram of the distribution of auditory feedback engagement scores.

Other outcomes I will be testing include: 1) desire to work with poor pitch singers; 2) desire to work with children; and 3) specialization in working with poor pitch singers. Turning first to the desire to work with poor pitch students. Hypotheses were tested using linear regression models. No sociodemographic or educational variables significantly predicted a participant's stated desire to work with poor pitch students (on a 5-point Likert scale). However, variables assessing attitude towards auditory feedback were significant. The best explanatory model for stated desire to work with poor pitch students including the following dependent variables: 1) specialization in working with tone-deaf students (Beta: .29, $p < 0.001$); 2) stating that they would still work with tone-deaf students regardless of finances (Beta: .47, $p < 0.001$); 3) knowledge of the auditory feedback loop (Beta: .12, $p = 0.042$); and 4) desire to learn the auditory feedback loop (Beta: .15, $p = 0.011$). The final model statistics are very strong, with the dependent variables explaining 56% of the model variance ($F: 46.9$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = .56$) (see table X).

Coefficients^a

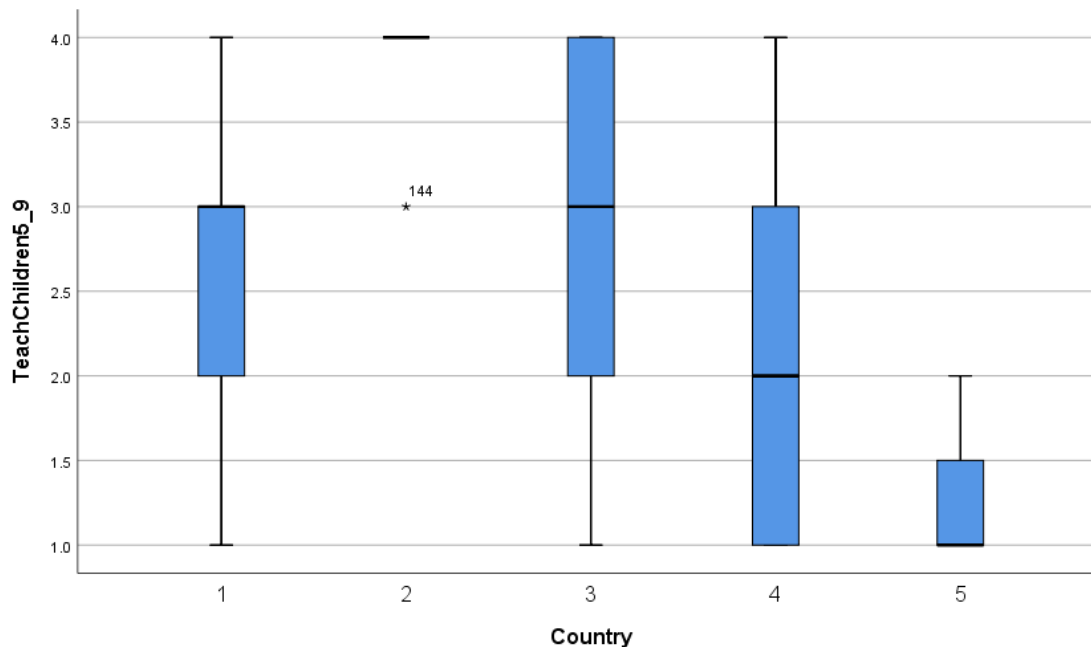
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.008	.359		-.023	.981
	Q5Specialize_ToneDeaf	.305	.069	.286	4.423	.000
	Q13StillWork_PoorPitch	.395	.054	.469	7.295	.000
	Q1Auditory_Feedback_Knowledge	.109	.053	.116	2.053	.042
	Q5Desire_Learn_AuditoryFeedback	.197	.076	.148	2.591	.011

a. Dependent Variable: Q4Enjoy_ToneDeaf

Linear regression of enjoyment for working with tone-deaf students

Looking at our next outcome of interest, desire to work with young children (ages 5-9), the best predictive model including the following variables: 1. Country of residence (with North American residents less likely to want to engage with young children) (Beta: -.13, $p = 0.009$); and 2) desire to teach children 9-12 (Beta: .78, $p < 0.001$). The model was overall very strong with a $F: 133.9$, $p < 0.001$, and $R^2 = .65$. The model explained 65% of the variance in desire

to work with young children (ages 5-9). No other sociodemographic, educational, or variables related to engagement with tone-deaf students were significant.



Turning to stated specialization in working with poor-pitch singers, no sociodemographic or educational variables significantly predicted teacher's specialization in poor-pitch singing. The strongest linear model had two significant dependent variables: 1) perception of their ability to help tone-deaf students (Beta: -1.58, $p=0.017$), and 2) enjoyment of working with tone-deaf students (Beta: .57, $p<0.001$). The total model was significant, and fairly strong ($F: 42.0$, $p<0.001$, $R^2 = .36$) This means that the dependent variables explained 36% of the variance in specialization in working with poor-pitch students.

Lastly, turning to our main outcome of interest, engagement with the auditory feedback loop, I performed another linear regression and found only a single predictor of total engagement - stating that a non-musical career was the most desired path following post-secondary school. While this was a relatively weak model, it was statistically significant ($F: 5.4$, $p=0.024$, $R^2 = .10$).

To delve a bit further, into associations between knowledge of auditory feedback and specific areas of engagement with poor-pitch/tone-deaf students, I performed bivariate Pearson's correlational tests, and found that self-reported knowledge of the auditory

feedback loop was associated with enjoyment of working with poor-pitch students ($r=.26$, $p=0.001$). Additionally, working primarily with children aged 5-9 ($r=-.27$, $p=0.001$) and children aged 9-12 ($r=-.29$, $p<0.001$) was associated with enjoying working with poor-pitch students, as well as perceiving that a greater percentage of the population is tone deaf ($p=-.17$, $p=0.035$).

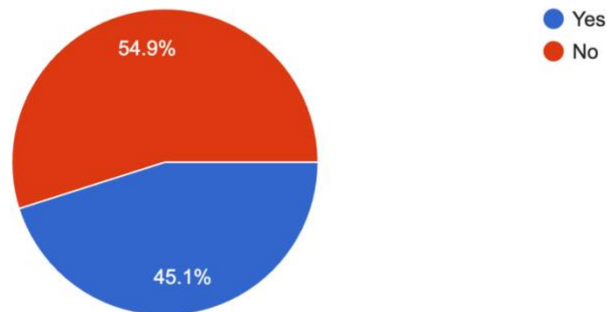
Significant Associations	
Teachers who self-reported knowledge of auditory feedback loop	Were found to enjoy working with poor-pitch students
Teachers working primarily with children 5-9 and 9-2	Were found to enjoy working with poor-pitch students and Perceive that a greater percentage of the population is tone deaf
Teachers who desired a non-musical career at the start of post-secondary education.	Were found to have greater engagement with the auditory feedback loop.
Teachers who specialize in poor-pitch singers	Were found to perceive a strong self-ability to help poor-pitch singers and to enjoy working with tone-deaf singers.

Interview Results – Qualitative Analysis

Survey respondents were asked if they would like to be interviewed as part of this research in order to gain a better understanding of survey participants perspectives. Of the 153 survey respondents, 84 Participants answered that they did not want to be interviewed (54.9%) and 69 responded yes, they would like to be interviewed. (45.1%).

Would you like to be interviewed?

153 responses



The 24 respondents who indicated they wanted to be interviewed were emailed on October 10, 2024 and were invited to select interview timeslots using Google Calendar scheduling. 12 meetings were scheduled by participants, but three meetings were cancelled before the interviews could take place by participants and one was cancelled by the researcher due to a scheduling conflict. A total of 8 interviews were conducted on the Zoom Video Conferencing platform. Participants gave verbal and written consent to having their interviews recorded. The interviews were semi-structured. The researcher stated the purpose of the study and then encouraged open ended conversation from the participants. Audio recordings of interviews were then transcribed using Microsoft Word. Interview transcripts were analyzed both manually and through Claude AI (Anthropic Claude 3.5 2024).

Interview Coding and Analysis using Claude AI

The researcher supplied Claude AI with the following prompt: "I am looking for themes and analysis of qualitative interviews that are part of a research project. The interviews were semi-structured and there are 8 interviews transcribed. the subject area is vocal pedagogy" Claude AI generated "Qualitative Coding Framework: Vocal Pedagogy Interviews" (Anthropic Claude 3.5, 2024) ([Appendix A](#))

The researcher entered "if I paste the interview text here can you help me identify themes" and Claude AI responded with "Yes, I can help you analyze the interview text and identify emerging themes. When you share the interview text, I will:

1. Read through it carefully
2. Identify key themes and patterns
3. Note significant quotes that support these themes
4. Highlight recurring concepts or unique insights
5. Organize the findings in a structured way

Please feel free to paste the interview text, and let me know if there are any specific aspects you'd like me to focus on during the analysis.” (Anthropic Claude 3.5, 2024).

The 8 interview transcripts were then pasted into Claude AI and Claude AI generated “Key Themes from In-Depth Interview Analysis” (Anthropic Claude 3.5, 2024) ([Appendix B](#)). The researcher then entered the prompt “can you convert the thematic analysis into a coding chart” and Claude AI generated “Coding Chart: Vocal Pedagogy Interviews” (Anthropic Claude 3.5, 2024) ([Appendix C](#))

The researcher then prompted Claude AI with “can you apply our coding chart to our data set to create a new graphical representation of importance of each theme” and Claude AI generated “Thematic Analysis Results - Vocal Pedagogy Interviews” ([Appendix D](#)). I will summarize some of the most interesting and applicable findings in the following paragraphs.

The most frequently coded concepts were:

Coded Concept	Frequency in Interviews
Pedagogical Strategies	90%
Psychological Factors	85%
Early Musical Exposure	80%
Personal Philosophy	75%

The significance of psychological factors discovered by Claude AI, were not part of the researcher’s hypothesis. Some key interview quotes about psychological factors were: "The most heartbreaking ones are the ones that tried out for choir when they were like 6, and the teacher told them they can't sing and they never sing again" and "I have yet to encounter a student that isn't aware that they struggle to match pitch"

Early music exposure seems important in terms of developing internal audiation which seems to indicate whether a person has “good pitch” as an adult. Internal audiation was covered as part of my literature review and its importance was also highlighted by my quantitative survey. Some key quotes regarding early music exposure include: "I found that for students who came to my junior choir group, which was aged 5 to 8, who had done music garden...were already much better at matching pitch compared to those that didn't" and "What I noticed is for students who came to my junior choir group, which was aged 5 to 8... had done music garden. Well, already much better at matching pitch"

Both the qualitative analysis completed by Claude AI and the results of the quantitative questionnaire highlighted regional differences among respondents. Surveyed North American teachers were found less likely to want to teach young children than other regions. One of the interview participants who was based in the UK said "The culture of singing a lot at school... Also, just when they grow up singing a lot as a thing that they do... overall they will have better pitch". This is a very different attitude from the Asia Pacific based teacher who said "Compared with Australia, when I used to teach in Australia versus Malaysia, the culture of keeps singing a lot at school for like players and things like that... They will, overall, not everyone has perfect pitch, but overall, they will have better pitch than some of the kids who come to me". Additionally, a Wales based teacher recounted the open and inclusive nature of their musical theater programs at the high school level: "So I'm in South Wales... we're not particularly affluent, but our students come in, they're not auditioned. We don't audition. We take anybody who wants to come. Pretty much and we probably get 100% success rate and they go where they want". These regional differences are supported in the literature such as Gabbittas, et al. (2018) which specifies that the UK and Europe places a large emphasis on early music education and choral singing in elementary grades.

Claude AI identified the following as primary emphasis of the following regions:

Region	Primary Emphasis
North America	Teaching Methodology
Europe	Developmental Factors

Asia-Pacific	Institutional Context
---------------------	-----------------------

Additionally, Claude AI found experienced-based variations.

Experience	Primary Focus
New Teachers	Teaching Methods
Mid-Career	Student Factors
Experienced	Developmental Understanding

The difference in focus makes a lot of sense, as new teachers are beginning careers directly the conclusion of their education and therefore they are focused on developing successful teaching methodologies which they may or may not have received as part of their formal education. Over time, mid-career teachers focus on student factors once they have taught a wide variety of students. Perhaps experienced teachers have a larger developmental understanding due to their many years of experience.

Interviewed teachers were happy to share success stories about poor pitch students. One teacher said "He couldn't even match pitch to the piano... and now he got rising star. So he was the 3rd top in the category across like piano, violin and singing". Another teacher shared their success by focusing on physical sensations: "We just experimented and everything forward until she had slightly more right at the front than the back... she was suddenly singing and hitting absolutely the middle of pitches".

Reflection and Application to Practice:

I designed this mixed-methods study to further study teacher perspectives on teaching poor pitch students. In Waxer (2024a) I conducted a similar mixed-methods study but only had 25 survey respondents and 4 interview respondents. In this study I was able to receive 153 survey responses and conduct 8 semi-structured interviews. The results of the quantitative study are clarifying as my pilot study (Waxer, 2024a) indicated that teachers had a strong aversion to teaching poor pitch students. The results of this study paint a different picture, showing the majority of voice teachers willing to work with poor pitch students. Although few

teachers consider themselves specialists in the area, many feel they have the skills required to help poor pitch students improve their pitch.

In Waxer (2024b), I conducted a thorough literature review which explained the physiological and psychological process of singing and pitch matching through the lens of the auditory feedback loop (AFL). I wanted to test if the AFL could be a useful resource for voice teachers to identify potential deficits in their students that could be causing pitch issues. In this study I wanted to test teacher knowledge of the AFL and to see if there was interest in learning about it. The results showed that teachers did not overwhelmingly seem familiar with the AFL and a majority indicated an interest in learning more about it. Respondents overwhelmingly believed that voice teachers should receive more training in the “hard sciences”. With the vast majority of surveyed teachers indicating that they hold an undergraduate degree in vocal performance and that the majority desired to work as professional singers, It makes sense that pedagogical training was lacking in their studies.

The literature review in Waxer (2024a) focused on the lack of pedagogical guidance on pitch matching within the standard vocal pedagogy literature, with most surveyed textbooks not containing any information on poor pitch singers. This survey has confirmed that poor pitch students are prevalent in the voice studio. Some interviewed participants believing that pitch is something that needs to be developed in early childhood and that internal audiation is essential to be able to match pitch.

Most interviewed teachers shared a story about teaching a student with poor pitch and the methodologies they used to help that student. The most common experience being that it took a lot of patience and numerous hours of practice over many months and years. No teachers reported a poor pitch singer becoming a great singer, but most reported a vast improvement in that student’s ability to match pitch accurately.

I work with poor pitch students in my professional practice and am always looking to improve my methodologies. With one final master’s research project left in my program, I venture that I need to assess if internal audiation can be mastered beyond early childhood and if there are methods that could help build a strong sense of pitch in children. I believe that the development of an app that parents and caregivers use to expose their children to

music to build their ability of internal audiation could be extremely successful and be professionally lucrative.

Part B Word Count: 4911

Total Word Count: 9201

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A: Qualitative Coding Framework: Vocal Pedagogy Interviews

First Cycle Coding Methods

1. Descriptive Coding

- Teaching approaches and methods
- Student challenges
- Technical elements
- Anatomical references
- Musical concepts
- Assessment strategies
- Learning progression
- Practice techniques

2. Process Coding (-ing words)

- Teaching strategies
- Learning processes
- Developing technique
- Addressing challenges
- Building confidence
- Assessing progress

- Adapting methods

3. In Vivo Coding

- Capture specific terminology used by vocal pedagogues
- Document unique metaphors and descriptions
- Record specialized vocal instruction language

Second Cycle Coding

Category Development

1. Pedagogical Approaches

- Teaching philosophy
- Methodological frameworks
- Instructional strategies
- Student-teacher relationship

2. Technical Elements

- Breathing techniques
- Vocal placement
- Register transitions
- Tone production
- Articulation methods

3. Student Development

- Learning progression
- Common challenges
- Success indicators
- Growth patterns

4. Assessment & Feedback

- Evaluation methods
- Progress monitoring
- Feedback strategies
- Modification techniques

Thematic Analysis Process

1. Initial Data Familiarization

- Multiple readings of transcripts
- Initial noting of potential patterns
- Identification of recurring concepts

2. Code Generation

- Apply first cycle codes
- Document frequency of occurrences
- Note relationships between codes

3. Theme Development

- Group related codes
- Identify emerging patterns
- Map relationships between themes

4. Theme Refinement

- Review themes against raw data
- Check for internal homogeneity
- Ensure external heterogeneity
- Create theme definitions

Analysis Documentation

For Each Interview

- Interview identifier

- Key quotes
- Dominant themes
- Unique perspectives
- Contextual notes

Cross-Interview Analysis

- Common themes
- Divergent views
- Pattern analysis
- Frequency of themes
- Relationship mapping

Quality Assurance

- Member checking process
- Peer review steps
- Audit trail maintenance
- Reflexivity notes

Appendix B: Key Themes from In-Depth Interview Analysis

1. Developmental and Neurological Factors

Early Exposure and Development

- Critical importance of early musical exposure
- Role of neuroplasticity in pitch development
- Impact of childhood musical experiences
- Cultural differences in early music education
- Connection between crawling/physical development and musical ability

Auditory Processing

- Multiple components of auditory feedback loop
- Connection to speech and language development
- Processing delays and pitch matching
- Role of auditory memory
- Impact of auditory processing disorders

2. Teaching Approaches and Methodologies

Assessment and Diagnosis

- Need to identify specific type of pitch difficulty
- Different approaches for different causes
- Use of technology and visual feedback
- Importance of individualized assessment
- Recognition of multiple contributing factors

Pedagogical Strategies

- Matching student's pitch rather than requiring them to match teacher
- Use of visual aids and technology
- Focus on body awareness and physical positioning
- Progressive skill building
- Adaptation to individual learning styles

3. Cultural and Institutional Contexts

Geographic Variations

- Differences between UK, US, Australian, and Asian approaches
- Impact of cultural singing traditions
- Variations in music education systems
- Different assessment standards
- Role of institutional structures

Professional Standards

- Issues with non-vocalist judges
- Need for specialized vocal assessment
- Importance of appropriate evaluation criteria
- Differences between instrumental and vocal standards
- Role of professional organizations

4. Student Characteristics and Challenges

Types of Pitch Issues

- Motor control vs. auditory processing
- Registration and voice change impacts
- Memory and retention challenges
- Physical positioning effects
- Impact of previous experiences

Psychological Factors

- Role of confidence and self-perception
- Impact of past negative experiences
- Importance of creating safe learning environment
- Student motivation and commitment
- Family and cultural influences

5. Teacher Development and Training

Educational Background

- Gaps in traditional pedagogy training
- Importance of practical experience
- Need for specialized training in pitch development
- Value of cross-disciplinary knowledge
- Role of continuing education

Professional Evolution

- Development of teaching strategies over time
- Adaptation to different student needs
- Integration of multiple approaches
- Impact of personal experiences
- Growth through challenging cases

6. Technological and Scientific Understanding

Use of Technology

- Role of apps and visual feedback tools
- Integration of technology in assessment

- Benefits of real-time feedback
- Limitations of technological solutions
- Balance of tools and traditional methods

Scientific Knowledge

- Understanding of vocal physiology
- Awareness of neurological factors
- Recognition of developmental stages
- Integration of speech pathology insights
- Application of research findings

Notable Patterns Across Interviews

1. Strong connection between early exposure and pitch development
2. Importance of understanding individual causes of pitch issues
3. Value of multi-modal teaching approaches
4. Need for specialized training in teaching pitch matching
5. Impact of cultural and institutional contexts
6. Role of psychological factors in pitch development

Key Observations

- Teachers report success with long-term, patient approaches
- Value of understanding both physical and psychological factors
- Importance of early intervention when possible
- Need for better resources and training
- Recognition of multiple pathways to improvement
- Impact of cultural and institutional support systems

Emerging Best Practices

1. Comprehensive initial assessment
2. Individualized approach based on specific challenges
3. Integration of multiple teaching strategies
4. Use of appropriate technology and visual aids
5. Recognition of psychological factors
6. Long-term, patient approach to development
7. Regular reassessment and adaptation of methods

Appendix C: Coding Chart: Vocal Pedagogy Interviews

Coding Chart: Vocal Pedagogy Interviews

A. DEVELOPMENTAL & NEUROLOGICAL (DN)

Code	Description	Example Indicators
DN1	Early Musical Exposure	References to childhood music experiences, family singing, early education
DN2	Neuroplasticity	Discussion of brain development, learning windows, age-related factors
DN3	Auditory Processing	References to hearing/processing sound, feedback loops, delays
DN4	Motor Control	Discussion of physical coordination, muscle memory, physical development
DN5	Memory & Retention	References to tonal memory, ability to remember melodies

B. TEACHING METHODOLOGY (TM)

Code	Description	Example Indicators
TM1	Assessment Approaches	Methods for evaluating student abilities, diagnostic tools
TM2	Pedagogical Strategies	Specific teaching techniques, approaches, methods
TM3	Technology Integration	Use of apps, visual tools, recording devices
TM4	Progress Monitoring	Ways of tracking improvement, evaluation methods
TM5	Adaptation Techniques	Adjusting methods for individual students

C. INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT (IC)

Code	Description	Example Indicators
IC1	Educational Systems	References to school/university structures
IC2	Cultural Differences	Geographic/cultural variations in approach
IC3	Professional Standards	Industry expectations, certification requirements
IC4	Assessment Criteria	Judging standards, competition requirements
IC5	Resource Access	Available tools, materials, support systems

D. STUDENT FACTORS (SF)

Code	Description	Example Indicators
SF1	Prior Experience	Previous musical training/exposure
SF2	Psychological Factors	Confidence, trauma, self-perception
SF3	Physical Factors	Body alignment, positioning, physical limitations
SF4	Learning Style	Visual, auditory, kinesthetic preferences
SF5	Motivation Level	Commitment to improvement, practice habits

E. TEACHER BACKGROUND (TB)

Code	Description	Example Indicators
TB1	Educational Background	Formal training, degrees, certifications
TB2	Teaching Experience	Years teaching, types of students taught
TB3	Professional Development	Ongoing training, workshops, research
TB4	Personal Philosophy	Teaching beliefs, approaches to students
TB5	Specialization Areas	Areas of expertise, focus areas

F. SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING (SU)

Code	Description	Example Indicators
SU1	Vocal Physiology	Understanding of voice mechanism
SU2	Neurology	Brain function, processing understanding
SU3	Developmental Science	Growth/development knowledge
SU4	Research Awareness	Familiarity with current studies
SU5	Interdisciplinary Knowledge	Cross-field understanding

G. CHALLENGES & BARRIERS (CB)

Code	Description	Example Indicators
CB1	Educational Gaps	Lack of training/resources
CB2	Student Limitations	Student-specific challenges
CB3	System Constraints	Institutional/structural barriers
CB4	Time Factors	Time limitations, scheduling issues
CB5	Resource Limitations	Limited access to tools/materials

H. OUTCOMES & SUCCESS (OS)

Code	Description	Example Indicators
OS1	Student Progress	Improvement indicators
OS2	Teaching Effectiveness	Success of methods
OS3	Long-term Results	Sustained improvement
OS4	Assessment Results	Competition/exam outcomes
OS5	Student Satisfaction	Student/parent feedback

Coding Instructions:

1. Apply codes to relevant text segments
2. Multiple codes can be applied to same segment
3. Note frequency and co-occurrence of codes
4. Mark particularly strong examples with asterisk (*)
5. Note contradictions or exceptions with (!)
6. Track emerging patterns not covered by existing codes

Analysis Guidelines:

1. Look for relationships between categories
2. Note frequency of different code appearances
3. Identify patterns across different interviews
4. Compare responses across demographics
5. Track evolution of themes throughout interviews
6. Note unexpected or contradictory findings

Appendix D: Thematic Analysis Results - Vocal Pedagogy Interviews

Theme Frequency and Prominence Analysis

(Scale: 0-10, based on frequency of mentions and emphasis in interviews)

Teaching Methodology (TM)	[*****] 10.0
Student Factors (SF)	[*****-] 9.0
Developmental & Neurological (DN)	[*****--] 8.0
Teacher Background (TB)	[*****---] 7.0
Challenges & Barriers (CB)	[*****----] 6.0
Scientific Understanding (SU)	[*****-----] 5.0
Institutional Context (IC)	[****-----] 4.0
Outcomes & Success (OS)	[***-----] 3.0

* = 1 point on 10-point scale

- = empty point

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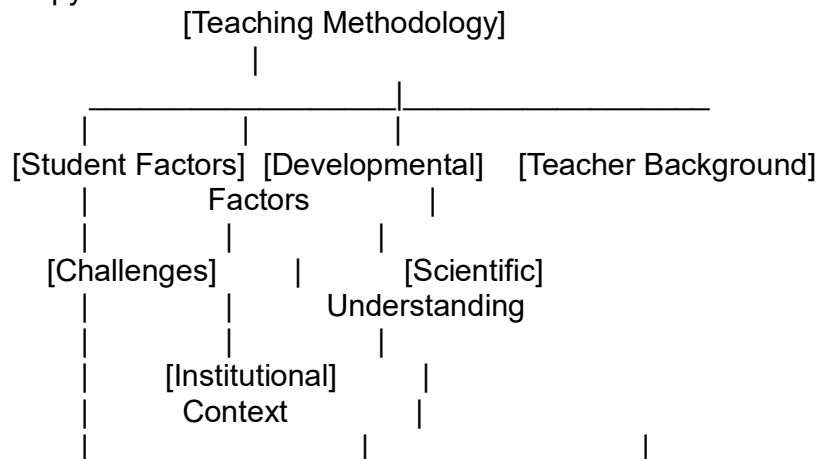
Teaching Methodology (TM)	[*****] 10.0
Student Factors (SF)	[*****-] 9.0
Developmental & Neurological (DN)	[*****--] 8.0
Teacher Background (TB)	[*****---] 7.0
Challenges & Barriers (CB)	[*****----] 6.0
Scientific Understanding (SU)	[*****-----] 5.0
Institutional Context (IC)	[****-----] 4.0
Outcomes & Success (OS)	[***-----] 3.0

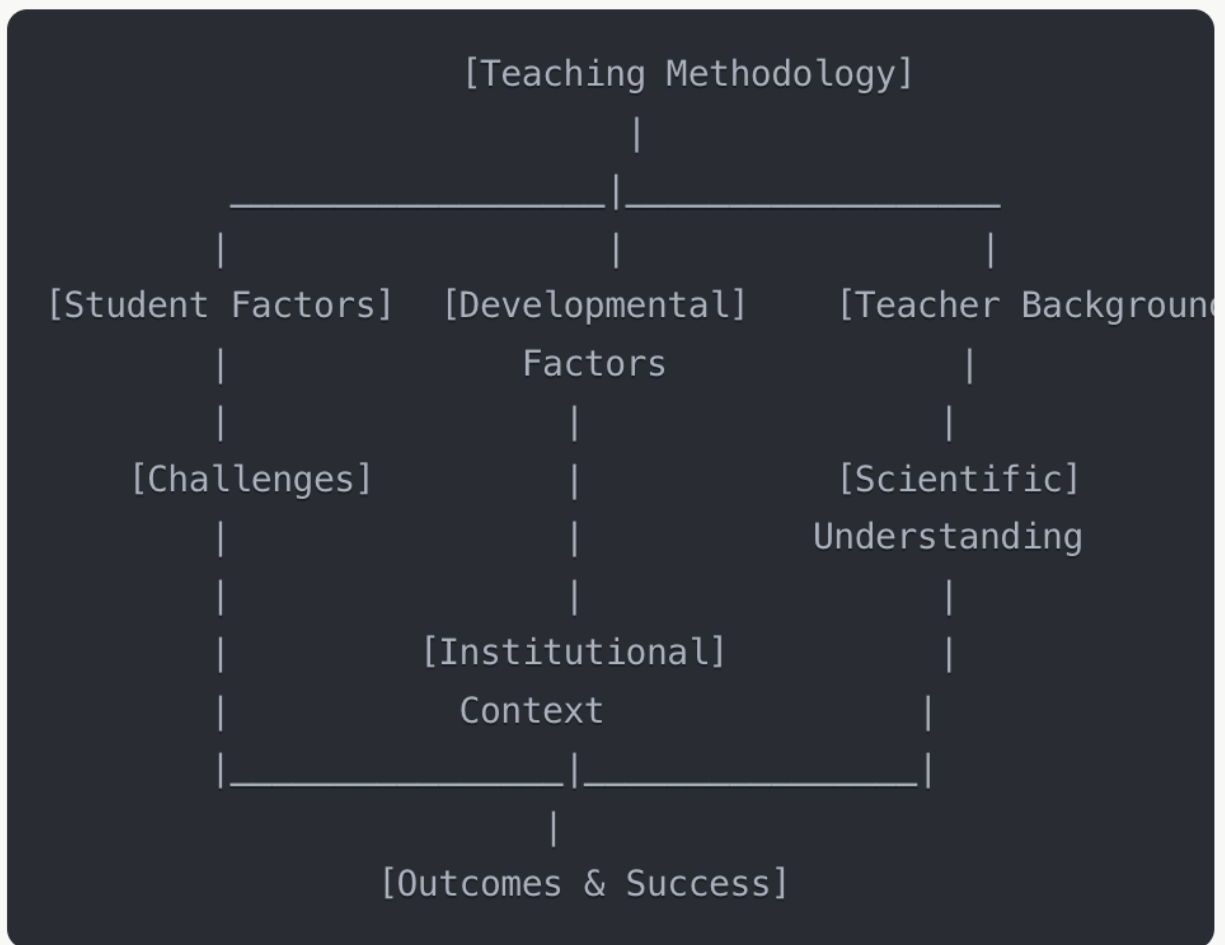
* = 1 point on 10-point scale

- = empty point

Key Theme Relationships Map

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[Outcomes & Success]

Most Frequently Coded Concepts

1. TM2: Pedagogical Strategies (mentioned in 90% of interviews)
 - Matching student's pitch
 - Progressive skill building
 - Use of visual aids
2. SF2: Psychological Factors (85% of interviews)
 - Past negative experiences
 - Confidence issues
 - Self-perception
3. DN1: Early Musical Exposure (80% of interviews)
 - Childhood experiences
 - Family musical environment
 - Early education
4. TB4: Personal Philosophy (75% of interviews)
 - Teaching beliefs
 - Approach to struggling students
 - Commitment to improvement

Critical Intersections

1. Teaching Methodology × Student Factors

- Adaptation of methods to individual needs
- Response to psychological barriers
- Customization of approach
- 2. Developmental Factors × Scientific Understanding
 - Neurological basis for pitch matching
 - Age-related learning patterns
 - Processing mechanisms
- 3. Challenges × Institutional Context
 - System limitations
 - Resource constraints
 - Training gaps

Emerging Patterns

- 1. Primary Focus Areas:
 - Individual approach to teaching
 - Psychological support
 - Early intervention importance
- 2. Secondary Concerns:
 - Institutional support
 - Professional development
 - Assessment methods
- 3. Areas Needing Development:
 - Scientific research integration
 - Standardized assessment tools
 - Resource availability

Geographic Variations

Copy

Region	Primary Emphasis
North America	Teaching Methodology
Europe	Developmental Factors
Asia-Pacific	Institutional Context

Region	Primary Emphasis
North America	Teaching Methodology
Europe	Developmental Factors
Asia-Pacific	Institutional Context

Experience-Based Variations

Copy

Experience	Primary Focus
New Teachers	Teaching Methods
Mid-Career	Student Factors

Experience	Primary Focus
-----	-----
New Teachers	Teaching Methods
Mid-Career	Student Factors
Experienced	Developmental Understanding

This analysis reveals that while teaching methodology and student factors dominate the discourse, there's significant interplay between all identified themes. The data suggests that successful pitch matching instruction requires a holistic approach that considers multiple factors simultaneously.

Would you like me to:

1. Break down any specific theme in more detail?
2. Analyze specific regional or experience-based patterns?
3. Examine particular intersections between themes?
4. Provide specific interview excerpts supporting these findings?

Appendix E: Participant Consent Form

Consent to take part in research

- I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time
- I understand that I can refuse to answer any question involved during the research process without any consequences of any kind.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that participation involves responding to an online survey and having my responses analyzed and reported anonymously in a research paper.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous.
- This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in published papers, dissertation, academic presentation and conference presentation.
- I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in Microsoft one drive and local computer hard-drive until exam board of university confirms results of research assignment the latest date being December 31, 2025.
- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for two years following the date of researcher's exam board date.
- I understand that under freedom of information legalization I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.
- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Thank you,

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Appendix F: Interview Transcripts

Transcript – Participant A –HS/Lower College Musical Theater Director UK

Speaker 1

All right. So I'll tell you a little bit about why I'm doing this study and then I'd love to hear all of your thoughts. I did. I'm working on my masters and vocal pedagogy. And I have been a voice teacher for. 10 You know, 14 years and I started having some students who had. Very big problems matching pitch and I realized that I had even though I had done an undergraduate degree in vocal performance, classical opera singing and we had to take a vocal pedagogy course. I had never once been instructed on how one would even teach someone who has trouble matching. Which? And so then I hypothesized that. The vocal pedagogy literature traditionally has been written for the college academic. For people who started out as singers, who became voice teachers. And therefore, because they already had natural talent in singing, they're assuming that they're going to work with other people who also have. Because if you're in the college level of voice, you're already past all these auditions. And so then there becomes a self selecting.

Speaker

And.

Speaker 1

Loop. We're almost people don't want to teach people that have poor pitch and then it becomes self perpetuating and it just gets worse because the people that think they Can't Sing are like, oh, I'm toned. Like someone told them. And they were a kid. They were toned up. And So what I did on in my first pilot study, I only had about 25 responses and. This time I'm going to have over 100. And I found a correlation between the more education a teacher had, the less likely they wanted to work with the. Poor pitch student.

Speaker

OK.

Speaker 1

So that was one of my major findings that was. You would almost think contrary. You would think if someone has a vocal pedagogy masters, they should be more adept to teach someone who is struggling and singing.

Speaker 2

But it did. It did it depend what country they were in.

Speaker 1

I had in that sample I had mostly USA and then I had some UK and I had then some in Asia, Australia kind of that area.

Speaker 2

So so I think looking what I'm so my understanding of how it works in the US compared to how we deal over here in the UK, I think that's a major thing to do.

Speaker

Correct.

Speaker 2

When I look at sort of the way that we teach and the way that you guys teach and the way the students we have competed students you have and the way you come to the schooling system, I think that has a major difference. So if I tell you a bit about my background, we can see where we are. Yeah. So I did the music. Degree specializing in piano and then in music tech. Did a bit of singing. There wasn't really like a singer. I did a singer in my in a couple of years just because the piano was too difficult and I wasn't as good as I thought I was, so I needed to. So so I went and. So I was old school, taught opera, you know, singing the diaphragm, etcetera, etcetera. And now I discovered still. And then I realized that if I understood how the voice worked, I could then. Get my learners to understand how their voice worked.

Speaker 1

What was the thing you discovered? What was that word?

Speaker 2

In a. With this still, do you still technique? Do you know that way? Do you still method?

Speaker 1

No, says spell. What's still EST? I asked.

Speaker 2

Double L.

Speaker 1

OK. Still OK, good.

Speaker 2

It's still, yeah. It's still depends how you pronounce it in the. States, yeah. So what I realized is that when you understand the 13 figures, each one of those figures when put together like a recipe, will create a certain tongue quality. So I can now listen to somebody work out, possibly from what I'm hearing, what's causing the tuning issue and then we can work on that by working on a specific element of the vocal track. So it could be often and tuning is caused by the back of the tongue is pulling back on the larynx, which is not making enough space which causes the tuning issue and it could be the fact they're retracting as in they're squeezing the true folds, which doesn't allow the the true folds to actually open up enough. Which also can affect pitch. It could be without hearing properly. It could be a lot of, I think. It's do with. Listening, but I'd also say a lot of it is, as you said, if they were told they couldn't sing as a child. They don't think they can say no, so I'd say 90% of what I do when I work with people is what? I call head work. So you've got to realize the first thing that moves when you want to sing is your brain thinks the larynx moves and is then willing to make a sound. If you think can't do it, the larynx goes. Yeah, OK, whatever. And we'll do it.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I found really.

Speaker 2

That's my that's sort of my.

Speaker 1

No, that's fascinating. I actually noticed I had an observation of that in that my students and these were mostly teenagers and. And you know, older like 11 through 18. I noticed that the people who had the worst pitch matching would sing too fast like they if I would play a pitch they would sing before they heard the pitch, and that was so common I said, Oh my gosh, that makes so much sense. They don't even connect the. Idea that the tone exists in the mind, it's like they they don't even have a sense of the translation because they're just trying to sing right away.

Speaker 2

Do you? So another thing that I use is I use apps that allow them to visualize the pitch because I'm a sound guy, I'm used to looking at things and I'm looking at pictures, etcetera. So I use that there with my students. So there's a there's a free app called nail the pitch, which I think is on Android and is on iOS. So I go OK, you've got to try and do it. So then nobody is as you know, as straight as it can be. So before I even try and get them to match pitch, I try and get them just to keep a straight note. Once they've got the straight notes and I then so the big thing with this still is not how it sounds, just how does it feel. How does it feel in the throat? How's it feel at the time? So what did you start? You start sort of. Understanding and honing in on the elements of the voice. So where the vocals are, what's happening, and once you understand that you can go. OK, so I say don't listen. Because if you listen you got. I don't like that once you put like in they then start singing differently. How does it feel?

Speaker

With this.

Speaker 2

So that's the way I put a lot. Of that.

Speaker 1

OK, I have a question about the Estill method. So is this taught in uh music pro like universities in the UK?

Speaker 2

So in the yeah in the UK and in the states, it's in all our drama colleges. In the UK, users still somewhere along the line. So the background of it. So I'm not an still master. You know, I'm not one of these who was amazing. I've done a couple of courses, but I for me it's really helpful, especially with the students I will. So I work with. I try to think what you guys would call it. So in US it's it's secondary education, so it's not. School and it's not uni, it's in between.

Speaker 1

High school. That's what we call.

Speaker 2

It high school, high school high school for that's secondary school.

Speaker 1

Ohh you have a thing like they have in Montreal where they do one year in between high school and college.

Speaker 2

And this is no, this is college. There's not University College. So it's 16 to 18.

Speaker 1

OK. Yeah, that's like.

Speaker 2

And it's vocational, so rather than where they do written exams, it's practical. So I'm dealing with students aged 16 to 18 who've come in because they've perhaps enjoyed doing acting, singing, whatever. So I run and look after musical theatre courses from age 16 to 18. Give. And then we get them ready and to go to drama college. Or university. So most of the major drama colleges are in London, so you've got mount view, you've got lane. All those, all of those I know have got are still technique lecturers in there as well as traditional techniques. And the way that I sort of tend to look at it is there is no right or wrong, it's whatever works for the singer. So the way I tend to do it is I I don't tell somebody how. To sing. I go here's the toolkit of things that allow you to develop your own voice.

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 2

It's your voice, not mine. What do you want? To. Do so one of the main questions when you listen to me is right. How can I help? What is it that? You. Don't like or don't agree with what? You're doing and then. Using the techniques I go OK we can try that we can. Try that we can try that. So it's quite useful because I'm quite a logical. Say you know my singing teacher used to say, I imagine what you mean. Imagine what you can imagine a note. What do you mean? I think there I know. OK. But I know if I do AB and CI will create D. So for me it works really well. Some people it might not.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I had never heard of that. So that's this is great. So these are the kind of things that I can incorporate into my research. Because I I'm going to do it looks like a lot of people are signing up for interviews. So what I do is it's qualitative research with interviews. So I basically have to code it. I have to code it says basically going to be if you say still someone might not also say still they might also they might have some other method that's similar but different and then that still is a coding right versus.

Speaker

Close, yeah.

Speaker 1

What I think in the. States. Are are vocal. We have. Our musical theater programs are very separate from our music schools because classical voice is with the Conservatory and theater. They put musical theater with the theater department. So the theater department is going to have dance. They're going to have straight acting, and then they're going to have the musical theater there. Over here we have. The opera people. And there's very little programs. They're just now emerging with commercial music, contemporary music and and it's it's very few schools that have an actual crossover between classical and theater for.

Speaker 2

So what's so what's interesting is the fact that when you're talking, is still it's opera is just equality of voice. So as far as sort of we are concerned, it's just the way you say. So the guys who work me teach me, they work with the the Finnish National Opera. So you've got people that work with opera, they work with musical theatre. And I know one of the guys has never officially told me, but I know he's been one of the local coaches on The Voice and on Marcus Talbert's Got Talent like but he signs NDA's so he can't. Somebody does? Umm. So this works with any type of of site. I also work a lot with. Active speakers. So another thing that I I look in is vocal health. It's one of my main things vocal health. So I'm very big into SVT and the understanding of SVT and how that works with rehabilitative voices. One of my sort of specialties is that I'm a voice. Fixer. If somebody comes to me with an issue, as long

as they've been to a doctor. So we've got a a medical diagnosis. I then go right, I can probably help. But it's got to be a medical diagnosis first. You know? You can't. I can't tell you whether you've got nodules by listening. I might be able to, but I can't quantify it until I know they've had the camera. And then they've done it.

Speaker 1

But you will. You will teach voice to someone with nodules.

Speaker 2

Once I know if someone has got something we can then work on a technique to help them. Sort of rehabilitate. I don't mean teach to sing, but rehabilitate and get the voice. So it's starting to.

Speaker

M.

Speaker 2

Not be where it was before necessarily. But be required.

Speaker 1

Do you almost feel like a crossover that's almost like a crossover with speech therapy?

Speaker 2

Little bit, yeah. Not not like. I don't do tender this cause it's not my that sort of if it's somebody who is has got, who has got that much vocal trauma, I would probably leave that the 70s much more. Specialized than me. But if it's somebody who's just got. You know the trauma from, you know, being sick too much, just having tonsils removed, that kind of stuff. I work with that, but I'm very I'm very carefully, very aware of who and what I can work with because I always remember the voices, the unions, when you can actually break. And you can't fix, so I'm very aware of that. I'm not one of these. And you know, if I don't know what I'm doing, I won't do it. I'm not one of these. We'll just going old. Guns. Blair and going, yeah, I. Think just like, no, I just go up. I'll either pass down to one of my colleagues or say right you need to get this fixed. First, you need to recognize that. So just to see how we go with it, so you gotta be really careful when it comes that kind of stuff, you know.

Speaker 1

Yeah, for sure. Do you find a correlation between people who come in saying that they were told they were bad singers as children or as adults? And then what issues do you see? Do they come with a certain set of issues that's kind of standard? Or can you describe like the kind of student?

Speaker 2

No. So what I get is you either get those that were put in the back as a child when they were in like. Kindergarten in your respect. Yeah, well, that should be Infant School. Yeah. And they were. Going oh, yeah, yeah, they'll just go. Stand in the back and look pretty. When mum comes. In to watch. The concert, so they stand in. The back and just go. And so they've never been told they've been told they can't do it. And rather than to encourage them and go, OK, you've got a bit of a voice. They just go see, you're not the star. Just out of the back, so I find. That you got those. I work a lot with dancers. Dancers have been told pretty. Much you can't say. So a lot of my so other courses as a two year course and my biggest problem is dealing with dancers who won't sing because they're dancers. So I so today I had a group of I think was about 60 probably that I was working with and we did back backstage romance from well enough. So I had some first years who I knew and I'm not really know very much with. They're getting to know me. You know, I'm, I'm not your your average boring vocal coach. I'm all over the place. And because I play piano and I've got recording studio. I'm quite. Whatever, you know this this age of face isn't what's going on inside the head, right? So I'm quite, quite lively. And the ones that weren't doing anything

with the dancers who were just sitting in the back, not during a we then did the dance section. And they then were the ones who were there going. Look at me. Look at me. And I just go. So yeah, so you've got those that were told that were bad and those that were dancers who think they're bad.

Speaker 1

Do you think for the for?

Speaker 2

Now.

Speaker 1

For succeeding in musical theater in the UK, do you do? The dancers have to become triple threats like they do. They have to be. Are there ensemble jobs for dancers who are not singers, like enough that they can just come through?

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah. So yeah, there are.

Speaker 1

As a dancer or. Is it good for them to sing?

Speaker 2

Yeah, there are ensemble jobs, so you've got your. So there's something, I suppose the way it is in the UK you've got. You've got singers who can act and move. You've got dancers who can carry a tune and act so they're all triple threatens, but it's it's a a top heavy or bottom heavy triple threat. Do you mean it? It's sort of.

Speaker

OK. Yeah.

Speaker 2

But then again, there's lots of other, you know, there's lots of other things. We've got a lot of the sort of a lot of my ex students sort of are on the West End now. So they go from us. So we're only. So I'm in South Wales, so I don't know if you know anything about Wales?

Depends.

Speaker 1

Well, I know you guys have your own language and you have.

Speaker 2

Where the states. Are are you in? Where are you?

Speaker 1

I'm in California.

Speaker 2

OK so.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I watched the crown, so I know when that Prince, when he was Prince Charles of Wales, he had to study in Wales to like make.

Speaker 2

So you went to two into ability Swift. Yes. And he got his no place was in Carnarvon Castle. So I went to university about 10 miles from Carnarvon, a place called Bandra, where I. Did my music. So yeah, we we are a small the the bit of of the UK that sort of sticks out on the West and we are quite fiery. And yes, we have our own language and don't you dare say we're English, it tends to work like that, right? And so I mean, so I I work in a place called Bridgend which is about. 1520 miles from Cardiff, which is the Welsh capital. OK, if you have kept the UK, you have to go to Cardiff in Wales because it's gorgeous. We've got castles and we've got it's a mate, there's no cast.

Speaker 1

Well, I'll get to come for my graduation. So when I come for my graduation trip, I'm going to plan a big I I'm I'm only been to London, so I want.

Speaker 2

You.

Speaker 1

To go not to London.

Speaker 2

That's really when you come over for that, you know, I'm not far away. Let's meet up and I can show you around and and whatever. In fact, the place you're going in West Wales is really nice and you've got Harry Potter that's filmed in Wales. There's actually a beach where Dobby died, and there's actually like a tombstone with this is where Dobby died, you know, and some of the point I'm saying is, we're not from a particularly affluent area. So our students are, you know, money is not affluent, but our students come in, they're not auditioned. We don't audition. We take anybody who wants to come. Pretty much and we probably get 100% success rate and they go where they want as in drama school or dance school or university if they want to go, they only get in. So I've got students that are currently on the West End are currently touring in the UK. They have done Broadway shows from here to the mean, so it's it's really a matter of you're working with everything. And I think if you we are sort of our college motto, if you can say is really be all you can be. And we work hard to get them to be as good as they can be with whatever start point they've got.

Speaker 1

OK.

Speaker 2

You know, so I I. So I think we that's I don't know whether that's a different ideology than you have in certain you know you need colleges whatever. But that's how our department works.

Speaker 1

No, I think that's great. I think we just have less. So yeah, our our high schools go from 14 to 18. And then it's four years, and then you go to university is the same as college basically here. So it's the four.

Speaker 2

Yeah, because you have, you have Community College, don't you? Which I think I think that's similar to what I work in. I think that would be your version of that.

Speaker 1

With you. Community colleges, people who can't get in. They don't. Or maybe they can't afford. They can't get in, they they can't go straight to a four year university, so they go do a Community College and then it's only they only have two years offered and they have to finish their bachelor's degree in a four year institution, which are called universities, basically. And then universities usually have graduate programs, and a college will not have graduate programs, so that would be the difference. And so and then the other thing is we don't have what I like about the UK is that you do put such an emphasis. I mean, you are the holders. I mean, you're in Wales, but the rest of the UK is the holder and not the Scottish. But everyone who's English.

Speaker 2

Yes.

Speaker 1

They're the they're the holders of the English language. Like, I didn't realize that until I came to London, and then the first time I came to London, I saw the West End and I saw all the. Museums and I said, oh. This is the center of the English language.

Speaker 2

Which?

Speaker 1

I said Ohh I get it now because I'm an Anglophone, right? But I don't think about it as my language is based somewhere and the center of for art for art, music and everything.

English with Shakespeare. It's all London, and then the you know. So I'm like, oh, and that really, like, opened my mind as a, as a as an English speaker. US person because we have our own, obviously our own culture. We have our own art, but to see.

Speaker 2

Close, yeah.

Speaker 1

See that this our whole musical theater tradition, and even if you go back to the per cell operas, right, which were in English, which is so old, but then you always think Monteverdi, you think about that.

Speaker 2

They don't, there's, you know. So yeah, you've got your parcel. So I studied all that in uni, so that was my my first and 2nd year was looking at all early music and that kind of stuff. So looking at the early operas.

Speaker 1

Yeah, but that is the that is the the you guys are the holders of it. So that's why I think you guys put more emphasis into.

Speaker

So.

Speaker 1

Supporting it, that gets part of the culture that you're like, OK, you can go into theater.

Speaker 2

It's it's, it's. Weird though, because because I've looked at jobs in the states because there are more jobs to do, I do in the states than there in the UK. You know, because every school, every, every city, every town has a college, university, school that does some form of empty Glee stuff. Do you mean all that kind of stuff? So what they're doing in the UK is the arts at the moment are not particularly important, so the funding is being cut on everything. So are sending in a college is being kept in general, education is being kept because other things are more important. Allegedly. Yeah. Went during COVID, who kept everybody going. It was all the performance. Yeah, which is, but that's that's an entire different kettle of fish and it's.

Speaker 1

You know.

Speaker 2

When I'm by bed anyway, right?

Speaker 1

Well, the UK has some other problems right now. Oh, yeah, you know, well, all I heard was about your big riots this summer. And I'm like, oh, my gosh. See, that's. A whole nother.

Speaker 2

That that wasn't that wasn't as major as it seems. Actually it it was more.

Speaker 1

Good.

Speaker

And.

Speaker 2

Yeah, we said games. A couple of things, but things like that in. The UK we just. Deal with it. I start with and it's like, bang. It's it's bizarre because I'm a great fellow of you. I'm not going to go into American politics, but I'm a big fellow of American politics and just watching. You have an interesting country.

Speaker 1

We do. We have a very interesting country right now. Yeah, but yeah, but our Parliament has less spicy. You guys have a much more interesting Parliament to watch. Our Congress is boring.

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 2

Because I I I I. Those, they just do what I told you. I will go. Oh, no, no, that's all. And they argue. But I I think so. My understanding of the states is rather than being lots of different states, it's just lots of different countries as far as I'm concerned, it's the country. And that's why they're so different. Whereas the UK we have have Scotland, Wales, Ireland and even.

Speaker

Hmm.

Speaker 2

Though we're all one. We have our own independent. You know, identity. It's the same in the states, you know, different states are. So I look at this, that's that's a that's a little country.

Speaker 1

Yeah, yeah, that's that's what I explained to my grad advisor who's in the UK. I was. She's like, oh, but didn't Trump ban abortion? I'm like, no, he actually just let each country essentially make their own rule. Like they and some like, I live in California. You can abort a nine month baby here. Like, I'm serious. Like, you can. So that's why I'm like, no, he did not ban abortion. He's not going to ban abortion. I'm like. Complicated but, and that's hard for people to understand. It's like he didn't ban abortion, he just took away, he said it was no longer. The overarching. Like that, you can't tell the states what to do. And then if you think of each state as a country, you're like, oh, it makes sense. If you don't get.

Speaker 2

And. In each state to country then it's confusing, and then the federal thing is like, how will we call our like national government. So each country has got its own like Wales has got its own parliament, it's got its own laws. However, on language, as we said and what might be worth you is having a look at some of the Welsh folk songs, some of the Welsh language songs. And again, if you wanted me to help you with those, I'm more than happy. Once you've done all your stuff to do bits of that because at the moment I'm I, I'm not fluent in Welsh, but I'm I'm developing and it's it's type and stuff. But the Welsh folks owns the Welsh culture, is really, really interesting. Especially that's what kept the language and singing happening throughout the last 5-6 hundred years is because of the Welsh culture. Again. But it's very well spaced, so it's very.

Speaker 1

Right, right. It makes sense. I mean, I've heard of Celtic music, right? So that's like another culture, right? So those are all traditions, oral traditions that are passed down and.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I know. Scotland. Yeah. No, it makes sense. I mean, we. Yeah. So it's so do you direct the full do you do full scale scale productions and direct them or are you? Teaching theater classes.

Speaker 2

So. Well, basically again it's it's a bit different with us than is with you. So I I'm main vocal coach working with groups or with individuals. I have a private practice where I do mostly 1 to one sessions in college. Because of funding, it's mostly group things, so we do a pantomime which you won't even probably. Know what that? Is because it's a very UK based thing. So how to explain parts? Might somebody doesn't know what is?

Speaker 1

Is this like a non staged version of a music? No.

Speaker 2

No, no, not well, it's. It's actually really put together, but in a so it's probably based on a fairy tale.

Speaker

At all.

Speaker 2

You have you always have a good you have a hero and a villain. The villain always comes on stage, left the hero, the Fairy or good person always comes to stage, right? The villain is always in the green light. The fairy is always in the light. He then.

Speaker 1

It's a formula, OK.

Speaker 2

Then it starts with a big course number. The main boy is only played by a guy. The main sort of like game or character is only played by a guy, but not a guy in drag. You know he's a guy, but he plays a daemon. It look on YouTube, it's gonna be easy. To me to explain.

Speaker 1

Alright, I'll look that up at some point cause I'm like that is the most interesting thing. Yeah, we don't have that. We just have Broadway shows that we do in.

Speaker

So.

Speaker 2

High schools and stuff? Well, that's really great with that is that when we have American stars in it. So Hasselhoff has been in it many times and he's my friends. One of the MD's. And he said, and Henry Winkler, the fans, he loves doing it. So Americans come over because they and they, they the pandas, are normally only on between December and January normally. And these stars can make. £100,000 just for six weeks.

Speaker 1

Wow. Amazing. I'll have to come see you. I'll have to see the big ones then in London sometime.

Speaker 2

Because it's massive that. It's massive that time of year, so we do that this time of year and then we do a big musical then in January, sorry in June time. So last year we did footloose. I was keys to a map, so I'm not MD cause I'm I'm looking after three other courses who do little shows so I haven't got time to look after those and.

Speaker 1

Hmm. OK. Yeah. I was just trying to understand your full role, so. I can understand. Lynn is going to be, but I actually I only have two minutes left. So because I do have a student come, that's OK you can always meet again another time. But I've been really interesting.

Speaker

So.

Speaker 2

Sorry, sorry, sorry. Yeah, if you wanna have more than I'm quite. I talk a lot. I apologise.

Speaker 1

No, I like it. I like it because when I coat it, it's going to be it's going to be really interesting. And also because I have to compare, I can make it I if let's say there's a trend with the UK teachers versus my American teachers that will make a really good thing to study because I have to still right this is my. Penultimate paper. So basically after this one is my master's thesis. So whatever I find in this study, I'm going to then take and figure out the big problem and solve it. And that might be figuring out the best app for these people or comparing people improving with an app versus improving with something else. You know, like comparing two things and this method versus that method.

Speaker

Yes. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Or, you know, just seeing that teachers are not getting that education because most of the teachers are answering now that they think teachers should have more training in hard sciences. That question was like really far to. Right and.

Speaker 2

But that's that's. Why I do what I? Do because it's all based on science.

Speaker 1

Yeah, but the fact is all the teachers agree, so everyone taking the taking my study was like, yes, we do need more science, but then they're not a lot of the teachers don't actually understand the way the brain, the neuro, no one's learning the neurology. No one is learning the psychology like the, you know, the brain is. And then the loop and the hearing, no one learns that they just learn like formants.

Speaker 2

Whereas I I look. I've looked into all that because I find it really interesting, so I looked in that myself and how it.

Speaker 1

Yeah, me too. That's why I'm doing this. So I'm trying to like see if that if we add that into the education or maybe let's say you say, still someone else says something. But those two things have one thing in common and then I say I proposed to kind of all of the big that we have, you know, vocal pedagogues all over the US then that we have our organizations, we have that maybe then that becomes oh we need to add this standard into the vocal pedagogy. Horses is missing because we're just training opera singers to teach opera singers and like we need something else in that. OK, so my suit will be arriving shortly, but thank you and I will e-mail you if I need to meet with you. Again, and feel free to e-mail.

Speaker 2

Yeah, it's fine. Like I said, Fridays.

Speaker 1

Me if when I come to Wales, I'm going to tell you that I'm coming, but they're not gonna let me graduate till like next. Like it might be. The summer of 26 actually, because they.

Speaker 2

Yeah. I want to. Because I actually thought of doing the course you're doing. That was something I actually was thinking of doing. So when this is done, perhaps I'll chat you about the actual course and see. I will.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I'll let you know what I think about that too. So, all right, I will have a great weekend.

Speaker 2

So I can say. Deal, which is Welsh, which is, thank you very much. You. Bye. See you soon.

Speaker 1

Very much. Thank you.

Transcript – Participant B –College Voice Faculty in USA

Speaker 1

OK, so I just want this to be mainly open and we can pretty much talk about anything, but the reason I am doing this research is that in previous research well as a teacher I came across many students who had very. Limited abilities and pitch matching and I had never been trained in how to teach that. As someone who studied classical vocal performance. And I basically had to figure out my own methodology and then I figured I should research whether teachers or what are they doing and then did they have training in it? And then, you know, just. How people feel about it and what they've seen out in the field and yeah, anything really that's related.

Speaker 2

Sure. So would you like me to talk a little bit about some of the? Some of the experiences I've had, like some some case studies type anecdote stuff.

Speaker 1

That way. Yeah. So first you can tell me about, like, what was your background before, you know, becoming a teacher and then then you can talk about, you know, the experiences you've had, I guess. And then, yeah, and then maybe how your background or training related to that basically.

Speaker 2

So I did. I did a my undergrad is in professional music which is Berkeley's way of of having a tutor and adventure type of major. So essentially I. Was able to design my own program. Really is what that means. So I drew a lot at the time from the performance division and from the Jazz. Position division, which is. Kind of funny because I have not really used that but, but that division was the way into understanding harmony. That's why, like I I started singing because I heard people singing together and I was like, amazing. And then I got interested in different genres. So. So there was no training in my coming up either. About we're really even voice teaching at that point, let alone how you, how you've trained people to to match pitch. I did then sort of independently and through, you know, was looking at what's out there in the voice world, who's teaching, who's teaching what. Still not all that much about teaching pitch matching, and then when I started teaching at a university, the expectation is that they've all been auditioned, and so there's a level of ability. However, I have encountered students at this point in in undergrad situation who couldn't tell if. And they were. Their voice was going up or down. They were. I guess what music there? What? What speech? Language pathologists would call stimulate so you could get them to do it. So like, OK, so. So just kind of starting to appreciate how it's learned. Because I was interested in vocal pedagogy and then was thinking about how to train teachers to teach boys. Which I have an online course in through Berkeley Online and also I designed the minor for Berkeley College of Music in Boston in teaching voice. We do have to, we do sort of grapple

with what you know with the development of musical skills. So that going back and looking at Cooks's work and then adolescent voice. And so what's the journey of how humans do that so. So understanding that that process and that's I didn't find all that much out there about how to help people match pitch. I don't you I'm sure you've looked more extensively at this point. So it's really been, I've really just been sort of Magpies things from pedagogues by going to their workshops and their maths classes and and and taking what what seemed to be useful and sharing it with students and then sending them on their way. I think possibly the most one of the most fruitful things came from the Parva. Folks from from the Pan American Biology Association. Beth was talking about working with she does a lot of this work. Have you come across her? Is. She.

Speaker 1

What's her last name?

Speaker 2

I will look it up to make sure I have it correctly, but it's Falcone. Falcone.

Speaker 1

OK, something like that. OK, I'm just gonna write it down because I haven't, actually.

Speaker 2

Yeah, well, she yeah, she does a fair amount of work. I don't know how much she's published about it, though, but she gave a talk in which she said, you know what I found helpful rather than me giving a note that they have to sing or me going to a piano or a guitar and producing the pitch. And then they have to match that. I've actually found it really helpful to get them to make a sound and then I have to match their sound. And that somehow in that process then then we can trade it around and they they start to do better, which is pretty.

Speaker 1

Interesting. Yeah. OK. So you're a you're a university faculty.

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 1

OK. And then what, what is your position, sorry.

Speaker 2

I like missed. Sorry, I'm so I'm an associate professor at Berkeley College of Music. Nick, so there I teach private instruction and and recital preparation. It's sort of it's divided up a bit weirdly at Berkeley, but because we don't have our our students come in and everybody has to have a principal instrument. Then you could choose to be a performance major, but even if you're a, if you, even if your major is film scoring, if you came in as a singer, you're getting two years of lessons and voice. You know, so.

Speaker 1

OK, so even the non perform it whatever like they still have to take an instrument and then did you have a PhD?

Speaker 2

No, I don't. I don't. So I have. I have a masters degree in education. UM. Because I'd spent so much time studying what was out there in the vocal pedagogy world that I wasn't really quite prepared to just. I'm like, you know what, let's take one step further back and just study how people learn.

Speaker 1

Yeah. No, that's really smart. Also all Berkeley. What I know about Berkeley is you were one of the first places that had any pop music, basically anything non classical.

Speaker 2

It's about the people that think landscape is. Sort of weird too.

Speaker 1

Like back in the day, even 20 years ago, you know, when I was in school, it's like, oh, the only place you can go for non class music is basically Berkeley College of Music. And now there's a lot more popular music programs spawning up. So yeah, because like where I went, USC has a popular music program now, and NYU has 1, so I'm like. OK. Well, that's. Good. You know, just because it's very stodgy, right? Like everything had to be one way and or theater, but then theater decided that's all within theater, not music, which always sound very weird. That musical theater is under theater. And like, they're not allowed to be like voice. You know, it's like, you know.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Well, when we, I mean, we were founded in 1945 and at the time it was revolution. Try to say you can teach musical principles through the music of the day you. Not that there's anything wrong with studying, but I like Bach plenty. But but like you don't have to start there. You can, you know. And so yeah, at the time. So and what? And and Berkeley frankly has gone through several identity. Crises in its in its history as well, because at what point? So if you're teaching the music of the day, jazz. At what point do you then become a conservator? Of jazz and never not fulfilling your mission of teaching today.

Speaker 1

Right, right. And then they don't go beyond. Yeah, that's that's typical. It's like people get stuck in an era and then it's like this is. I mean, even I feel that's with like, the Golden Age of opera, right. Or it's like, they always love doing the same operas. It's like, oh, we're just going to keep doing the same one. It's like they keep making new operas like, I know. But we only like to do these ones like, OK, and they do that with these little theater as well. I mean, they have new musicals. There's always like, oh, we have to do. The Sound of Music. Again, you know what I mean? It's like it's always the there's. There's a lot of, I think, music in general just creates a. Lot of traditional. Nostalgic things. It's very emotional.

Speaker 2

So and even even though we've been a, a, a contemporary music school forever. The voice were big and different departments are handled that differently too, so that the voice department specifically, we've only just this semester, stopped requiring 4 years of a classical song.

Speaker 1

As a you mean when you're in like your undergraduate major has to take classical something.

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 1

For four years.

Speaker 2

You have to sorry for four semesters so you don't have to audition with a classical piece, but once you get into Berkeley, you were until last month. Required to present to performance standard in an exam.

Speaker

A.

Speaker 2

I mean, we called it a traditional piece and then bought over what that meant, but essentially they.

Speaker 1

Oh, it could be a folk song. I mean, you could sing Shenandoah. OK, so, like, whatever we that's how we classify it. Classical in Nats. Now it's like American folk songs can be I'm like.

Speaker 2

So that so that our faculty basically was our our faculty came from the same place, all boys teachers came from in that. You know from the 40 years ago or 30 years ago, certainly 20 years ago when I was a student there, if you've learned to sing classically, you can sing anything. Really. You now? Yeah, you know, and they've learned to sing healthily so they so the the faculty either came from there and we still have some of those. Folks. Or they were singing backgrounds for Chaka Khan and so they got pulled off the road, had no academic experience, no teaching experience, no nothing. But they were amazing singers. So our faculty. Basically consisted of those two. Whoops, none of which speaks to hey, do you know how to teach? Someone to match pitch.

Speaker 1

OK, so you're teaching, so you guys do have you have a vocal pedagogy program?

Speaker 2

We have a minor in it now.

Speaker 1

OK, so so then you're still designing curriculums, but it's just a minor at this point, it's not.

So you guys don't yet have a commercial music vocal pedagogy program?

Speaker 2

Well, we have. OK. So then a couple of years ago, we also merged with Boston Conservatory and when? I say merged. They were still auditioned separately but, but yeah, yeah, yeah. Berkeley was only undergrad forever, so it's only recently that we've started adding some graduate programs.

Speaker 1

Oh, you take classes.

Speaker 2

And they tend to be at our other campuses. So at in New York in Valencia. So the so the graduate programs on the Boston campus are relatively new, but the Conservatory side of town. Have have masters degrees 1 is a master of Music, 1 is a Master of Arts and both of those are involve the vocal pedagogy programs at the masters level. At the undergrad level, there is just the minor in pedagogy on the Berkeley side of the.

Speaker 1

Campus my favorite question from my survey, which I think is going to be really interesting to because I already have. I already have like a summary kind of result of I have like 89 responses. So I have like nice little charts created, but then I have I'll do more statistical crazy things to it, but really interestingly. The the amount of people who were first wanting to be singers, that was very interesting to me. It's like who, who, like, did you want to be a professional singer? Initially it is cute so far to professional singer, then later have that question about do you consider yourself a teacher or a singer? Which one more are you equal, you know? So then I think I'm going to be able to put that statistical everyone who answered that they wanted to be a singer. I can then test that against all of the later things about like, do you like working with poor pitches? And how do you feel about it? It's going to be really interesting because I do think my theory is that. I there's very few people in the sample size who were sometimes there's like a pianist who they were like. Well, I was a pianist and I wasn't. I kind of realized I could teach voice. I start teaching voice, but they they were a pianist, right? Everyone else was. I wanted to be a singer. A few people were choir director people. But generally, I'd say we're talking, like, 80% of my voice teacher sample is. People that were singers at a very high level that wanted to get a performance

degree, then maybe came teachers and so again, you're dealing with the population of people who always knew how to sing. Because I haven't met anyone, I really haven't met anyone who's got to the level of Conservatory level voice where they would tell a story of like, you know, when I was a kid, I was the atonal. I was the one off pitch in the back of the chair. Like no, I've never heard that before. Pretty much anyone I know who got to a very high level singing wasn't good. Good singer, naturally. Right or like as a child showed talent towards it already. I hadn't seen many people come from that far to that far. I've seen people prove a little bit, but I haven't seen someone.

Speaker

The.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah. I mean one of the other things that's been going on where I were at Berkeley in the last few years has been. It's probably started maybe.

Speaker

Hmm.

Speaker 2

Let's just say 10 years ago. But it was growing before then, so I graduated from Berkeley in 2000 and. Four. And when I was a student, there were 4000 students. There were 1500 guitar players. There were 900 singers. There were about 550 piano, 500 bass, maybe probably about 500 percussion, and then the brass instruments and all that, you know. That number started flipping and I think maybe 10, maybe 15 years ago there were more singers than any other instrument. So now over 1500 singers.

Speaker

MHM.

Speaker 2

And so again, they're not all going to be performance majors, but that's 1500 people who need voiceless, who like, who are getting voice lessons. That they're expected to. Complete as part of their as part of their degree. And. That does a couple of things. Ohh by the way, the reasoning for that was we were looking at the gender balance of our college and noticing that there was a lot of men and not very many women. And historically, even fewer, like when I was there, I was, I was the only girl in some of my classes.

Speaker 1

Because of the guitar heaviness, is that what we're saying?

Speaker 2

Yep, guitar heaviness, but also like for a lot of for a lot of. I mean you can give a free presidential scholarship to every single 17 year old female tuba player you find. But after you've recruited those two people, you've still got, like, how are you going to? How are you going to address gender balance? Well, So what?

Speaker 1

Well, I'll try it base. I mean, yes, there's a few instruments that are going to be rare for females, upright bass, very large brass instrument.

Speaker 2

Was.

Speaker 1

I can see what.

Speaker 2

You're saying, OK, but we got there was an influx of of. Singers and and and. I mean, we can attach other identities to it as well. I suppose Asian piano players cause they were female. That's like, you know, I mean, we don't have an orchestral thing. Really. Yes, you

can come and study strings, but why would you study classical violin at Berkeley that makes. No sense. So yeah, so so that shift. Has meant that. There are definitely faculty who feel like this person shouldn't be here. They're not good enough. Where Berkeley the standards are going down, to which my response is. OK, great. Well, that's a problem for us to all talk about later. But right now, they're here. So how are we going to help them?

Speaker 1

Yeah, you're taking a practical. OK, so this is where you've now actually had singers. Who? They're not performance majors, but maybe they're studying music industry, but they're instruments voice, but then they take voice lessons, but then the faculties like this is terrible. Like, these people can't think, but they chose voice because they don't play anything. OK, I think I get what you're saying. Yeah. It's actually a good sample. I mean, honestly, you guys should study yourself because.

Speaker

Just.

Speaker 1

You're such a unique. Conservatory if I can call you that. I mean, because every other Conservatory. That's classical is, you know, I think very split between the orchestra you're going to have more piano and violins typically. And then, yeah, you're going to have a lot of the foreign students from Korea. We had a lot of Korean exchange, you know, foreign students, Chinese, you know, because that's a lot of the instruments they play. Right. But yeah, I mean that's that's interesting that it was so male. I'm very surprised by that because I just think now you hear with singers it's just. Really. There's too many women in opera, for example, and there's not enough men who are becoming opera bear. Yeah.

Speaker 2

Right, well and yes, and we we certainly we certainly have that in our department but that's but our department has been charged with like get more women in the college because I mean traditional like wait in 1945 like we were jazz school.

Speaker 1

Yeah, yeah, yeah, it was, yeah. And 94.5, who was allowed to be a jazz musician. Right? Like, acceptable. Like who? And also, women weren't even necessarily even and go across to any university. Women weren't even attending, weren't even becoming doctors in 1945. I mean, there were a lot of careers in 1945. I think women could be teachers and secretaries at that point. So of course, like, that's going to be.

Speaker 2

So.

Speaker 1

And for us to apply today's standards to them is also like crazy, because you have to look at everything like you have like, wow, we were all male, like, well, Harvard was all male. You know what I mean? Like, like, so things have changed so much in 80 years, right? So. But that's interesting because, yes, you're probably going to get different populations. So now you're saying that you have faculty.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

Through their their their their pedagogues right. So they're teaching private lessons and they're now dealing with a level of student they weren't trained to teach because these pedagogues have been teaching. Good singer, good, good singers. Their whole life. Yeah. I mean one that's there was a study from Nats teachers where they surveyed 2000 people teachers and they're like, which of these traits give someone the most indication that they're

going to have a talent and, you know, to succeed as a as a singer and pitch was the number one.

Speaker

M.

Speaker 1

And then tone was the second. So it's generally so that's why. So my whole thesis of my original 1 was how is it? That. We consider pitch to be so important, and then I looked at these pedagogy pedagogical books like Richard Miller, Appleman, venard, whatever, all these old pedagogies of the 20th century. And I went through the entire books, I'd have coded them. Like how many of these chapters are going to be dedicated to teaching pitch, or how many pages even. And we're talking nothing. Like literally, they don't even mention pitch. They didn't even mention they would spend chapters and chapters on vowel formants and on. You know all the vowels and when you get to this range and then the tested, you know, like, yeah, like all of that. All of that was in there. Not one mention of pitch or a student who's maybe singing flat even. And I'm like, what? This is crazy. So then I realized there's a big problem. And nowadays and then we have this new problem now where now. Anyone who just has a YouTube channel or TikTok is now like a voice expert. And they're giving all sorts of advice, which isn't based on anything. So we have like, no, I'm just saying we have, like, and then those teachers, some of those people are making the most money. And then the teachers who are trained in these music schools don't have any clients. They don't know how to market themselves like, they're. So the big problem is you have, and I think bigger than that is like, you have all these performance major singers. Who end up as voice teachers?

Speaker

Who?

Speaker 1

Were not really trained to teach voice. And therefore, but if you're taking all these people into school to little unethical to. Take people, I think, who are don't have a chance of even making it at all. I remember when I got to USC and you know, it's the Thornton School of Music. It's like very prestigious, right. And I remember getting into my first undergraduate master class with the other voice students. And I heard some of them and I'm like. How did this person even get into school like I was like the level of? Of like, yes, they were singing classical voice like they were in choir maybe, and learned to sing an art song from the 24 Italian songs and not like the tone the Brett, like everything was like like you're not an opera singer. You know what I mean? But it's like ohh money, right? So it's like they let people in because of money. So.

Speaker 2

I mean, I'm fine. I'm. I get, like, the ethical questions. It's with me squarely because it's not it's it's the money thing, but frankly. Then they're never going to be 19 and 20 again in 21. So that why? Why? Why not let them spend that time doing something that is going to be feeding them later on, you know. But but for me. I mean, Berkeley has always. Had the approach of OK. You don't know. We'll teach you. So we start. I mean, we start with, like, here's a treble Clef the the, the difference being back in the day, most people tested out of those classes. But but that the whole point of that was to accommodate some kind of, like, insanely brilliant drummer who could just play his **** off but just didn't know notation yet, you know.

Speaker 1

Right, right. Yeah. Well, you had the jazz people who were self trained and then you guys taught them the fundamentals. Like, let's learn about jazz harmony that you're already playing in the clubs. Yeah.

Speaker 2

I mean, come. We'll take it to. I right? Like I don't mind. I I'm not fundamentally opposed to giving someone a go. Though what I'm opposed to is if you're failing your training one, then fail it don't get like. Crept through the system and then handed into air training 2 where you still don't have those skills.

Speaker 1

Ah, so you feel there's a little bit of grade?

Speaker

Like we need.

Speaker 1

Inflation in your university.

Speaker 2

We need it. We need it. There need to be barrier exams. It's like OK, we accepted you. Did you work hard? Have you, like learned anything? And if not then we don't keep taking your.

Speaker 1

Money. You almost need a remedial. Yeah, well, in law school, they kick everyone out every year they they cut the lowest 10% in law school every year. What happened to my friend she? Got kicked out of law school after one year? Guess what? She became a parallel paralegal. Got a job in tech and now makes good six figures doing contracts. But it's so good that they kicked her out of law school. That after the first year so shouldn't waste another two years of tuition because they knew she wasn't gonna pass the bar. Basically, they were like, she's not going to pass the bar, right? So they they said doing them a service actually.

Speaker 2

I mean, one of my one of my one of my students from a couple of years ago. Though. Who had difficulty matching pitch, but possibly an even bigger deficit in terms of just where she was in the bar. I mean, it was amazing to me, truly probably the worst case of someone who couldn't keep time that I've I've ever encountered. Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

Yeah.

Speaker 2

And yet she could improve. Yeah, and she worked. She probably was my hardest working student, and so she auditioned for the performance major and. Didn't get in. And buckled down even harder. And then auditioned again and still didn't get in, which was kind of at that point I thought that's a little bit unfair because I've seen other people in your major and I don't see how she's that much worse. But then I had that insider knowledge of, like, if you give this girl a go, she's gonna work.

Speaker 1

And her she was rhythm. Yeah, but she had pitch.

Speaker 2

The pitch was OK, her pitch wasn't any worse than other folks who still have some work.

Speaker 1

OK. You're saying she had no sense of rhythm, so she couldn't. I've met people like that, actually. Actually, that's a whole nother thing. I'd like to study. It's like people that number that I read. A study that babies who skipped crawling have. They may be the ones that have trouble with rhythm because. Crawling is that stage, but then if they go straight to walking,

they don't have that fundamental like sense. The crawling is a rhythm thing. I was like, huh. That's really interesting. So they'd have to study that in a bigger, bigger scale. I had a girl who was pretty about it, rhythm. And now she's doing ballroom dancing of all things. And she's actually like. Getting it in terms of like she has really good rhythm now, but then sometimes I have to be like. You have to count your song. You know, it's like it's like wasn't. Innate. Right, like an innate sense. Whereas I know for myself, it's like rhythm is just ingrained in me. I'm, like, always moving to rhythm, you know, it's like it's so. And I think we just have some people. Have. Really. Musical brains. My brain is really musical, where my ears are so attuned. That I can be. I can have my eyes closed, or sometimes I have a piano student here and I'll be walking around my apartment, whatever. And then, like, I'll be like, oh, we have to get water. I'll be in the next room. I'll be like, OK, that, you know, like my ears. So attuned to the music that I'll catch them on anything when I'm not even looking at them. Voice students as well. I can be not looking and I can just close my eyes and I know what's going on totally right. Like it's like you just hear it so astutely, I can hear the slightest little thing, but a. Lot of people don't have ears like.

Speaker 2

That right? Right, I think, I mean it's it's.

Speaker

So.

Speaker 2

It's a it's a really. The the timeline thing in education is also very difficult to surmount because. Who? Who says it takes? 13 weeks to learn Harmony 3.

Speaker 1

Right, right. Well, it's interesting you guys should have a remedial. I almost feel like you guys should create a remedial course for people who don't pass, like they didn't pass out of your training 1. So you don't want to, like, put them in like your training 2. But they almost need like, an extra tutoring. It's almost like one A2 like, you know, you need something.

Speaker 2

Maybe it takes. Here. Yeah, well, what what we've. What we've done is we've expanded like again the assumption was you know you just sort of test out at the first level of courses. So that you know when you arrive you you've auditioned you, you've gotten into the school and you show up for check in and you're given a bunch of placement tests to sort you out into which classes you need to be in for those core skills. So the assumption was. Like a bunch of entering, students would just pass in, would just test straight into higher level. But they've had to create a lot more sections of those beginner levels and add more like free free classes than than they ever used to. Have to teach.

Speaker 1

Yeah. So then you are, you only. Do you teach any private students? You're only in the university?

Speaker 2

So I take, yeah, I teach everybody in the voice department pretty much with very rare exceptions. I mean, there is over 100 faculty. That's what happens when you've got now 2000 boy students. You're right. We should do studies, by the way. There was a study a couple of years ago that I responded to.

Speaker 1

That's crazy.

Speaker 2

And I kind of knew one of the authors, but late years later, when we became like when we became friends, she said, you know, we had to exclude your responses. We had to have a

whole meeting about it cause to exclude data is like a giant. No, no, in research. But we had a giant meeting about it because your response is based on Berkeley stuff just skewed our results. So yeah, it it's like. OK, Berkeley, you. Go be over there. Play. Go do your own thing you had.

Speaker 1

Yeah, yeah. You need your own, yeah.

Speaker 2

We have what most of the availability of what so many studies in voice in particular don't have, which is like we've got an N of 2000 like not an N of two or six or one or, you know, 70 research that happens in the voice world, where there's some, unfortunately, because we have.

Speaker 1

Yeah.

Speaker 2

A. Sticking our butts about. It's like we're embarrassed that we give degrees. It's so funny to me. Like, really.

Speaker 1

Really. Why? Because the.

Speaker 2

Yeah, because we're busy. We're busy, slightly crass. I don't know if you should say this on recording, but we're such a bunch of ***** like. You know, we want people who are in the industry doing stuff and in the contemporary world. That's often not people who were trained in conservatories, and so.

Speaker 1

OK. So you're saying you'll get faculty who are in the music industry who aren't teachers, but just to say they're on the faculty to be like, oh, someone is teaching here from Broadway or whatever, like, whatever. Like Hollywood, we have a film score here. OK. I see what you're saying. Well, I mean, every private I feel like. Every private institution. Is for profit, right? So it's like every instrument. And I mean, I have a student applying for NYU for their whatever contemporary music program. And luckily they're very wealthy. Like, I'm like, he's like, oh, what if I don't get it? I'm like, I think you're going to get it. Like. Like, I'm pretty confident you're going to get in. Like you can pay. You know, NYU's now 75,000 a year or something like that. Something crazy. I'm like, I feel like if you can pay, they're going to let you in, you know, like he can sing. I mean, he's not like a bad singer. But I.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I was. I was like, what? Ann Patchett the author said about MFA's in in writing. She said, OK, like, well, well, first of all, she said, do not go into debt for Graduate School to be a writer. Like, just don't just said if you get accepted into MFA's, what you need to be paying attention to is how much scholarship.

Speaker 1

That's right, yeah.

Speaker 2

They're offering you. If they're offering you scholarship, that actually tells you something about whether they want you to be there. If they're not offering you like scholarship, then. And it's money.

Speaker 1

Right. Like if you're going into MFA and they're making, you know, you're a, you're doing teaching aid, and they're giving you, like, a professor, you know, like a then, yes. If you're just like, paying a lot of private school money to get an MFA, like they're taking your money.

Yeah. No, I totally agree. Because if you actually good writer and like, oh, we want this person. OK, well, you're an interesting. So yes, you are a very interesting data point to put into this because you're teaching. Lee University students not necessarily voice performance. Theaters. So you're getting some people who are not as talented. You've also seen there's lack of. Resources. There's been a few studies on apps and things like that like does do apps help? And uh, one interest? So apparently just in general with auditory feedback. And they tested this will we can just kind of probably wrap up. By. You know 5 minutes from now, if they take a violin. And. You know, teaching people to bow and they kind of have, like, some of them get auditory feedback like whether they can hear it. And some people just get visual feedback and they kind of like block the sound. And then there's another test where they had singers sustain a pitch, but then they're listening to a a tone, but then the tone is going to go down by micro pitches and the non trade. Singer, the non trained singers. Their pitch starts to go down too, but the really trained singers can maintain their pitch regardless, which shows that there is a motor control aspect that is. Independent of the ear. But then people have to constantly listen to themselves against the changing impetus, basically so. And this auditory loop thing I was talking about. That is where I think you can. Well, my theory is if I can package this in a way that teachers can understand it, it can be used to diagnose what is causing the pitch problem because it's a process of hearing. Then as you're singing, you have to actually get live feedback of yourself singing now, by the way, stutter. Thing. Is an auditory feedback disorder. So when they delay, when they put headphones on stutterers and they find the correct amount of delay, where they can hear themselves, they can actually stop stuttering. So they're so there's similar things that maybe with pitch they can't hear back at the right rate to to adjust properly as they're singing. So that's like #2, right. And then three, it's people have don't have total memory. They can't remember like they might be able to repeat back the note right away. But then if you're if you're just like independently being like, can you hear that in your head without singing it? And they're like, no. Like some people can't hear the notes without. It's not connected for them, it's just like singing. Like. Yeah. So, anyway, all these little things are. So I think this is where my next security masters thesis after this one. And I'm thinking whatever I gained from this, maybe in the next one, I'm actually testing these theories about if we can independently dissect what is causing their pitch problem. Because it might be teaching someone to hear, it might be teaching someone to hear themselves while they're hearing also a a stimulus pitch. It's improving how many notes they can remember to repeat back stuff like that. So I think that's where. Yeah, but no, I really appreciate your thoughts. And if you have any other, you know, always e-mail me and I'll, I'll e-mail everybody the results.

Speaker

What's 2?

Speaker 1

And all that 22.

Speaker 2

Things bring to mind perhaps, and and again you may already be aware of them, that the study that you mentioned about the holding of the pitch sounds familiar. But I wonder if you've come across Sarah Kevins work.

Speaker 1

Let me.

Speaker 2

She did some stuff recently and I can dig it out.

Speaker 1

Is she the speech language pathologist? Yeah. OK.

Speaker 2

Right. So she used to teach at Berkeley, but she left to go study speech, language pathology. And she did some stuff on pitch accuracy just because, like the singers who think they're singing in tune and they're not. And the singers who don't think they're singing in tune and they are. And, you know, and then Heidi Moss, Ericsson stuff about audiation, too.

Speaker 1

OK. Oh, I see her article here. Yeah, maybe I'll use this. Oh, it's recent. She just published this in 2023. That's good. I always love when it's a new study because it might have not even been there yesterday, 92.

Speaker

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

Yeah. Yeah, it's pretty. I mean, most people seem to be relatively decent singers, like the average person is only, you know, 4% of people are actually tone deaf. And then the four pitch singers are less than 10%. However, they just keep coming to my studio. You know, everyone, everyone wants to sing, even though worse people, right. And then they.

Speaker 2

I have I. I'm 19 years. I've tried to the 10%.

Speaker 1

Yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly. And then I'm like, great, OK. Well, thanks for. Yeah.

Speaker

You know.

Speaker 2

Seems to me like in the same like in in that like skipping of the crawling. Yeah what was skipped in child was it. It makes me think. OK. Well then do I need to know more about Orphan Kadai and?

Speaker 1

You do. You do because I think also look, this is my own colloquial evidence. This is not anything but my two children have perfect pitch. I don't have perfect pitch. But you know what? My kids have been exposed to their whole life is me teaching voice lessons for their that I teach at home. They've heard me sing these exercises over and over. I did put them in music together when they were babies, but only for like two quarters. So like.

Speaker 2

Like.

Speaker

Right. Like, yeah.

Speaker 1

Did that really make them have perfect pitch so. So I just like if I sing a song out of the original key, they go mom. That's the wrong key, mom. That's the wrong key, mom. That's the wrong key. My kids have perfect pitch. So they had that by they were when? By the time they were five years old, they had that, by the way, because it started, they would just sing every single thing.

Speaker

Hmm.

Speaker 1

On the. On the absolute pitch, so I don't have perfect pitch so can't be genetic. I have close to I mean I have really good relative pitch, but I it's really hard for me to like. Remember the

exact note an Aria starts on. I'm usually like at at least 1/2 her whole step. I can be within a whole step, but I'm usually not on the actual. Right, so this is an opposite of that.

Speaker 2

Hmm.

Speaker 1

I've also found that most of my poor pitched middle schoolers, because I teach a lot of kids if I'm like, OK, let's sing and I start to play a note for them to match. They're singing before they've heard the note. I've seen it across the board. I've seen it with like 5 people all like I'd be like, OK, ready. And I'll like, I'll, like play. And most singers like take a moment. Like I'm playing the chord, you know? And then they're like. Oh yeah, magic piano, by the way, no one knew that the whole time. And then then they established the key, and then they sing. That is what most people who have a sense of tonality, the singers who are the poor pitched singers, will sing before I've even like I, as in consecutively. It's almost like as I'm as I'm playing it, they're saying I'm like, you didn't even hear it. I know you couldn't have heard it.

Speaker 2

Dude, that's so. I would want to like that opens up the Jazz improvisers who like for the folks who need to hear like, what's the chord change ahead like? Yeah, so interesting. So that the facility is very.

Speaker 1

Ohh no, that's for sure. Yeah, I mean, but don't. Yeah, I mean with jazz too, that's tricky because they don't always. Yeah, they could go in a different direction while they're actually just playing, right. The whole ensemble together can just like. Decide that they're going somewhere else, right, and they just.

Speaker

Yeah, well, yeah.

Speaker 2

Free, free jazz specifically for which Jim Jeffries was very fun about funny about, I don't know if you know, Jim Jefferies, a comedian at all but but yeah. He did a bit he he took. He made some offhand comment once on a podcast where he said he said free jazz. Yeah, that's exactly how much I'm paying.

Speaker 1

To hear it. Yeah. No, I mean, I get that there's, like, a sense of, I would imagine it's more like this is the overall skeleton. We then shift to this chord, but then it happens at its own pace, depending on whatever. We're all kind of improvising. And then we kind of come together in that moment. They all shift together, but yes, you have to kind of anticipate. But girl singers, we're all, you know, choral singers. You're like, OK, you, you kind of have a skeleton of where you're going and you're singing acapella. Choral in eight parts. You really have to keep your part. You really have to know what's going on.

Speaker

Hey.

Speaker 1

But yes, the poor pitched people did skip something. It's like, what is that exactly? And I actually also would theorize the other thing with my kids, with them having perfect pitch, they also were little songbirds. My children didn't stop singing from when they were two. Like, they literally like, literally all day, they're singing while they're doing everything. They're always a kid singing in class.

Speaker

Right.

Speaker 1

Constantly so I also have a theory that a lot that's just my family, because they're crazy. They're like me, but. But what about these kids who literally never sing? They never think about it. They just don't sing. They don't sing along with their recordings. They don't ever just sing in their room spontaneously. Singing is just this thing that they don't think about. It's like then one day, they're like, I want to sing. They've never sang before. So I do think there's a big. There is a lot of potential. Or improvement with practice, just like with everything, just like takes 2000 hours to become a master of something. I do believe that is a important thing I do. I think I think to some degree there could be some sort of like, OK, if you're this good and you have these skills, you can probably become this good and now be worth it because you want people to know their expectations like, hey, you're not going to be singing. La, Boem, Arias, but you know you can you will be able to get through this pitch, this whole, this piece. So yes, this is all interesting stuff, just because it's neglected so.

Speaker

Bye. So.

Speaker 2

Well, it's so lovely. Thank you. I hope if there's any you want to follow up on, but I'm. I'm very.

Speaker 1

Yeah. And I'm just, I mean now I know about Berkeley College of Music again. Well, I'm glad you have your job, and I'm glad it's employing. Apparently, all these voice teachers. To teach all those people, but probably not enough to live in Boston. You know what I mean? Like, no, that's what I mean. It's like, that's another problem. It's like, let's pay people, not a living wage. So of course they're all going to teach private on the side because most colleges don't pay enough.

Speaker 2

God.

Speaker 1

So Yep, just got us.

Speaker

So my.

Speaker 2

I got her. I always want to help any researcher who's out there, like doing, you know, providing evidence for us cause.

Speaker 1

Hey, we're trying to get, you know, vocal, make it a real science, not just, like make it feel like it's in the mask, you know? Like it's like it's it's, it's should be like shimmery sunflowers, you know, like that kind of voice teacher, it's like, OK.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Chucky Chan. Chucky Chan was like, I think she she gave an interview, and they asked her, like. How do you sing? How do you sing all those high notes? And I, I think implied at the in the question was also at your age kind of thing too. You like to? And she said, well, I see purple and you just still hear that and you go. I just feel sorry for the person who goes back to the practice room and they're like, ohh. And you're like, I guess mines too lavender. I don't know, like, is what we're trying to fix. OK, well, have a lovely Boston cold fall. So.

Speaker 1

Yeah, as I imagine we're California. So we're still like 70. You know, it's lovely low, 55 high 7075. OK, alright. I will see you sometime soon and we'll be in touch. Thank you so much. OK bye.

Speaker 2
Thanks, Erica. Cheers, bye.

Transcript – Participant C – Professional Singer in USA, USA Trained

Speaker 1
OK. Yeah, it is later on. Looks great is I can just transcribe it with. So it's really nice. Hi. OK. So we probably have less time than because I have to probably leave around like, you know, 17 minutes from now or so. But basically, I started researching. I've been teaching voice for 15 years and then.

Speaker
OK.

Speaker 2
OK, fine.

Speaker 1
I started a Masters degree a few years ago part time and I decided to spend researching time, researching poor pitch methodology, just as I had so many. I had so many poor pitch students and then when I looked through all the books and stuff, there was no information on it and I even read these great famous.

Speaker 3
Huh. Great.

Speaker 1
Pedagogical books like Richard Miller and and literally nobody even mentioned pitch like it wasn't even in the book. It's not even a chapter. So anyway, I'd love to hear your experience, but your background is and like any methods or stories you have of teaching.

Speaker 3
So hard. Oh yeah. That's ridiculous. So first of all, thank you for. Your patience. I'm away on a. Gig. And this is like our dark day. So I. Scheduled, you know? This phone call, because I had, you know, some free time there. I lost track of time. So my background is similar to yours. I started teaching one-on-one voice lessons. When I was in college, so like, right immediately following my freshman year of College, I taught my first voice lesson and. Really just loved it. Loved it, loved. It slowly built a studio from one student and this was. Like back in. The day before, like social media and stuff, so it. Was all word of mouth. And you know, every break or summer or whatever I would take. In undergrad and then. After my undergrad and voice performance, I decided well in my university told me repeatedly that I was not quote UN quote, ready for grad school. So it was like, what am I supposed to do with my life now that I have a, you know, music degree and? Then I went. Part time to Westminster Choir College and started their voice performance and voice pedagogy. Masters program with and and my. They had two tracks at the time. They were very similar, but the pedagogy track had more academia to it and so I was drawn to that because of the teaching component like teach me how to teach voice and you know, I really fell in love with the program. I was part time for the first couple of semesters worked toward my. Matriculation. Audition and really, the program taught me how to teach. It taught me how to sing well and it was like everything I needed at the time to, you know, give me the tools that I needed to succeed in teaching boards. Yeah, you know and. Like and through all those connections. You know, I've taught at various places privately the collegiate level, but only like county colleges, that it's not like. You know, university caliber students who already

come in with the strong foundation. So I have had a lot of pitch poor students over the years and it's tough and you are correct, there are very few resources other than like singing along with them and drilling intervals. Yeah. So. It is really hard and I don't know if you want me to start elaborating on some of my methods.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I mean, methods are great or also like just you know if you had, was it frustrating or was it interesting like like was this a challenge you liked or was it like you didn't want to where I mean that too, but then I.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Also, yeah, methods are good.

Speaker 3

OK, for so I'm going to talk about one specific standout student and this was. Prime samples pitch poor and you know. Her parents thinking she was. Far more talented and capable in the music stuff versus what was reality, so let me think. This was probably a good 10 to 12 years ago. I received an e-mail from a student where I am in the hotel lobby. I received an e-mail from. A family where? The dad was. Saying. My daughter is so talented. I know she can be the lead in her High School Musical. You've got to hear her. We want to give her lessons. And I was like, sure. Awesome. No problem. That's a little first lesson and. The girl couldn't match pitch at all, so it's just so interesting because perhaps she came from pitch poor parents, so they think she's really good. But when in fact she's really, you know, struggled. And so, you know, the process of trying to gently break it to both parents.

Speaker 1

Yeah.

Speaker 3

In fact, no, this student is less than a beginner, like really a primary primary student in terms of intonation, and certainly she was cute as a button and very, very sweet and a sweetheart. And she did end up studying consistently. And the cool thing is. While she will never be a superstar, I was able to get her. To match pitches. It took a long time, a lot of me singing along with everything from start to finish. From you know, minute one to minute 30 of her lesson every week for years. But she she was able to, yeah.

Speaker

Dude.

Speaker 1

And did you find that it was better with, like, a voice versus a piano kind of thing, or did you test that out, or did it not really matter?

Speaker 3

Well, me being, you know, I'm typical like voice teacher, pianist like. I really think. Piano. So like I, you know, play chords and that's kind of it because that's all I. Can do like you know Facebook style.

Speaker

We.

Speaker 1

Yes.

Speaker 3

It was a combination. Of both. Me playing and singing everything with her and starting kind of from the ground up with like you. Know I think the door in the system. With her did. I do numbers I might have tried both and maybe it was numbers. You know, like, you know

12123, you know. And. Hi little by little, I think really starting with you know like. Make seconds. Make the hers all the intervals. And. It took quite some time, really quite some time and they were a long standing family and in terms of, you know, consistency and lessons and the the parents were so appreciative. But it's just always so interesting that perspective of we think our daughter is so talented and really in real life it's. Like, Oh no. This is going to need. A lot of work and. You know, I don't think she's, you know, she should sing with her choir. She should sing, you know, in the shows. But I don't think she's going to be any. In any type of thing.

Speaker 1

Right.

Speaker 3

MHM.

Speaker

And then since.

Speaker 3

It was so long ago, obviously don't have all. Of those records. Because I do everything like old school on paper and gosh, what a sweetheart. And what a nice family they were. They were very appreciative. And it turns out I think the student also had some mental health struggles. So her, her lessons really were, you know, a good thing for her to bring her out of her shell as well. So I was really happy to be able. To do that for her.

Speaker 1

OK, that's great. But yeah, you're saying it's very fundamental like one step at a time, like constantly having a basically call and response basically.

Speaker 3

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Hmm.

Speaker 1

Sounds like.

Speaker 3

Yeah, yeah. And you know, we we do a lot of Disney songs just because they're so, you know. Everybody knows them already and and. You know, coming in I find with the the pitch force students then starting with something they kind of already know is way better than showing them a new piece of music because like a, they can't read B they, you know are not able to even process. This is what it looks like on the page versus this is what it looks like. You know in my brain and in my. Your type of thing. So it's a lot of votes, yeah. You know, in weeks and weeks and weeks of doing the exact same patterns and exercises.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 3

Into the same exact repertoire for weeks on end. And then building that repertoire like. Oh, OK. We did, you know. I'm trying to think of like. You know, random Disney Princess. What did we start with? It might have been something very simple, like a whole new world from a lot, because everybody knew. Was that like the original Disney one? And then, OK, we did this. So why don't we try the other Disney one?

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 3

And and then. We build our book based on that, you know, and it's not like a performance audition book. It's just for personal. Repertoire, you know, and then you know, building her confidence that way and. Drilling kind of. Challenging sections within Sub Disney songs. Just over and over. And over again. And so she felt safe and comfortable. And it's like I was trying to make my students feel. Seen and heard so. Yeah, it's not easy though, and you know over the years the just the wear and tear of me having to do that with certain sets of students, I started to get some. That's a problem. So I'm really not.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 3

Able to model everything from start to finish just because I always need to conserve my own voice for my local health. But you know, for unfortunate now in my, you know, teaching career that. My students, I can kind of hand select. The ones and that do have. That natural capability and and go from there and. Yes, of course. There's going to be pitch and intonation issues, but generally speaking, at this point in time, you know now like what? 23 1/2 years into teaching privately, you know I'm in that position where I can do that, but of course, you know, when I was first starting out, I would teach any and all kids who wanted to be taught because you know, of course we need to establish our reputation and build our studio from the ground up and you know, pay our bills at the same time. So yeah, but it's it's interesting always. To figure out a how this. Student. Learn. Are they auditory? Are they visual? Are they? A combination of both. Coming up with really that specific thing, that one thing that's going to help or maybe 2 or maybe 3, there's things that are going to help them.

Speaker 1

I have some questions that are specific to your training. Do you think that it sounds like you did a pedagogical degree? I mean, do you think that they should be spending more time in pedagogy programs preparing to like teachers to teach beginners? Because I feel like so much of the vocal pedagogy is was built by opera singers for opera singers.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 3

I know it's like I know. And I think.

Speaker 1

The.

Speaker 3

Pedagogy process and the pedagogy of the pedagogy, so to speak, is heading in that direction. But it wasn't that way. Back in the day, if that makes sense. Yes, you know my training? Yeah, my my training was, you know, this is how you teach at the.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I know cause all the old books are for office singers, yeah.

Speaker 3

University level and I'm like, well. I would raise my hand and be like, well, what about kids? And what about this and that and fortunately. Me. I my very first book was teacher is. Well known in the Nats community and in my local community and and in the region. And in the country, for he works with family kids, he's had students, you know, go on to really, really high. Double things all over the world and. I was able to observe. Him teaching from time. To time and, you know, knew how to work with kids because of him. And even you know when, as I was like defending my grocery project of just like a little mini pizza at the end of my master's program, that question came up. Oh, you teach children. What is that like, Rachel, like teach kids. Right. No, I don't come from the school level. You can't teach kids

until they reach puberty. Like, that's ridiculous because they're. Going to sing no matter what. Why not give them some healthy habits? So they don't blow up their. Vocal folds. You know when they're. For hours and hours and hours and quote UN quote.

Speaker 2

There's so much.

Speaker 1

Condescension. There was so much condescension from the university level of.

Speaker 2

Haha.

Speaker

It's it's.

Speaker 3

Absolutely absurd, I agree.

Speaker 1

Yeah, it's and then it's like almost like the music. Education majors are completely separated from. Voice majors. Yet music, education being, you know.

Speaker 3

Yeah, and I never, unfortunately. You know, my undergrad was, you know, too Conservatory within a university. It was Boston University where we had our, you know, College of Fine Arts within the larger university. I did not want to take music, and I should have taken at least one music at class. There just wasn't room.

Speaker 1

Yeah, well, it turns out they didn't really want.

Speaker 3

In the South wall and in my tuition, I.

Speaker 1

Interviewed some music, good people and they didn't really learn so much about it either. Like there was like one. Yeah. It's like they might learn like, more for Kodai, but they don't actually talk about, like, what's going on in the brain. It's just kind of like, well, felt Melody isn't repeating, you know, scales.

Speaker 3

What a shame.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 3

Right.

Speaker 1

Help kids build them without any build methodology so.

Speaker 3

So much, yeah.

Speaker 1

It's. Absolutely. So that's why I'm thinking, OK, so after I find out the results of this study, because one thing I'm going to be able to look at is I had that question about do people consider themselves singers or teachers 1st? And then I also have the little about what was your goal going into school and overwhelmingly most wanted to be professional singers. So I'm actually going to.

Speaker 3

No, I never did. I never did. Can you believe that? So I went into voice performance just because I knew I could sing. But it's like, OK, go to college and then you figure.

Speaker 1

Right. It's out type of thing, but we're going to be able to test. I'm going to actually be able to test the difference between people who win in being singers versus people who win in being teachers. And who? Who better? Like who would rather work with corporate students? Like it's going to be interesting, like the people who wanted to be singers and then did they do they feel like they wanted more science or do they wish, you know, it's kind of an interesting thing to study just because most teachers or singers, right. And then it's like they're singers.

Speaker 3

Oh.

Speaker 1

Yeah. But you know what they say it's like. I'm actually writing in my paper the quote that's, you know, from a play. It's like those who can't teach or whatever, you know, those who do, do those who can't be.

Speaker 3

Oh OK so. Then you need to read my Nat article. I wrote an article for the Journal of Singing and I talked exactly about that related to my background. So it's called some. Yeah.

Speaker

Good.

Speaker 1

Yeah. So I think it's the same. It's so funny because I agree that I feel like I consider myself a very good teacher. A lot of it's funny because a lot of people go with the the singers who have the reputations, right. Or you'll hear people who studied.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Basically, will the universities will study will hire these famous opera singers, but they're not?

Speaker 3

Yeah, and they can't teach.

Speaker 1

Yeah, they can't teach, right? So it's like, so funny. Yeah. They're just like, really.

Speaker 3

OK. Oh yeah, I wrote exactly about this, which my teacher was the associate editor of that column of the Journal of Singing, Robert Edwin at the time, and he quoted his article in praise of the. Not much. There are situations where one cannot, but you know for me, yes, I do still think. Yes, I do teach. I do all the things because it's what makes me a better teacher. Teaching informs my singing. Singing informs my teaching. Blah blah blah. Yeah.

Speaker 1

No, for sure. And I just think that's going to be an interesting thing to look at just again because so many people are great teachers. Well, also, there's a lot of.

Speaker

Quote good teachers.

Speaker 1

Who they just auditioned into their studio so that they they don't take anyone who needs help, so they just kind of self select the singers who are naturally talented so that they can say, oh, look winners, I have. Look how.

Speaker 3

I know.

Speaker 1

Any far as I have.

Speaker 3

No, I hate that. I hate that. I hate that. I hate that I. Hate that it's. Like they're no.

Speaker

No, that they're.

Speaker 1

Not actually good teachers, they're just really good at selecting people who are already talented. And you're like, wow, what about working with the worst singers?

Speaker 3

And yeah, yeah. Well, and that's why I'm so grateful for the teachers that I did have, and I've had very few considering I'll be 43 years old next month. I've only really had four teachers ever in my life.

Speaker 2

That's nice question.

Speaker 3

Because you know, yeah. And you know, thankfully, by the time I got to Westminster, you know, I was told repeatedly in undergrad that I really sank. And then I was awful. And, you know, had no skills and whatever. But luckily. I was matched. And, you know, requested to study with the. Specific teacher who really, really. She taught me how to sing. She taught me how to sing. She taught me how to teach all the professors taught me how to teach. So it it was, you know, a great decision to do my Masters program in in pedagogy track.

Because I was always better at academia than the actual singing soft. But I became a better singer.

Speaker 1

And it makes you a better teacher because you've had to learn with your own issues, like you had to learn how to overcome your own vocal things. OK, well, I'd love to see you. I'd love if you could just e-mail me any articles. You know that relate to this, because it will help me just write my literature review.

Speaker 3

Absolutely, yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Like if there's anything you know about anything we've talked about like pitch wise or, you know, teachers being better than singers teaching, you know, like that whole stuff would be really helpful.

Speaker 3

So. Have those, I'll, I'll e-mail you those two titles because it's my article and then my teachers article from like 30 years ago.

Speaker 1

Yes. No, I'd love that because I had that was actually going to open up my whole thing with the line of like those who can't teach. But then, you know then, like, looking at that and then I can, then I can even bring in my data from my study where I'm going to have. I also have 100 respondents.

Speaker 2

Yes.

Speaker 1

Which is a pretty good. Sample size, so I hope that then I'll be able, yeah. So then hopefully I can say, hey, all the people who consider themselves teachers above singers, they're the ones that feel really confident teaching poor pitch students. They're the ones who have a

better scientific knowledge versus, like, here's the professional singers who consider themselves singers.

Speaker 2

Amazing.

Speaker 1

And they're this, this, this and this. Right. So I actually think it's gonna be a really cool point. So yeah, those articles will help. So it just gives me more citations. Yes. So I'm so glad.

Speaker 3

Yeah. I think that's wonderful. Love it. I will. Yeah, I will, definitely. I'm so glad you called. I'm so I'm so glad you reminded me about the meeting. And I'm. I'm always so happy to participate in other people's research because that's what makes our community better.

Speaker 1

Better, yes. And we need to keep having all the Nat, science and Journal of singing. And it seems like things are really coming along or.

Speaker 3

I, you know, absolutely, yeah. The science it is and the technology has improved and the science of it. So it's it's wonderful, it's a it's a good game. Yeah, I will.

Speaker 1

Yes. Pines and also we're not abusing people anymore, you know. They used to like like hit people and, like, yell at them and.

Speaker 3

Thanks.

Speaker 1

The crazy time.

Speaker 3

I say that to my students all the time. Like, you know, if I had ex teacher at X universe. I would have not been in the field for more than two seconds because she ** *** would have scared the the deeds out of me. Do you? Know what I mean?

Speaker 1

They used to slap pianists hands. I mean, they used to, like, do crazy things. And this was in our generation. I'm, I'm 39. So just within our generation, I also tell you know, when I was in USC and we were doing our study.

Speaker 3

I know it's it's. Yes, hello.

Speaker

I.

Speaker 1

Operas I have directors basically saying we're going to do this very sexual thing, and if you don't like it, there's ten other people who want to take this role. They're basically like, you need to push boundaries. And this was 20 years ago, and now it's like, ohh, intimacy coaching. And they've already, like, come around on all that. But Can you believe in our lifetime? We were faced with, like, massive sexual harassment.

Speaker 3

No.

Speaker 1

Not to mention all the me too stuff. With all the conductors.

Speaker 3

Experienced this. In high school we had this in my high school.

Speaker 1

Oh no. Yeah, the whole nother thing to research like, that's a whole other thing I want to research, too. It's like sexual harassment in the music world and just all the stuff we dealt with and and abuse, just like the fact that teachers used to say things like, oh, you're never going to be a great singer. And like, all whatever, all sorts of crazy stuff. So it's nuts. So I'm so glad, like, our students.

Speaker 3

Mr. Tyler. Oh yeah, it did not.

Speaker 1

It's so easy. I mean, maybe it's aired a little bit too soft in a way we're like now you can't.

Might tell the student to practice more.

Speaker 2

Yeah. No, like what? I'm not good. Just the way I am. It's like, no, you're not like, no. Sorry.

Not sorry. Yeah. You.

Speaker 1

But we need it lovingly. We're just trying to be balanced, but I would never. I would never do the things that people did to us. I mean, it's hard to even talk about now and people can't believe it. I'm like, yeah, that was like 20.

Speaker 3

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Years. Ago, like not even a long ago.

Speaker 3

I know it's insanity. It's insanity. I will definitely e-mail you those article titles because I think they're they're very important. Just. And. In our own personal stories, my our teachers article and yeah, it was it was lovely talking to you. If you need to follow up on anything, I'm always happy.

Speaker 2

Yes.

Speaker 1

Yes, thank you.

Speaker 3

To help with that.

Speaker 1

Yes, I will e-mail you and I'll keep you posted once I publish so that I can send you the.

Speaker 2

Plan, you know.

Speaker

Sorry.

Speaker 3

Never did a doctoral program always want to participate in any way I can. So yeah.

Awesome. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thanks so much. Bye.

Speaker 1

OK. Well, thank you so much. Bye. Good luck with your gig. Bye.

Transcript – Participant D – MM and MA Ed, DMA USA trained, 45+ years teaching

Speaker 1

OK so I have been researching pitch matching and the challenges it is for voice teachers to teach. Students of poor pitch and in my first study, I only had 25 survey respondents, but there was a strong correlation that people did not want to teach poor pitch people when they had a choice and it seemed that the more education people had, the less they wanted to do it, which seemed counterintuitive.

Speaker 2

I would say. So from my experience.

Speaker 1

I just want to hear about your thoughts about it and anything, you know, things that you know, it could either be opinions on teaching them in general or just if you've taught them what you think has been helpful or anything, sure.

Speaker 2

Well, I'll try and make it concise. I have a masters of music and Education K through 12. Voice. Voice dominant. I also am a pianist, the clarinet as a guitarist and for a while a harpist. So I have this instrumental. I have a doctor of musical arts from 8 Eastman School of Music where I also earned my MM and I also taught I've taught for 40 going on 45 years voice. The third. Also, a singer and a performer, opera operetta musical theater. Blah blah blah. My experience was as far as my first professional job in music was as an elementary vocal general music teacher in one of the Rochester Suburban Schools. Very good school district.

Speaker 1

Strict.

Speaker 2

And I had students from not kindergarten, but first grade through 6th grade. So I had a lot of experience in teaching children particularly. Who came from? From some families were professors at the Eastman School of Music. That's that. That was their parents. So they brought up in very musical households. And then the other students who had no musical background at all. And in first grade, of course, the the dominant areas that you want to start to encourage in children. Is pitch match, pitch matching, pitch and steady beat.

Speaker

I.

Speaker 2

Was I could have done my own study because. It was the. Students, the kids who had a a musical environment at home had no problems picking those things up. But the children who were not from such a background were struggling and we had to. But you know, that was a an emphasis. So that was my first real experience. In teaching. Students who may not be able to. Match pitch but. It wasn't because of a congenital problem or deafness or anything like that. After I earned my DMA, I spent a year sending that resume out for college jobs, which I eventually did. But I had a year at the. Roxine School of Music, which is a community education school in Rochester, very highly regarded, been around for 100 or more years and in that environment I had private lessons with. Folks from all the backgrounds, some who came from very nice areas of Rochester and some from what we would call the ghetto of Rochester. And again it was it was kind of a parent who was going to come in and be ready to sing and have a lesson and who kind of wandered in and just was saying, I just want to stay. Along with the radio. OK, we'll do that. One person in particular stands out because he was a really cool young man I late teens, early 20s, and he was so embarrassed. Because he'd be out with his pals and they'd have the radio on and he could not sing along with the radio in pitch. All he wanted to do was not be teased by his friends. So it took a year and we started out just matching, you know, a right in the

center of his range, nothing high or low. Something in the speaking range and we worked note by note by note over the course of many months. At first it was very frustrating for him, but patience. A. Boatload of patients on my part and encouraging him to be patient by the end of that. Academic year because it would fall to spring, he could actually sing AC scale. And he could sing along with his favorite pop tunes. So success. Yay. And and I've had other students I had a during that same period of time, I had a private studio in my house. About 50 students also at Hawks Town, about 30 students. I was teaching vocal pedagogy at Eastman. The class. You know, the course that the undergrads and graduate students had to take. So it was pretty busy. Time. So my experience I would say was. I'm willing, and I I would never turn anybody down if they want to really try and sing in tune. Over 45 years and I'll add one more thing and then you can ask more questions. I love going to the International Congress of Voice teachers conferences. I just was at the one in Austria two years ago and also the PAN European Voice Conference which I just was at in. Sometimes there's Spain presenting and attending. UM, I'll vividly remember in 1997 it was I CDT in London. And a a woman from Ireland. Gave an amazing presentation of students who were deaf. And she could get them to sing. She could. She had been able to find a way to get them to sing in tune. It was mind blowing, and she even brought some not the whole choir that she had, but she brought some students with her from Ireland and I was so encouraged because what they were doing. Was the the vibrations. Very much. I'm sure you know the the name of Mandy. Just a minute. She went right out of my head. She was on. America's Got Talent. Do you remember her, man? No, not Mandy Moore. Just a minute I can.

Speaker 1

So she performed on America's Got Talent. Was she deaf?

Speaker 2

She performed. Yes. Yeah. She had gone deaf. Her teacher, Cynthia Vaughn. I don't know if.

Speaker 1

I'll look. It up. Mandy Harvey.

Speaker 2

You. Had Mandy Harvey. That's it. Mandy Harvey was a student at Colorado State University, and her teacher was Cynthia Vaughn. Mandy and had been through high school. And then Mandy came in as a music Ed major, and by the end of her freshman year, she was wondering during theory class why everybody else was writing stuff, and she wasn't even here. Thing they were supposed to be doing. Dictation. She wasn't even hearing the notes. And by her, you know, by the Christmas time she's totally deaf. She can sing. She performed at Natt's conference in Las Vegas, 2018. In a with her ukulele. And she, she can say now she had the background as a hearing person, but she's totally deaf. What she did was learn how to feel the vibrations again in her feet.

Speaker 1

Whoa. In the feet.

Speaker 2

In her feet? Yes, because she she came out, she gave a lovely, lovely lecture demonstration. And she said and she she talks like she's a normally hearing person. She doesn't have a deaf persons sort of addiction and things. Her, her, her determination, because she was very depressed and I think her father, said Nandy, get up. Mandy, get up the off the couch and go get your ukulele and figure something out. While she did so she comes out barefoot. And she can feel the vibrations.

Speaker 1

Wow.

Speaker 2

In her feet and sings perfectly in tune. So I'm just throwing those.

Speaker

OK.

Speaker 1

Things. No, that's really interesting because I think there's a lot to that. I do think the musical exposure young seems to be important, but that's very hard to quantize that you know, like I've been trying.

Speaker 2

See you.

Speaker 1

To figure out. Because, well, what I'll notice is. There are people who I teach, who maybe they're in middle. I teach a lot of middle school and high schoolers and kids. And I'll get to a middle schooler and they want to learn to sing suddenly, and they're really out of tune. And then it occurs to me they've never sang that much like, this thing wasn't part of their life. It's like they don't wake up singing. Their family doesn't sing to them. Singing is just not in their it's like. And to me, that's so foreign just because I come from a family of musicians.

Speaker 2

Right. Mm-hmm.

Speaker 1

Grew up, you know, I just happened to be talented and I played piano. And my father plays piano and I sing and whatever. And it turns out my two children have perfect pitch.

Speaker 2

Yes, yes.

Speaker 1

Yes. No, I don't think that's by coincidence, so I don't have perfect pitch, but my two children have perfect pitch and it's because. And by the way, I grew, it's not from their father's side. And we I actually. Grew. Up I've been divorced since my kids were two and three, so they've been living with me primarily like 100%. So if anything, yes, there's a genetic component maybe, but I think it's because I'm teaching voice lessons in the house and they've heard my voice.

Speaker 2

Yes.

Speaker 1

Since for all those years.

Speaker 2

Excellent. Now I'm going to.

Speaker 1

By the time they were five, by the time they were five, they had perfect pitch.

Speaker 2

Yep. Yeah, absolutely. The environment, it's nature or nurture now.

Speaker 1

To the point where they correct me, I mean, I'm saying if I started they they they know relative pitch doesn't cut it for them. So if I start the famous pop song and I start on the wrong key, they go. That's the wrong key, mom. That's the wrong key. So that's how a suit they are on their perfect pitch. So it's like they know every.

Speaker

Oh. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Song. Exactly. And I'm like like I have close relative pitch. Like I'm like, that's really all, you know. But I might be in a few half steps.

Speaker 2

And two things about that I knew a member of a choir, Saint Peters, Escobal Cathedral in Albany. Great. Big, beautiful choir. And he had perfect pitch. But the the organ was just like quarter tone flat. It drove him nuts. It's like septic.

Speaker 1

Acquire when acquire slightly flatter together, but everybody else seems to be OK with it and the perfect people go crazy.

Speaker 2

Yes.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Ohh yeah, second thing is are you aware of a study done by a doctor, Donald Shetler from the Eastman School of Music? It was he published his results, but it would been. Back in the 90s. I'm I'm going to throw it in. Just I was OK. Doctor Donald Shetler it is.

Speaker 1

I'm going to look it up.

Speaker 2

Children. Who heard a lot of music around them while still in the womb?

Speaker

M.

Speaker 2

So it would be. Probably I don't know 9293. My personal experience with it was because I was taking the starting of my Masters degree at Easton in the summer time. I was six months pregnant with my older son Matt, who's 42 now, and I kept saying to Doctor Shetler. I was in a course with him and I said. I said you. Know this baby responds. The first thing that happened was my husband and I went to see La Boheme. At Chautauqua, which has a opera program in the summer time, this is the original Chautauqua in Western New York State. And as soon as the second act and the marching band came in, this baby was four months or four months. Along kicking, I could feel this movement. I was like, wow, my husband and I were also singing with opera. Theater of Rochester and when I was singing the baby was quiet. But any time there was any other kind of you know. Singing, going on or orchestral he deep. Bum bum. So eventually, doctor Shetler said, Are you sure? I said, oh, yeah, he's responding to external sounds or music particularly, he said. Well, let's do a little. Let's do a little project here. Let's do a little study. To go home. And. Pick out different kinds of music and put headphones because in those days you plugged into your you know your record area with headphones. Put them on your stomach and play different styles of music and different kinds of music and just kind of keep a. Journal. So I did that. One week after Matt was born, he was born January 24th. In 1982, Doctor Shetler said bring the baby in. I wanna do a little post test and it was so interesting because. A week old newborn baby there is. He started playing, particularly the pieces. I said I had played for Matt, as opposed to some random things. As soon as a piece came on that had been played, you know, in utero. That's looking around and following it as. A one week old newborn.

Speaker 1

It makes sense to me.

Speaker 2

So as soon as Matt was able to you? Know really kind of we. Kept going with that and as soon as Matt was able to come in as a little toddler and kind of he was very advanced and all in his social skills being an only child. Being up kind of brought up at the Eastman School of Music. I took him everywhere with me and you know from the time he was teeny tiny, he was the mascot. I think he was probably 2 1/2, maybe 3 Doctor Shetler every single month we'd come in and doctor Shetler would do sort of the same kinds of examination studies well that that kicked off the study with I think there were twenty other kids, same background musical environment. While in utero and then sort of post partum following them, and then he started on Doctor Shuttler Matt was the was the prototype, but he started with the second generation. Any of those same families with another child and. There's a book about his study. That's I I'll have to find out. Matthew now is. Very musical. Both of my boys, they didn't have perfect pitch, but again, I was teaching lessons out of the house their whole childhood and they were brought up with a father who was an operatic tenor and a mother who's operatic soprano and going to all kinds of concerts and things like that. And so. That just underscores the idea that the the nurture and then nature, I think nurturing is a highly important part of this whole thing.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I do think it's it. Yeah. It's hard to. It would probably be hard to isolate though, because it's correlation causation issue, because those who probably played music to the womb by chance, like music themselves, right. Yeah, yeah.

Speaker

Mm-hmm.

Speaker 1

Argue well, is that just kind of a genetic brain? You know what I mean? Like, it's like the people who like music, like music. It's kind of like how a music people truly tone deaf.

Speaker 2

Yeah, sure.

Speaker 1

People that 4% of people's music doesn't sound like anything to them, like music is not appealing. It's like, oh, music. Yeah, that you know, because that's why it's funny if there's someone who wants lessons, they're probably not tone deaf. You know what I mean? Like, if someone's like, I love music and I just Can't Sing along, they're probably not tone deaf because when you really see the studies of someone who is truly a music I've watched.

Speaker 2

Right, yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Isabel Parrott is the one in Toronto or Montreal. She does all this like tone deaf and poor pitch research, and she invented the slider. And do they match better from a voice or from a piano or from a violin? You know all this interesting things and she.

Speaker 2

Uh-huh.

Speaker 1

Has basically done studies on actual music people and they're very. They're not. They don't like music that much. They're kind of like. It doesn't sound it makes sense. I mean, I'm saying so. There's a second. I just think that people who truly don't have the brain for it, they're like, yeah, music. And I'd say the average.

Speaker 2

Well, yeah. Totally.

Speaker 1

Person is just poor pitch.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I say.

Speaker 1

They don't have the experience like you and your husband had. And like the children and you know, it's like it's so, but then there's the middle. So I feel it's like, yeah, there's the musical people, but then, oh, and this is the other problem I found in my research. OK. All of vocal pedagogy. That's university level was created by opera singers, who basically became teachers.

Speaker

Mm-hmm.

Speaker 2

That's true in in the traditional sense of. It Yep, Yep.

Speaker 1

So we have this. It's an endemic in a way of. People who are self isolating themselves like OK, so some of the good teachers who have the singers who win the Met competition for. Example, they might not be good teachers, but they happen to get the good students because they're in that environment where it's already pre screened, right? So then they get this reputation as a great teacher. Over here we have Sally in Kansas who maybe is the most amazing teacher ever, but she actually works with anyone like poor pitch. This sort of. So we get this.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Oh, yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

Problem too so and then. So when I was doing my research this other paper I wrote. I did this really fun thing. I looked through all of these like Richard Miller's Appleman venard, you know, all of those. I looked through those, and I did a little survey of them by percentage of how much of the book talks about poor pitch and how does one sing on pitch? And you won't believe it. But it wasn't in the book at all.

Speaker 2

I was just going to say, Yep, Yep, Yep. Yeah. Of course not.

Speaker 1

And I said this is awful. So then I'm like, wait a minute. We're going to vocal petty. So every undergrad performance person should at least have one vocal pedagogy course, right? And some don't. Even that I mind it. Mine had, like, a semester of.

Speaker

Yeah. MHM.

Speaker 1

Pedagogy and then a lot of the singers get masters in vocal pet instead of doing a masters of voice because they're like, well, I'm not going. To be an opera. Singer, you know? Or they're just.

Speaker 2

More interested in becoming. A teacher that was my taste.

Speaker 1

But even then, even then, the amount of the no one is learning about. How do you know no one's learning about how do you teach someone to sing?

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Which they're learning. Let's talk about vowel formants and breast supports, and it like, starts at the basic level that you're already singing in tune, and this this singer just needs to be molded into, like the Bell content method or some, you know, I mean, like, that's kind of what every old pedagogy book. And The only exception I found to that was.

Speaker 2

Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.

Speaker

Mm-hmm.

Speaker 1

There was book on early music education for young children, right? Like for music. Ed majors. In that book, there was like 4 pages about. Pitch development. 4 pages. So it's like 4 pages of 350 pages about pitch and then the but then other than that, they're not teaching any of these voice teachers to teach pitch. And it's a self perpetuating problem that's kind of was like my main like, whoa. So. And then it turned out the ones with more education were like, I don't want to use poor pitch, and it's the people. Who are kind of the self. Trained voice teachers who maybe were like, you know, they sang in a band and then later they became a voice teacher but don't have a music degree. They're the ones that maybe they do, the Estill method, or they did one of those method kind of things. And they're the ones that are like, oh, I love working with poor pitched people like. You know, and the ones from the university method are like, no, I hate it. And then so furthermore, those people even said.

Speaker 2

Interesting.

Speaker 1

Oh, I'm at a point now where I can choose my students, so I would never say anyone bad, you know.

Speaker 2

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Maybe I'm just an impasse, but I, you know, I have. A highly you know, a really high degree in in. In voice and a lot of experience. I really love. Watching someone blossom and watching them go from just I. I can't do it. I can't do it to Oh my God. This is amazing. Yes, I can. So I guess I'm the aberration of, you know, more highly educated and trained and all that that don't want to deal with that sort of person because it's either just too difficult or I I'm only going to take the very best people, I guess I'm not that kind of.

Speaker 1

Person no, ma'am. Me neither. No, me neither. It's just interesting. I mean, I think vocal.

Speaker

Well.

Speaker 1

I mean, so I'm born in 1985 and my older brother is 82 actually, so I like.

Speaker 2

Really, really the same age as my my younger son Andrew.

Speaker 1

You look really, really good. Assumably for you look amazing for 73. First of all, like my mom's 68, I think you look really good, really good. You have so much energy. You have so much energy too.

Speaker 2

Well, I'm 73. Thank you.

Speaker 1

You. Have such a good it's because you have such a good energy. You're not aging harsh. You know, I'm saying you're not like, good or you're not a Karen. You know what I mean?

Speaker 2

I am not. A caring whatsoever.

Speaker 1

Yeah. Where they act with assist of Karen, you know, but like because that's the problem is you meet the problem with women who are over 55 or whatever is just that a lot of them have that bitter. Their resentment to the world, you know, like they get this like I hate men, you know, they just have, I don't know. So you came in with like, the youngest energy, the most happy. You're like you have such a nice, you know your face looks so nice. Like you're just so like pleasant. You know what? I mean, thank you, I.

Speaker 2

Does he have such a?

Speaker 1

Good. No, but I see it right. Like it's again. I'm seeing you see this other side of it where the women become parents. It's like they're they're like, I mean, men. Also old men. Also other problems. OK, trust me, I.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah, I'm.

Speaker 1

Yeah. Yeah. No, I made a TikTok that was like that went viral because I'm single now and I was said like. Men who are 55 to 60 are the most delusional, and the 55 year old man did not like that. But basically I said that they they all think that they're not older like they all think at 55 that they should be able to date like a 30. Five year old and that they're.

Speaker 2

Oh, yes. Oh, yeah. They're, you know, they're.

Speaker 1

You're like, you know, when you're 60, you're gonna be kind of like.

Speaker 2

They're hot, they take.

Speaker 1

Those and. Old like you know, and they're like, well, we we age much better than women, I'm like. No you don't. Like they looked terrible basically.

Speaker 2

Well, I'm. I'm divorced twice.

Speaker 1

OK, well I've I've been only divorced.

Speaker 2

Which is probably why I'm so joyful that is.

Speaker 1

Probably why you are joyful. No, literally. Like I I divorced when my kids were young. And then which I just feel like that also just seems like an opera singer thing to do. You know what I mean?

Speaker 2

Even even Renee Fleming is divorced. And Renee, I was in my Masters program with Renee. We both were at Eastman at the same time. We all knew she was gonna be called, you know, like, world class, not like the rest of us.

Speaker 1

Like. Yeah, she has a crazy voice like.

Speaker 2

She's divorced twice. Well, her mom, too, her mom. Was Alexander Pat Alexander. They're all from Rochester and she was divorced from Renee's father, who was a choral director, and that's where the Fleming. Comes from so anyhow. I think you know a lot of us.

Speaker 1

No, no. The conductors. You were from the generation of all the bad conductors, you know? Yeah, from all the you're from? Yeah. All of the sexual. Conductors and and like when me too came out. It was like, yeah, no ****. You know what I mean? Like it was like, like, do you know men have been like holding their power over women for jobs? It's. Like. Really. Like how many Sopranos married a conductor you know?

Speaker 2

True, very true. And then they married him an. After. I guess that's almost as bad.

Speaker

Oh well.

Speaker 1

That's a fact. Yeah. No, I would never marry. I don't date musicians. I don't date actors, right. I mean, even violinist. You can't trust them. Maybe you can trust, like a French horn player, maybe. But like.

Speaker 2

That's the players, yeah, salted the.

Speaker 1

Yeah. Yeah, it has to be like the non flashy orchestra people, anyone who's, like thinks they're like, like no piano, no pianist. I would never date a pianist. You. Know.

Speaker

Ah.

Speaker 2

Organists are worse.

Speaker 1

Really. Because the choir.

Speaker 2

Ohh my oh oh, egomaniacs. Oh my God. Not all. Not all this something really nice, but the ones at Eastman that I knew not the that David Craighead, who was the chair of the department, was a lovely, lovely man. But the students I had to work with around with at the time, total.

Speaker 1

That would be an interesting paper. Is like our organist, crazy as Bach, you know, like, like is Bach.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

1st.

Speaker 2

Yeah, they they think the organ is the most difficult instrument to play because they have to use their feet as well as multiple keyboards, but they're just they're they have total disdain for singers because we have to breathe.

Speaker 1

Have a pedal we don't have like a pedal. To just slide right, they never.

Speaker

8.

Speaker 2

Have to you know, can go on and on and on and on and. And we actually are wind instruments. Yeah. OK, I'm digressing now.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I know for sure. I mean, I think so. But yes, I think there's. I feel there's like so many avenues that I can go in terms of like, what do I do next because I think this survey I'm going to have 100 survey people, which will be a very big. Study. On things and I'm excited, but I'm really excited to test because my friend is a PhD. She's like works at, you know, she's in statistics. Actually, she does like anthropology.

Speaker 2

That's excellent. Yeah.

Speaker 1

She can help me do these crazy statistical things. So basically I'm going to study like on the question I had that was, do you consider yourself a singer or a voice teacher first? I can actually test that against the later questions about like, do you like working with poor pitch people I can test with people who wanted to be professional singers versus those who came teachers versus those who wanted to become teachers and then test whether their preference for and their beliefs even like do you think someone can improve from voice lessons?

Speaker 2

Yes.

Speaker 1

Do you think that? You know, there's something. Yeah. So I think that will be good. And then, but honestly, like there's a lot in terms of marketability, this whole thing. About. The womb, even being the beginning of the child's musical education, and then the very young first years, I think that's probably where the big money is that people overlook it. Like obviously there's music together and all this stuff, but probably these parents who are from these non musical households who are always like, how can I get my child to be good at music? You know, every parent wants that kind of when their babies are young, they're like, oh, how do I get my?

Speaker 2

MHM.

Speaker 1

The Mozart effect. Yes, exactly. And that was the thing. When I looked up your. That guy, that was his thing. And actually people are using it to talk about ADHD. I found an article where it's like, oh, it helps cognitive function. Classical music specifically, like listening to classical for 20 minutes a day helps the brain have more executive function, which is like, what AD people.

Speaker 2

Doctor Donald shetler? Yep. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Lack, right, right. So it makes a lot of sense, but I mean and then all these well, if you think about like music together and it's based on. Kodai. And ORF and those are all about folk melody.

Speaker

Mm-hmm.

Speaker 1

Repeating it easy folk melodies and that also makes sense, because when children were raised well, I also think we used to have a society that was musically.

Speaker

Yep.

Speaker 1

Transfer to like that, like where you would sing folk melodies to your children, and then the whole family would sing together. But now we don't have.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yep. Yes.

Speaker 1

That that's society.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

My mom and I used to sing rounds we would like. Doing all sorts of rounds in the house.

Speaker 2

Oh. Yep, sure. I have another book for you. I can't remember the I I the the. He's a medical doctor or psychiatrist at the time. But he did come to Eastman and give a lecture at Doctor Shetler's invitation. The book he wrote is called the. Secret life of the unborn child.

Speaker 1

OK, write it down.

Speaker 2

Yes, fascinating. And what stood out to me as I was reading this book and, you know, being carrying an unborn child. Was he reported on an orchestral cellist who was carrying a baby and she was, you know, professional orchestral cellist. And when this baby was born and grew up, he became a conductor. And he said. He. The cello lines would just jump out at me. I could hear them before I even looked at them. Particularly one piece. I don't know what it was. If it was a Bach or a, you know, Beethoven or some other composer. Brahms maybe. But ** *** said he said I I went and I asked my mother, I said, why is it this particular? Piece the cello cello line. I know you're a cellist, but this one it just like, really jumps out, she said I was practicing that all the time when I was carrying you.

Speaker 1

Ah.

Speaker 2

Wow. Talk about interesting.

Speaker 1

I mean it makes sense. I mean, I do think that our brains are picking up on more than people know.

Speaker 2

And hearing is the first sense developed that develops. I understand from Doctor Scott was, yeah. Hearing is the very first.

Speaker 1

Oh, definitely. Yeah. And the thing that the thing that I'm talking about with this like auditory feedback loop is. That I thought would be helpful for voice teachers is that there's the hearing, there's the interpreting. But then there's a feedback part that as you're making the sound, you have to hear what you're doing, and that's the feedback. And then it's the there's like a memory aspect. So they found that stuttering is actually an auditory feedback disorder. So when they delay, they put headphones on a stutterer.

Speaker 2

Mm-hmm.

Speaker

Mm-hmm.

Speaker 2

Oh, interesting.

Speaker 1

And they find the exact delay that's needed for the person to hear themselves and correct as they're going at the stuttering lessons.

Speaker 2

Isn't that kind of part? Of the movie The King's Speech, did you see that movie with column?

Speaker 1

There was with Carter and they had to figure out. I mean, I don't know how that speech there, but that was old.

Speaker 2

And the the man.

Speaker 1

Technology, but.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Oh, yeah. But I really do recall something about in the movie particularly it's calling. I can't. I can't get last. Colin, Colin Firth and that brilliant, brilliant act.

Speaker 1

On 1st.

Speaker 2

Later. That plays the Australian, who actually helped the real king. There was a part where he did something about.

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 2

You know, with the on hearing and having to not, you know, having to actually be able to say his speech because he wasn't getting the feedback. Yeah, just out of nowhere that came out of nowhere. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Yeah, it was. I mean, but but then if you think about it, I think some of the people I teach with really poor pitch have an auditory. Delay almost like it's like they can't hear themselves.

Speaker 2

Ah.

Speaker 1

I can't remember. What I'll notice with one of my perfect singers is her issue, but she can't remember Doe. So like she can sing now, which is amazing. She was completely like this. She Can't Sing a half step. She can sing a whole really weird. OK, she can sing do-re-mi in tune. But the problem is from when I tell her where Doe is, she will forget dough. By the time we get to the exercise again or if I have her saying.

Speaker

MHM.

Speaker 2

Ah yeah.

Speaker 1

Showing me fall. So and then I'm like, OK, sing it again. She'll start on so she'll forget dough, like all the pitches that follow. Doe it. Like, forgets her. But if I have her sing Doe 1st and then like I I sing doe she sings doe again. And then I'm like now sing doe ray me and she can like her phone in on where Doe is she can sing it. So it's almost like.

Speaker

MHM.

Speaker 1

Her issue, and by the way, this is all about diagnosing. So I'm thinking the auditory loop helps you diagnose. Is it that they're not hearing initially? Are they not remembering? Are they getting off once they're singing actively, and what they're singing is overwriting the memory of the first time? Yes. So anyway, that's why I think the auditory feedback loop could be useful, and that's what my whole I might do my after this paper is my master's thesis, so I have to decide if that's going to be like a book. So I have to have enough to write on, but that's.

Speaker 2

I love it. Yeah. Hang on second.

Speaker 1

As. These.

Speaker

Girl.

Speaker 2

I'm going to be your secret supporter. This is my. Book.

Speaker 1

Wow.

Speaker 2

And it started out as my I was a DMA which you didn't have to do a doctoral dissertation, but I had.

Speaker 1

M.

Speaker 2

A house, a mortgage, a husband, 2 little kids under 5. I knew I was not going to jet off to Europe and become an opera singer over there, and I was fascinated because I had gone through all kinds of really bad voice teachers, some good ones, but. Some, like really bad. Boys, teachers. What is it? What does what is it that makes? A voice teacher exemplary. And also I read Richard Miller's the techniques of singing which he looked he he analyzed the German school, the Italian school, the French school, which is not really a school. And the British school. And I wondered if there was an American school of. Place pedagogy or voice singing. So I started out with this interesting sort of dissertation, and then at the end of the dissertation, you know, the end of it, you're supposed to give ideas for further study. So I had a whole list of other questions I would have. Yes. And then a year later, this is when I'm teaching my home studio, the Hochstein School of Music. Local pedagogy at Eastman singing in the church choir. Still doing, you know, theater and all that opera stuff. And I said. Dang it, I'm just gonna answer those questions myself and. Ten years later. The book was published.

Speaker 1

OK. And so yours is about voice teachers?

Speaker 2

So. This is called the spectrum of voices. Prominent American voice teachers discuss the teaching of sing. Richard Miller is in here. Shirley Emmons is in here. Orange Brown is in

here Barber Duster. These are all the different teachers I started out with the masters thesis and then I expanded it to, you know, a lot of. And it's a cool read. It's a fun read. However, it is not really about.

Speaker

OK.

Speaker 2

Teaching students that have. And, you know infirmity.

Speaker 1

Right. It's teaching the masters.

Speaker 2

Whatever you want to.

Speaker 1

And you're teaching the operatic masters. It kind of reminds me of that.

Speaker 2

These yes, yes.

Speaker 1

The one about singing that that journalist wrote, or he interviewed all the singers and their methods.

Speaker 2

Every button that yeah, that was a singers, singers on singing. He was a bass baritone at the Met and. Everybody said Ohh, you're just like it's over here.

Speaker 1

Yeah. No, I mean, because I like that book is interesting. Just because you get to hear these, you kind of get to see into the day of one of the, you know, the high, the heyday of opera. It was kind of. Name. Like. The height of like that world and these singers had these like old mentalities like.

Speaker 2

Right. Yeah, and it was. It was the fellow. Him. I can't think of his name, but it was like, done in the green room is like, hey, Pavarotti, you know, sit down. Let's chat a little bit. Mine is actually a it's a same as like yours doing. I did a survey. Today I sent out a survey and this is before Internet, so everything had to be done through the post office. Yeah, I sent out a survey to over 280 voice teachers using Nats, mostly as the localities to like the governors of each district. But. And I I. Had a pretty good return considering you know. I think it was probably. 6060 surveys came back to me and all they had to do was write their who, what they thought was an exemplary voice teacher. Some people gave me two names. Others gave me a whole list of names. I got some from Canada. Some of the people in Toronto. It was like, no, this is just. The United States. Sorry.

Speaker

I.

Speaker 2

Can't I can't include other. People. But it was really. Yeah, it's a whole quantitative research study. Not. Just shooting the breeze like shooting the breeze in the green room at the Metropolitan Opera Company with some of your colleagues. What is his name? It's uh. Singers aren't singing. I think is the name. Of his book.

Speaker 1

Yeah. OK. Well, yours sounds really cool. So that's no, that's like an interesting. I mean that's that would be interesting because again, I actually used doshi's book. I used a lot for of the books that these people use.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Oren brown? Yeah. They're they're all of their books so.

Speaker

Everybody.

Speaker 2

This just says this is I'm I'm boasting a little here now, ***** . Journal of singing. An invaluable tool for comparative pedagogical study. John Nix. He's a university. He's at Texas and San San Antonio. A specular voices gets young voice teachers in training, thinking about what goes into becoming a good voice. Feature. It's about so much more than merely knowing facts about anatomy or being able to demonstrate well. For one students, this book is unique in how it brings together a diverse group of American teachers. Blah blah blah. So it's a fun read. Because each of them had to answer, I had a there's three different sections. The first one is about just basic pedagogical. Hang on a second. You think I would know this better, but I haven't read my own book in a while for Part 1's vocal vocal concept. How do you teach alignment? Breath tone registration even as the grain, etcetera addiction falls to the second part, training singers, practical, artistic and professional development from the student audition to a first lesson, the typical lesson guiding practice. New chapter for the second edition, which is this when technology, voice science and medicine impact on the profession. Yada yada and then the third part is teachers, professional training their own background. Who they studied with, how they stay current, whether their objectives and priorities and the last last chapter is outstanding teacher attributes what they thought really made for an outstanding teacher. So as I said, you can just kind of drop in. It's a fun read Shirley Emmons. There are a lot of coaches floating around in a lot of ways. Teachers do masquerade as voice teachers who are really coaches and she goes on from there. At night. See, I knew I.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I know. Coaching is different. Yeah, because coaching is a different skill. But it's also important.

Speaker 2

And the. The neat thing is is when I was doing my dissertation my dissertation, I got to I had to meet with these people in person to audiotape them and videotape them. So I said that with Richard Miller, I said that with Shirley Emmons I. Sat down with Aaron. Down in his beautiful apartment, you know, just down the street from Lincoln Center. So it was really a fun. Excuse reason to you know to bring this all together, but I also I learned so much from what they said, even though I didn't always had a chance to study with somebody like that. I had good teachers at. Eastman. Don't get me wrong.

Speaker

Hey.

Speaker 2

Anyway, now I'm really drifting off into.

Speaker 1

No, I mean it makes so much sense. I mean I the more I've learned the better, right, like the things I even in my last few interviews I had some people say the same thing, which was good because. Helps me with my coding of the. Views. But basically people said, oh, I studied this method and it based or I I listened to this lecture and I followed this teacher's advice. He says instead of having the student match you have you match the student like have them sing in their comfortable range or just say seeing something and then you find the note they're on and then you start from there. And so multiple people said that. And I was like.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

That's an important point. And then I tried it this week with this. For some reason, this father, who has like a 7 year old, I mean I have a way that people can just book off my website and pay on a credit card in advance which I'm so happy I made that I'm like, I don't know. Yeah. So this with this good dad signed up his daughter and she is having some pitch problems.

Speaker 2

Nice.

Speaker 1

So here's the crazy thing. She couldn't was not matching pitch well and then I realized in her speaking range, she was matching pitch, which was low, like, you know, Middle C The A below middle C. And then I had her do like the Meow sound. And then she got through her whole little middle break. And then for Owl sounds who she could sing all the way up to the top of her club. And I'm like. Hmm. OK, so this is this. This is the story of a kid who I've seen before. They think that singing is talking. OK, so I'd say there's, like, that percentage of these poor, rich people that they just think.

Speaker 2

Yes. Yeah.

Speaker 1

That singing should be as easy as talking, and they think it's the same part of the brain. They're kind of like they do it exactly like talking, and they don't understand the head voice. And I'm like, oh, this is a this is an easy textbook. And in in a way, I was like, that was like, is she too young? I'm like, yes, but not too young to develop pitch skills. So I said this isn't like voice lessons like this is like.

Speaker

Mm-hmm.

Speaker 1

Time help and he noticed she was off pitch. So that's why he wanted her to get early intervention. Because they're like Russian, you know? And.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Anyway, it's working, so I'm like, oh, this girl's not gonna be off pitch now all. Because of this early. Intervention. This could be part of the later research that like because I've heard this before, they can make animal sounds very naturally. People can kind of like whoa, you know, you make so her meowing is completely on tune. But if I'm like singing this pitch, she's like toxic and like her.

Speaker 2

Ah. Nice. Of course.

Speaker 1

Middle seat, yeah. Weird, right?

Speaker 2

I can't wait to read your research.

Speaker 1

OK. If I could.

Speaker 2

Just.

Speaker 1

Typical me. You know, I have way too much on my plate. I have 14 year old. I have 13 year. My son and I are in a Christmas story right now. He's playing ralphie. I'm playing on Tomball slash mother under study, which means I have three times to learn because I'm mother every Sunday LDS or something, and which is good. I wanted the role anyway and then she gave it to this other woman because the directors husband is playing.

Speaker 2

Wow. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Anyway, the doctor's husband said his father.

Speaker 2

I I understand that paternal there. Yeah.

Speaker 1

You know what I'm saying? So she chose the very, like, Dowdy older Mormon mother because I came in and, like a mini skirt. And like, I'm 39. I'm too much of A threat to, like, a 50 year old director. You know what I mean? Anyway, I was like, whatever. Fine. So then when I.

Speaker 2

I've been in that world.

Speaker 1

So then when I got the ensemble, we're like, oh. I'll accept it as long as I have very flattering costumes, like OK, like, I know what's going on here, but that's OK. So then in the end, the woman was held. Yes, and doesn't perform on Sundays. So she's like, could you be the understudy? Her mother? I'm like. Fine. Like. Sure they. Get to pay the mother of my.

Speaker 2

Oh my goodness.

Speaker 1

Son. But his voice is changing in real time and I have to get him through December 22nd and he's just entered that kooky stage where he's like, losing a little bit of the top and getting breathy. But he has a few more low notes and I'm like, Oh my God, how long can I sustain this? Can I? I'm like puberty blockers for this, or is that not allowed? You know, like it's gender, just.

Speaker 2

Alright, yeah.

Speaker 1

You know, like can I get?

Speaker 2

Ohh yeah, that's funny. I've had I I. Taught or I directed, I started. Being hired to sing the mother in a mall and the night visitors and then the woman who was going to direct said I'd rather just conduct the orchestra. Can you direct also? So anyway, I had two little 3 little boys to play them all and one of them dropped out because he was too much of A super student and the other two it was the same kind of thing. It was like Oh my God. Can we get through the this show before they completely lose? They are mild, unchanged voice.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I think we'll be OK. He just started. We we what is it? October? I noticed his first vocal changes just about 3 weeks ago. So I think the kooky stages take longer than two months, I hope.

Speaker

Yes. Ohh.

Speaker 1

He's going through a growth spurt, and so I'm like, OK, well, because it's a little soprano roll. But yeah. Yeah, also. So it's OK. It only has like a few high notes, but he is playing us, you know, a treble voice. Like, you can have your voice changed on December 23rd, but not on his birthday is.

Speaker

Oh.

Speaker 2

Oh, that's cute.

Speaker 1

Christmas, actually. So he'll be thirteen. But he's just at that age where he's he's playing a nine year old, you know, because like 12. Yeah. Nine. And the little brother supposed to be 6 that played like you know, so anyway, so it's gonna be great. So I'm going to.

Speaker 2

Yeah, right. Right.

Speaker 1

So I'm vocally so messed up right now. Like I I was going to audition for the San Francisco Opera course again, and I'm like, I'm not ready. I'm skipping an audition here because I'm just not my audition package is just. Yeah, I don't see when do I sing? I'm teaching 25 students a week. I'm writing a paper. I'm a mother. I'm like.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Right now I cannot be an opera singer. I'm going to musical. Let's just talk about that, you know, so it's like, and they're like, oh, you can sing all the soprano stuff. And then they wrote in, like, there's a bunch of high B flat seeds. There's even a high D at the end of act one. I'm.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Like, I'm not saying that. Just so you know, I'm like, I'm like, we're just going to do the regular D I'm not. I'm like ad. In a musical. Theater school. I'm like, are you like?

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah, maybe sometime, but not. The coral you know the the big course.

Speaker 1

Yeah, yeah, this is plastic and Paul, so plastic and Paul wrote this adaptation of a Christmas story, the one with the lamp, the leg lamp and. The the gun.

Speaker 2

I love it. Yeah. Oh, yeah. Yes.

Speaker 1

It's actually a really sweet musical. It's music's. Very good. And it's very uplifting. So I think it's really nice right now. Everything's funny. Everything's light. Everything's.

Speaker 2

Ohh it's such a great story.

Speaker 1

It's all funny, like the whole every single song is funny. There's not one song that you're like, this is serious you.

Speaker 2

Know no, no.

Speaker 1

But the mother's song is more about just like being a mother and like.

Speaker 2

No.

Speaker 1

Sometimes things go wrong haha. It's what a mother does. You know it's not even like it's not even heavy, so it's.

Speaker

Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 2

Nice, very good.

Speaker 1

OK, so this will be good. I will let you in when I buy papers finished. When? If I can just not pay a lot of school.

Speaker 2

Thank you.

Speaker 1

You know, because. It's due on like November 16th, so I was. Like. The paper skeleton. OK, I just need to write the literature review section and then once my friend runs all the stats, I literally just copy and paste in charts and then I write about them. It's going to be.

Speaker

Right.

Speaker 1

Really easy but.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

We're going to get through, right?

Speaker 2

I have, fingers crossed and all kinds of good energy coming to you.

Speaker 1

Well, then keep your uplifting spirit. And yes, it's probably because you're twice divorced, and maybe that's why I'm I had a six year relationship that ended a year ago. So I wrote an album about it. Oh, yeah, that's other thing I'm on. Spotify now I'm a singer-songwriter.

Wow. So yeah, I have these songs and they're all break up songs and they're kind of funny.

They're all musical theater. My genres kind of like weird. But I like it. It's kind of like they're all pattern songs. Well, not all. But I have a lot of pattern songs where I just tell stories. And that's my genre, yeah.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Good grief, I talk.

Speaker 1

A.

Speaker 2

Lot, I'd say. I say your life is very full.

Speaker 1

Paper, but thank you so much and somehow this will all come together. And then I just need to come up with this method I can sell to all these moms when they're pregnant so I can make millions, you know.

Speaker 2

Sure.

Speaker 1

Like. Buy this course on how to like, teach your child to. You know, I've seen pitch singers in my studio. Let's prevent that because your.

Speaker 2

Well. There, there you go.

Speaker 1

Kids are free. There's my money, OK?

Speaker 2

OK, good. OK. Well, thank you. You're welcome. As I said, I'm going to follow and find how how this turns out. OK. Bye, Erica.

Speaker 1

Have a great day. Thank you so much for your. Time. Very. OK. Thank you.

Transcript – Participant E – UK trained singer, recovered from injury

Speaker 1

OK. OK. So I'll just tell you a little bit about the purpose of my study and then it's going to be pretty open about what you want to talk about, but.

Speaker 2

Should be signed.

Speaker 1

I've been a voice teacher. For 15 years, my degree was in classical voice. I came across. Poor pitch singers in my practice, like just singers who couldn't match pitch. I couldn't really find many resources on how to help them, so I wrote my first paper on the topic about. This theory that because most singers. Most teachers were singers before they were teachers, and a lot of the vocal pedagogical literature comes from the university level, and it's all about training opera singers, mainly or sometimes musical theater. But it starts at a higher level, like it starts at like, assuming that people are already great singers. And let's just teach them about vowel. Informants and. Well, Tonto and support, so therefore all these people don't want to actually teach poor pitch people. And so then that opened up a whole can of worms. And so here we are. So any, I'd love to hear about your background and then really anything about the topic.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Yep, Yep. Yeah, OK. So I've sung all my life. My first performance. I think I was about 5 or 6. So and it's generally been harder to shut me up than get me singing. I did a lot of my early stuff, was very I was say sort. Of quite. Folk. Influenced very much a lot, a lot of a cappella. Thing and and I always found that really quite easy and and I kind of like was sort of shoved down the classical voice direction. I also played guitar in a rock band but and and and did backing vocals and and then after that I went to university cause all my. You know, sensible adults in my life said to me, oh, no, you need a proper qualification. Like music wasn't a. Type of thing. Anyway, that's another topic and and then I went to the Royal College of Music and while I was in my second year at the Royal College of Music on a postgraduate study and I was involved in a car accident and I've still got issues in my neck with the vertebrae, kind of like turned themselves around. And. Don't. Asked me how and and I couldn't really sing properly for best part of seven years. I could. I could, but I couldn't. It just it really impacted on my breath ability and I think some of the, you know, short short hand

PTSD from the accident actually affected my ability to be able to memorise things. So I didn't really get. Singing for a little while after that, I then went into opera. I've I played Carlotta in the West End in London and just did. I've done or tour all sorts of things. And then I started working about 13 years ago with a lot of. CCM singers. And loved it because that's what I liked when I was a teenager as well. So, and I also started my working with Esther at that stage as well because I wanted to know. I know how I make my noise, but I don't know how they make theirs. And I want to be able to make it so that that's kind of like my background and I've. I've experienced. Real sort of setbacks to a very natural voice. So I had to kind of relearn in a lot of ways. And I also while I was in Phantom, actually I choked on a cough suite and ruptured one of my vocal folds. So I then had to kind of like rehab myself there as well. So I've had two times where things haven't. That hasn't been easy. And where technical learning has sort of like I've had to come, come back into doing it, the pitch matching was never really an issue. But I work with a lot of people and I'm I've got a couple of kids at the moment who have huge pitch matching issues in their head. They're doing great. And then you know, but I'm just working with them and they really are getting it. It's, but it's a slow journey anyway, so that's a little potted, me.

Speaker 1

OK. So then sounds like you had a lot of the rehabilitation was major having that experience, it's very unique. I think that really makes you stand out just because most people haven't gone through such a traumatic thing. And that obviously means you had to learn different methods to do things then.

Speaker 2

Exactly.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Is typical.

Speaker 2

Yeah. And I think also I became very, very aware of what was going on in my body. I've got a great sort of 3D awareness of my body because it impacted so much. I mean, the first, the first thing I really noticed was like knee positioning and and how that links to. You know lot news links to know the air flow being really compromised and then the the whole bodies rocking back onto the heels leads to flattening. Pitch and and these things I find really fascinating.

Speaker 1

Oh, so the rock. So you're saying when people are standing back, they're similar? Knock kneed. They're unstable.

Speaker 2

Yeah. So. Or or well, no, when their when their knees are are locked. You know what I mean? So when you when you sort of you stand up and then you you lose goes backwards. Yeah. Yeah, exactly. Yeah. Yeah. And. And so I heard, you know. And.

Speaker 1

Tall, yeah, yeah. The the the.

Speaker 2

I I can hear. Flattening that comes from lack of airflow that basically comes from locked knees, but recently one of the kids I've been working. With. And we've been experimenting with body posture because she's got she's she's got a voice in there, but she doesn't come from a family of singers at all, but she feels like. You should be able to sing better than everybody that she knows, and so far she's proven them right. But I I was doing some work with her.

So like you think of heel and ball on the foot. And if you think that you've got four points of contact. What I notice is that everything that she did, she was sitting right back on her heels, and we just experimented the other day and and, you know, you don't always notice about a student and then suddenly you notice something and you're, like, hang on a minute. What do you do with your feet? So just brought everything forward until she had slightly more right at the front than the back. She said she felt like she was gonna pitch forward. But that's exactly what happened. She pitched and everything kind of the whole experience of her singing went forward. That's her expression that she told me and that she was suddenly singing and hitting absolutely the middle of pitches. So that was something that I found really interesting. And I'm always up for experimenting because you never know.

Speaker 1

Yeah. OK, that's interesting. Today, I was on an interview and someone told me about. A deaf student who performed on America's Got Talent who became deaf later. She became deaf in university, but she learned how to sing on pitch by feeling the vibrations in her feet. And I'm like that's. Somewhat related to what you're saying, you know like I'm in a way. So it's kind of interesting that that today, because I've had interviews, you know, just last week, two weeks ago. And they also, by the way, the two weeks ago interviews mentioned a still method and. And so I was like oh, then you bring that up, that's always good. So whenever I have like themes in my interviews, that kind of.

Speaker

M.

Speaker 1

Because you would be put in a category of like, oh, very traditional background in terms of your education, you know, UK trained music Academy all that. But then your accident makes you the standout. So then it's there's always something. You know, I feel like all the teachers who specialize in.

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 1

The challenges versus the teachers who want just the Broadway bound stars, the people are going to win the opera competitions, you know, it's like a certain type. And you're like I want.

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 2

Yeah, hello. I mean, you know, you know, I've I've spent 12 years at a further education college, so I was working with people that were really incredibly competent. But because also of the nature of further education, there were people coming to me who were compromised in many ways. So and for some reason people were, I don't know, my colleagues decided that I was good with people who were not good. So. I got all the really interesting cases like the singers with Tourettes and visual impairments and severe asthma and scoliosis that leads to this and a really fascinating, fascinating thing. So I never knew what was going to walk through. My. Door but yeah.

Speaker 1

And now do you work? Do you work in a school? University, private. What is your?

Speaker 2

Sometimes. So I I work some private. I do quite a lot of work over zoom. I'm heading there after I've seen you. And I also work in a couple of schools, really aged 11 to 18. And and I. The other thing that I was thinking of about pitch matching is that. Because singing over

here used to be really something everybody did in school and and that sort of group singing thing has disappeared. And the pandemic just kiboshed it. It's really hard to get a choir going now. Which I find pretty distressing actually, because I think everybody's missing out and and then I. I've also. I also think because people have a lot of kids, have been living in their bedrooms in a way that I never to my bedroom or I was either outside or doing and then they are singing along often with headphones in and they they don't really hear themselves. They don't really have a sort of even they don't hear the sound in their own. Bodies really either. It's a very much they're listening and kind of. Singing along. But they're not really. They're not really doing either. So I was going to tell you about one girl that I've been working with. Really fascinating student has a beautiful quality to her voice and when she's comfortable lower down in her range is ohh. There's some beautiful notes there. And. She when I started working with her, she had. A flat below middle C to F just above middle C that was her range and and and it's kind of, you know. And she said, oh, can I can I I only want to do some what were you doing? She really wanted to do some Little Mix songs. And the lower stuff? She came out really well with and the, but the top was just disastrous. So yeah, she was. Yeah, she was, yeah. About a three to F4 and and. I think it's it's been fascinating. I was just. Getting it to try and. Pitch. Just feel the music. So I've been using blue roll tubes just to get that. You can feel vibrations and I I think. Would correct me if I'm wrong, but I think that what you're feeling is the vibration at the extremities of the sphenoid, so you feel it here in higher pitches and sort of there. And then people describe it differently. So you know, you can get EFGA here and then it will jump maybe for some people, some people feel BB flat. Yes. See, I've got one girl who I could just go like that with and she can. Sing a spot. On D you're just like, yeah, there we go. And. And so she's she's straight in with her. I don't have perfect pitch. But like I said, I got a really great physical sense of where notes are and. Generally and and then you know the high notes as they come here and then go up onto the top. And you know, I remember being taught, taught about this by an amazing guy called David. Todd Boyd at the Royal College. And he couldn't sing to save himself.

Speaker

I thought I'd like that and I'm not. It's hard deadline.

Speaker 2

Kidding. But I learned so much about the voice from him considering, and he used to say things to me like like at the back of your head and like. And he's got all that. It's, I mean, you know, OK, well, I didn't know what he was. Talking about at that time. I was yet to go through the stuff that would prompt me into finding. UM. And anyway, so the girl that I've just been working with, we've just been doing, do you know, pretty funny from dogfight?

Speaker 1

I don't, but I I've I've probably heard it in a competition that. I've judged but.

Speaker 2

Yeah, it's, it's it's, it's just basically, yeah, it it, it's got a lot of sort of nice low stuff and then suddenly cause I thought she needs this challenge, it goes funny.

Speaker 1

Sounds familiar? Yeah.

Speaker 2

And I thought this is great because it's kind of going up the passaggio but as part of the song.

Speaker 1

I love it. It's like an exercise. It's a technical exercise in a song.

Speaker 2

And. Yeah. And I found with her kazoo really, really helpful. Because I think Kerry Albert says this, that the that that the when you play kazoo the roof of your mouth lifts up and you can't play the kazoo with a with a flatten. Elam. So she, she said that, you know, that makes a massive difference. So I've been talking to her about internal mouth shaping and then she seemed to be able to work out when she was playing the kazoo where the notes were. And so she'd be playing cause and then with one hand she'd be doing this. She showed me where she was writing the notes were and. And you know, it takes. I have to remind her at the moment, but. Without reminders, she can pitch G3 to A to a 4B flat 4 without reminders. And then I have to go. She goes up, then she gets stuck and then and then and then I say ohh higher and she'll go. Oh yes. I just need to think higher and then Boof and off it up. It goes so.

Speaker 1

It's almost like a registration issue. It's almost like her head voice doesn't kick in and they transition to head voice. She doesn't change the placement at all unless she's told, like, oh, right, that.

Speaker

Right.

Speaker 2

So she doesn't. But she but she we know she's never really sung up. She's been working with me for a year. And a half. And she's never, really. She didn't do much singing before, you know, she'd sang in the back row of the chorus, but she'd. Have been knocked it down.

Speaker 1

Yeah. No. But it's very interesting. You're talking about all the vibrations because there's. I'd say the controversial part of that is you're probably right that things vibrate in different places because of the the nature of physics, right? That like things have resonant frequencies, piano strings will vibrate when they're hit with their resonant frequency.

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 1

But you know how? There's the teachers who also will talk about, like, singing into the mask or what? You know, the teachers that are very, like, sing it into the mask. Or. You should feel it here specifically, and sometimes I can get very confusing for people because they. End up putting in their nose or they're like, I don't know what the mask is or.

Speaker 2

Well, The thing is is I, you know, I never use. I I remember I had one teacher that talked about that and I, I I remember thinking I you know I didn't really know what you meant I I kind of like the feeling of biting an apple and then. Thinking of the energy there, and if you imagine the sound instead of going out of your mouth, if you imagine it going to where your thumb thumb end is and. You know, I I I know that works and.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I had a teacher who had me singing with my thumb behind my teeth for like a year.

Speaker 2

Ohh yeah ohh I just do it and go. Can you feel that? Yeah. Right singing it.

Speaker 1

Ohh, literally anytime I needed it, it would just be like sing this Aria there I was like OK and it like was magically perfect. Yeah, there's definitely a lot. And then I also find it interesting now teaching. You know, CCM belt type sound on the higher range with the mix and just teaching them the placement of like it's actually smaller and it's it's very high in the back like you know and they're like. Oh.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Makes a big difference.

Speaker 2

That's have you talked to? Jeremy Ryan Mossman at all.

Speaker 1

Not, yeah, no. But I know carry Uber. So that's why when you put that name, I was like, I know Carrie. She she was my advisor on my for the first half semester. She was. And then we used to have one-on-one all the time. And I took.

Speaker 2

Really. Oh.

Speaker 1

Her she had like a vocal pedagogy course over like, six weeks and it was really great. So she still she filled out my survey so. Yeah. So if you're still in contact, so she's great.

Speaker 2

Fantastic. Yeah, and.

Speaker 1

So there's so much. I mean, what do you think about? Do you think there are because one of the things I'm kind of trying to study in this particular paper that I discovered was and this is that I wrote, I had questions about it. Was this auditory feedback loop and the auditory feedback. The. Is they use it to describe the process of hearing from like a psychology from psychology and biology. Neurology, right.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah. OK.

Speaker 1

You know you have to hear. Then it has to process, then you have to create, you know, tell your motor control to make the note. But then you have to constantly be adjusting in real time because with speech, it's like you're hearing yourself and you're having to make adjustments as you go. And that's the part I think a lot of people struggle with. They either. That's the poor tonal memory where they can't remember the tune. And then there's this other part. So my other question would. Be. OK, so then I found out that stuttering is an auditory process is an auditory loop. Issue. So if they put headphones on a stutterer and delay the rate at which the sound of their own voice comes back to them, it can they their stutters gone. So I wonder there are certain pitch singers who their issue is.

Speaker 2

Hello.

Speaker 1

The delay.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I mean I I don't know because I've never really got into this from a scientific point of view. I've kind of sat in on a few lectures and I understand it, but it's not my research.

Speaker 1

Right, right. I'm just wondering if you if you've. Noticed.

Speaker 2

What? What next?

Speaker 1

I think most people think their issues are this, that this the thing you talked about with the the the head voice thing versus like they they once they they can't like they're in tune until they're break and then it's like. It's all. It's anyone's guess after that, right? So that's the registration issue.

Speaker 2

Yes. So the other thing that I found really interesting and and this was something that I had a I worked with a guy called Nick Powell. At the royal northern I was a bookseller at the time and I used to go for lessons with him at 7:30 AM. Anyway, so I could get it before work. He was mad and. And so basically he used to get me. To do this. So that I would hear the sound as it. Came back to. Me and I love that phrase. Rather than trying to sort of get your mouth to kind of get as close to your ear as. Possible when you do that you you totally change your experience. Of the hearing. And and I've had great results with with that and getting people to.

Speaker 1

You find that it's coming from the back of the wall, then back to you or OK versus.

Speaker 2

Yeah, exactly. That's what I think as it comes out. And then that way.

Speaker 1

Versus singers who listen to themselves, which, by the way is a whole nother problem. The singers who's like singing back to themselves instead of out. So this helps.

Speaker 2

Nightmare nightmare. I've got a friend. A friend who's a professional singer. He's actually a conductor now. But who's who are both and he's saying like that because he was deaf in the other ear. So obviously. And he that was totally. Subconscious. He didn't realize you were doing that, but it was really fascinating. But this I found really good and. And then the other thing that I've used with people to get them to. It's just about awareness of sensation, I think. And just changing, if you like, disrupting their normal.

Speaker

Or.

Speaker 2

Sensation of of singing. So I I quite like using these just a rolled up bit of paper. I mean a big bit, it's great. And then singing to it that way so that you can feel the vibrations here because your thing in that way it totally changes how you hear it and sometimes it the disruption like using a kazoo. It's just enough to kind of get them to notice something. That kind of switches them on to thinking about it in a different way. And you know, I think it's also about I try and make it fun or silly in some way so that people don't feel that they're being scientifically observed, whereas my head is going what the heck?

Speaker 1

Oh yeah, every time I hear a singer and. And it's also interesting how you don't have to. There's so much you can hear without looking right, because sometimes I'm not really like, I'm like AD. I'm like, not really looking at my student and then I'm listening. I'm like, oh, my God, they're placement. And then I look. And I'm like, Yep, I was right. You know, it's like you can, like, hear you can. Hear what's going on in the back of their their mouth. It's very, very.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I think when you start to tune into it, you can and. And I think. And then, like I said, I got really interested in teaching because my own body wouldn't do what I wanted it to do. And recently and this is just an aside, it's something else that I was going to sort of just

Chuck at you is I've been diagnosed as hypothyroid and my thyroid gland has been quite swollen. And I was having real issues I couldn't belt above B. That was it was all going because they're just. I just couldn't get it to do it. And it was it was. So. Tight and when I got the diagnosis and I got some medication. Suddenly I'm I got to D5 the other. Day and I was just thrilled so.

Speaker 1

Was it creating constriction on your larynx?

Speaker 2

Yeah, because of where the where the because it butterfly is there and it it just it was just stopping stopping mobility I think upward mobility, yeah.

Speaker 1

Couldn't raise. OK.

Speaker 2

So it just wasn't working as well as as it could be, which was so frustrating for me that I was, you know, and it I listening to myself and thinking you're going flat, you're you. I I put it on record. You know, and you can hear.

Speaker 1

And I'm so glad that your medication is working and that that's that fixed it. I had about six years ago I had a vocal cord. Hemorrhage. So I had, which is worse than nodules.

Speaker 2

Ohh, I know that's what I had when I choked on the cough suite and it was just, you know, it's. All that, and you can still see a little blood vessel right on on my phone.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I have a tiny polyp still, but it mostly cleared up and the doctor's like, it's probably at this point I was about to do surgery. Actually it was. It was about a year of recovery, two years almost. It was a, you know, the the hemorrhage happened. I lost my voice. I started noticing I couldn't sing above. Similar, I couldn't sing above like C5 and I'm I'm soprano like opera soprano and I was like that's weird and there was a hole in the register.

Speaker 2

Yes.

Speaker 1

So I'd go.

Speaker

Look.

Speaker 1

Like. Yeah, and it was literally like a a hole where great. And then it would be continue. And I was like, that's not good.

Speaker 2

Like.

Speaker 1

So then when they scope me, he's like, you're literally bleeding. And then it was a dual they had a speech therapist working with the ortho lung, whatever ENT with the special kind and he they literally worked together. And so you would get. Speech therapy with the treatment. And so they're literally like, you need to immediately go on a vow of silence. You need to have no speaking for seven days, you're going. On.

Speaker 2

I had three weeks. Three weeks silence.

Speaker 1

I had three weeks separated so basically like I had one week. I recovered a lot. Then I started speech therapy and then like a month later I did another week and then it got a little better. And then I was always like slightly. It was never back to baseline. But it was like very close. And so then I was about to like, a year later, I was about to do a surgery. I signed up for it. I picked the date. And then I go for like the pre op appointment basically and he scopes me and he's like, wow, you're looking like much better now. I'm like. Weird. And then I realized it was like the psychological. It's like knowing psychologically that you're OK then you're OK. It's like, once you think there's no other choice of surgery, you get into time. But the surgery, like, gave me this. OK, well, I'll just get the surgery and then it's going OK and my body's like, actually, now that you're not stressed anymore, you know, we're just going to and I and also the improved vocal hygiene.

Speaker

Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1

I think taking vocal rest is really important, but even learning that the vocal rest can be. 15 minutes every hour.

Speaker 2

Oh yeah, and and I was interested in in what? What you. It's what you think you can and can't do. So I'm. I'm just thinking of of somebody else that I work with who's like she was. She said look, I'm back her the chorus. I'm a I'm a hoofer but I have to go to sing in tune for panto and that kind of stuff. But. And she said, I really Can't Sing. And she was quite right. It was. Yeah. She had about 3 notes and, but that was her perception of it. And the thing that I found really interesting was that when. When we, when we were working, she could sing with me just fine. But yeah, if she had to sing something by herself. She just couldn't get her voice to move around because she wasn't used to hearing herself. And I think because she was always singing in a group, she just had no concept of what she sounded like, you know, and so everything she did was like what? Ohh. I'm not sure about that. But she had. And this was something that I noticed. And this was also. Affected. Pitch probably you know presagio and up. She was really conscious of not being fat, so she would hold her belly in so she didn't get a diaphragmatic drop properly either. So she had loads of IBS and all sorts of other problems, because obviously that's the function of the diaphragm massage in the blah blah blah. And note that that didn't work at all, and so I got her to. I got her to flop her tummy out a couple of times and she did. She did get it in the end, but she. People like I didn't expect to have functional voice, it just it was fascinating. That was that. Was a really interesting 1 and conscious of time, but just a very quick thing. I was a girl that I worked with. Who, if you, if you showed her D5 on a piece of music, she could not sing it. And this is all to do with what your brain thinks you can.

Speaker

See.

Speaker 2

And. What was interesting was if I gave her the music in the lower key and then played on the piano in. Another key she. Could sing that. No, no bother, but. If. She saw it on the music wouldn't come. Then she just like her voice, would literally cut at C#, and that would be it. Boom and and. Eventually, you know, I was sort of asking her, you know. What is this with this D you know? Has anybody ever said anything to? You if you know. What are you worried about? You know, it's just me and here there's just me. You and me. There's that. I'm not judging. You just see if we can because there's no reason you can't. And I'm going to tell you now. You have sung it. And she said that was cheating and I said yeah, but I had to work it out. Nothing wrong. With you and. She'd been singing primary school, so she was

about 8 possibly and singing the sky boat songs. And going up for. There, there. OK and so. And she'd sung it. And the teacher had said to her at that precise moment, something along the lines of you're not loud enough. Honestly, I could pick someone else that would sing this. And you know, right in front of everybody in the school and. And so little girl is now really, really nervous. And in the middle of the concert, the teacher said to her.

Speaker

Right.

Speaker 2

And she said she went to. And threw up. So that D was associated with being quite extreme, stressful little person and then being very sick so she couldn't sing it anyway. It was really interesting after she told me that and I told her that I'd, you know, scammed her basically and. She could. She could. Sing and definitely sing. She could sing. Way up B flat and she had. She had a lovely voice as long as she couldn't see what she was singing. So that's that's an interesting thing as well. You know that your eye tells you something. And then your body refused to do what the eye said apart from not does that mean? Does that make sense?

Speaker 1

I've I've seen that too. I've seen that too. Where it's like, if it I don't know what key I'm in. I'm like, this is great. And then it's like, ohh, I'm in. You know, I'm this high and then. I'm. Like this is straining, but it's all. It's all mine.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

Or what you've. Conditioned yourself. Yeah, well, that's great. Thank you so much. I don't want to take more of your time, but this has been helpful. And I'll compile this somehow into my research. I have to like. So it all went into interview that to be like they all talked about this, you know. But this is lovely and thank you so much for your support.

Speaker 2

That's OK, and if? You want to chat again then? Just ask. I'm happy to not a problem.

Speaker 1

I have your e-mail now, so we. Can be in touch.

Speaker 2

You do and it's something I'm genuinely interested in. So. Yeah, OK, fab. Bye, bye.

Speaker 1

Then I'll send you the final report once I'm finished, OK?

Transcript – Participant F – Canadian Voice Teacher 15+ years experience – Studio Owner

Speaker 2

All good.

Speaker 1

OK, great. So I just want to hear your thoughts on, I'll just tell a little bit of why my research occurred in the 1st place. So I'm a voice teacher. I've been doing this for 15 years and then I of course came across singers who were really not great at matching pitch. And then I realized that I had never been taught how to teach that. So then I started researching for my masters like this idea. Of, well, how much our voice teachers actually taught how to help people with that. And then I realized they're not. And then I looked even at vocal textbooks

and realized that nothing in these, like, great vocal type like Richard Miller Appleman, there was nothing on pitch. They don't even mention pitch. In the book. So then I'm like this is kind of messed up. So the first.

Speaker 2

That's a pretty big.

Speaker 1

Oversight. Yeah. So I only had 25 people on my first survey last year, and but everyone was a very skewing against teaching poor, rich people. So I figured I needed a follow up study. And then. Maybe just think about what are going to be some methods to help teachers with this. So anyway, I'd just love to hear about your experience, your background and then anything about teaching pitch matching people.

Speaker 2

Ah. Yeah, yeah, absolutely. I've also been teaching for about 15 years. I've definitely taught lots of people who struggle with pitch matching. I don't do so now, but not because I don't think that those people deserve lessons, not because I can't help them, not because I don't think those people deserve to be helped. But because I have a couple of. Other teachers that work for. You know, and we have a pretty gigantic waiting list, so I hate that. It comes down to.

Speaker 1

Where are you located?

Speaker 2

I'm in Peterborough ON Canada. Sorry, I should have started with. That. Yeah. Yeah. So we have, we've got a pretty significant waiting list to get into our studio and at the beginning, I think this is probably true for many teachers at the beginning, I would have taught pretty much anybody and now I tend to. Not work so much. Less so with with singers who have a hard time matching pitch just. Because it's not my. It's not my favorite work to do and I have an associate teacher who tends to work with more beginner singers, so sometimes she ends up with some of those singers. But no, I agree with you 100% that I don't in school at least, I don't recall being given any strategies. I don't recall. Having like, I think that helping singers with intonation issues is different than helping singers who have a hard time matching pitch like. I think that we were definitely given some strategies for, you know, if you're if you're finding your singers a little bit flat on this or a little bit sharp here. There were strategies for that, but not the same as people who have a hard time matching. I did. Later. I don't know if you know Shannon Coates at all, but she has been my like, teacher, mentor, kind of. Since I was. In school and in Canada, she works with lots. So where? Where are you located?

Speaker 1

By the way, California.

Speaker 2

OK. Gotcha. Yeah. So in Canada, Shannon Coates is she's a PhD in vocal pedagogy and she teaches lots of teacher. And and I have worked with her in person because she's only a couple of hours away. But she had said and it was sort of I think she was probably the first one to put it into words like what I had kind of came across myself this to like one of them most significant ways. One of the most helpful ways to help. Singers who have a hard time matching pitches is to try to match them rather than get them to match us, and I think I had kind of come across that anecdotally myself, but no one had ever told me that. And I think that once she phrased that out loud, I. Was like, yeah. I have been finding that, but that was the first time that I had been taught that. So now I have worked with a couple of a few singers in the last few years who have a harder time matching pitch, but they're usually

actually in both cases it was teenage boys. Who had already been involved in musical theatre, which is crazy to me that, I mean, I guess it's it's hard to find boys in theater, so it's it's just funny that the boys are over here having a hard time matching pitch. And the girls have been taking singing lessons for 10 years and they're getting cast as a tree. But that I've the the. Singers that I've worked with in the last few years that have. Have had challenge challenges with pitch matching our teenage boys who have their sights set on professional performance, whether it be in musical theater or in straight theater, and they're just looking to improve their skills by adding singing so. That feel my I would say like my ideal client are has has really nothing to do with people singing levels, but more they're like a level of commitment to singing their level of curiosity, their level of engagement. So people who are kind of lukewarm and just testing out singing are not really my people. I think those people should get lessons, just not you.

Speaker 1

Know wait list for your other teachers. You.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Go by time or do you like actually have them audition and just hand select like for your studio who you want like? No, no, I mean no shame. I would you know. So that's fine.

Speaker 2

Yeah, that's a good question. So. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Kind of. Yeah. Kind of both of those things. So we're not so much auditioning for, like, who is the best singer, but more who is the kind of person that we want to work with? Like, I had I, for example. Simple. I had one kid come in for lesson fairly recently, and while the kid was lovely, her mother was kind of challenging. She was not super respectful of the space that she was in. She was like, almost like pestering to the point of almost harassment with her emails. So. And that's unfortunate. That's not the kids fault. But like, it's more that kind of thing that we are, like auditioning for is the kind of clients that we want.

Speaker 1

That's what I said.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah, so. It means that we don't take people in order and it also we take people in terms of like we like to have for us some people really like to specialize, but we like to have kind of a variety of folks in our studio. So if we've got. You know, a whole bunch of eight-year olds on our waiting list and then suddenly a 13 year old appears. We're more likely to take that 13 year old. So we don't have a studio full of eight-year olds as much as we love 8 year olds when we have recitals and festivals and whatnot, it's nice to have variety. So yeah, that's we definitely don't take away.

Speaker 1

How many teachers or how many voice teachers work for you?

Speaker 2

So I have two other teachers working for me one. That teaches voice and one that teaches guitar.

Speaker 1

And do you have a physical studio? Yeah.

Speaker 2

Not yet. That is our next step. We currently have three locations I teach from home. My associate voice teacher, Bray, teaches from home and my associate guitar teacher, Stewart. I rent space for him in like a sort of community. Center sort of building.

Speaker 1

OK. Well, that's.

Speaker 2

But our next step will.

Speaker 1

Great. Sounds like you're having a great. No, it sounds like your business is doing really well. So good for you. OK. Congrats. Yeah, I I.

Speaker 2

Be having us all in delivery. Yeah. Thank you. Yeah.

Speaker 1

I have a full studio, but I don't right now have the mental capacity to hire people. You know what I mean? Like it's like I know I could, but I'm like, I'm just going to keep it where it is because you have to be in certain places to do it. It creates so many other problems. But yes, long run, that sounds like a lovely thing, but that's always like a hard transition from being just.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I totally, yeah. So.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Like. Itself.

Speaker 2

Yeah, my, my the next steps will be moving us all under one roof somewhere and. I'm way overdue for needing another staff member as an administrator because I am teaching full time and managing the client loads of two other teachers and it's. It's a lot.

Speaker 1

So like getting everyone all my new students, I'm putting them on automated billing. I'm like, but then I have old people, legacy clients. Where it's like they're still paying me at the end of the month. Some people then you know, like, so I I. But as I go with new clients, it's getting more automated, but I'm not yet like everybody's registering on this system now and but that's what you have to do. You have to just be very official and it has to be auto debited and you can't think about it and no makeup lesson, you know, it just has to be. Otherwise you never make any money. You know what I mean?

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 2

Yep. Yep.

Speaker 1

Like that's can't be nice. Yeah, well, that's good. So you know, it's definitely good to be in a place where and I feel the same way where I don't have to take students anymore. I just take who I want. I get to choose the schedule I want, and then it's just our own crazy workaholic Ness that makes us.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Take on too much? Yep. It's like our own passion of like, but I want to teach everybody, you know. You know what's interesting?

Speaker 2

Yes, yes.

Speaker 1

You know, it's interesting. I had an interview earlier and the person said exactly what you said about having the singer sing 1st and then having the teacher match them. But they attributed it to. Sarah Kerr. Then.

Speaker 2

OK yeah. Ohh I'm sure this is not like. Shannon's thing, this is just a thing that she shared with me.

Speaker 1

No, no, no. It's apparently. It's called NAV, Nava National Association of voice. Something I don't know. This is a person who taught at Berkeley College of Music in Boston. But it's interesting because this is exactly the kind of information I need, because this is my. This is a much broader study because I only got 25 survey people last time and this time I'm kind of really diving into the questions because my questions were not as clear last time. So this time I really differentiated between a music, not a music. You know, last time it was a lot of these, like, would you rather shoot someone with poor pitch or someone with bad acting and everyone was choosing the not the poor pitch. Everyone was like intonation. And I had a theory that it's because the vocal pedagogy didn't have any of that. I also think that another study I saw.

Speaker 2

All right.

Speaker 1

Boys, teachers, the Nats, they surveyed 2000 Nats teachers are like which of these attributes? Give people the most success at being good at singers like which of these precursors would you think someone's going to be talented and pitch and tone? Well? Pitch was the number one and tone was the second, but there was 11 factors and pitch was overwhelmingly chosen. So then I'm like, wait a minute. This is where the thesis came in. It's like how is it that?

Speaker

Oh.

Speaker 2

Mm-hmm.

Speaker 1

Pitch is the most important we have least.

Speaker 2

Pitch is the most important, but we have no resources to help people with it, yeah.

Speaker 1

And you know too, whenever I have students who are very serious about musical theater and they want to be professional or whatever, when they're flat, even these are good singers, right. But they're like a little bit flatter, sharp. I'm like, listen, if you get in with that casting agent and you're off tune, you're in. Currently out, they're not going to care if you are the best actress, the best dancer. The best is the minute they hear that you're like kind of always sliding and your pitch is like not perfect. You're out like you're cut. Like that's it. Like you're out, you know. So then it's like, wait a minute. How is this that we live in this world where it's just overly.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

The thing, but then, yet there's no resources for it. So it's interesting you saying the thing about matching student. Are this other person saying that this is now giving me a good idea for my masters thesis which is after this research, what if I create an app that actually has the singer or just sing a note doesn't give them a? Pitch. Then back then and then. It's more that they're getting a sense of.

Speaker 2

And then helps them. Move there.

Speaker 1

It's telling them what they are doing like ohh you just saying what would be considered.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Four, did you know? And they could even give them more information on, like, this is here's where it would be on a piano or here, you know.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

Something. And then they can start to sense that there's some sort of connection, but it has to come from them versus if they're constantly thinking about matching, there's a whole because, OK and the other whole part of my whole research, I talk about this auditory. Feedback loop. This is another part of my theory my.

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 1

Is OK, the auditory feedback loop is a pretty simple way of explaining this process that happens in hearing and talking or any speech, right? So it's like you have to hear your brain then has to interpret that as a note. Basically, one second was getting a package.

Speaker 2

Right.

Speaker 1

This is my OK, so the so they have to hear, they have to interpret. Then once they're saying they have to actually listen actively to their own note and be able to adjust in real time. And that's the loop part of it. But then there's the motor control, because then you're telling your your larynx and your vocal tract what to do. So all of that is going on, and all of that could cause problems. Not to mention registration. Like, if they're, you'll notice a lot of pitch problems when they're in their register shifts.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yep. Something else that I wish I could remember where I had heard this, but I don't know if anyone else has ever mentioned this to you. If you've come across this at any point, but I was like that seems like a really interesting theory. Is that I had heard somewhere that singers. The kind of people who had a hard time learning to ride a bike or learning to tie

their shoes or with like motor coordination. Are more likely to be the people that have a hard time matching pitch. I wish I had any like scientific backing for that. That was just a theory that I heard someone threw out, but I was like, but that seems like an interesting theory because so much of matching pitch, as you were saying is about coordination, not just active listening. But then like, what do I do about those sounds that I've just heard? Like, I have to give my body. Some instructions about how to adapt to do what I want it to do and it's it. This may have come from. Actually I taught a husband and wife that were that retirees and. This particular man might have been my most challenging in terms of helping him with pitch matching. We definitely made progress, but it was the IT was the smallest like longest, the progress was slow, slower than I think it ever had been. And and his wife was definitely aware of this because they like to make music together, so she would. Hear him singing and know that he has a hard time matching. Pitches. And I think it was her that said, Ohh, you know, Murray's always been kind of an uncoordinated type. Like, I wonder if that relates. And I was like, huh, that's really interesting. And I wonder if anyone's ever looked into that.

Speaker 1

Yeah, but on the other hand, I feel like there's tons of randomly good. Singers who are really bad at sports, you know what I mean? Like they're not coordinated. So that's where I'm like, I don't know. Like, it would be worth studying. Well, I heard with rhythm. This is a study that babies who skipped, skipped crawling and went straight to walking have trouble with rhythm.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

Interesting that there's like an intrinsic.

Speaker

So.

Speaker 1

Like interesting, you gain, you learn rhythm, because when you're crawling, it's all about the the coordination of the body, you know, hand, foot, hand.

Speaker 2

I had also heard that about. People with a heart murmur, and I don't know whether that's true or not.

Speaker 1

So basically, like basically don't skip a developmental step basically, but I also just think a lot of it is.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Practice my own children. I have two children, they. Have perfect pitch. I don't have. Perfect pitch. But they've heard me singing my entire life teaching lessons, and I play the exact same warm ups for every single person, so it's almost like.

Speaker 2

Hmm.

Speaker 1

And it was. And then all they did was music together when they were a baby for like 1/4 or whatever. So I don't think that gave them a pitch, but I was always shooting to them.

Speaker 2

Yep, they have internalized that.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

And the other thing I did is I was always repeating to them what they would make as a sound. So when they were first babies and just doing like like a little googly thing, I would communicate back their exact sound, whatever that was. And so whatever that is, I'm not saying this is like it's just interesting because I don't have perfect.

Speaker

Sure. Yeah.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Pitch. But they do like if I start a song in the wrong key, they go. That's the wrong key, mom. And it, like, really bothers them. So then on the on the, on the alternate side of that?

Speaker 2

Fine.

Speaker 1

The people who aren't around music at all, they're not exposed to it, they never sing. I'm surprised. Cause for me it's like singing as part of our life. All my kids are singing while doing homework while they're biking. They're just always. Then imagine that other people who they've never sang, they've never opened their mouth, they've never even practiced. And I think a lot of it is that. So I think there's, like, this percentage of the poor pitch singers who.

Speaker 2

MHM.

Speaker 1

They never actually sang.

Speaker

Mm-hmm.

Speaker 1

And they never sing. They just don't practice. They just never like, maybe I should.

Speaker

Yep.

Speaker 1

Randomly try matching that Taylor Swift song. Yeah, it like doesn't cross their mind. Then they're like, I want to take a voice lesson and then it's like, all right, you got to sing a melody now.

Speaker

Yep. Yes.

Speaker 1

They go. There's a melody in this.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah, absolutely that. That just that brain body coordination hasn't been exercised.

Speaker 1

They never thought like like when I listen. It's like, I'm sure all musicians that I know when you're listening, even to a Symphony, you're hearing all the little parts individually and you're like, oh, the violin is doing that. And the food saying that and you're the singer. I'm thinking about the melody. I think a lot of people just think about the words.

Speaker 2

M.

Speaker 1

Hmm. I had some poor pitch singers where they were very lyric focused. They were almost like monotone.

Speaker 2

That's so interesting. That's so interesting because I and I'm very transparent with my students about this. I'm completely the opposite, that you would think as a singing teacher that I would be good at. No, terrible. Like I have learned to. I have picked up this skill over years of teaching. But there are tons of songs where I know all the words inside, out and backwards, but I have I connected them to my brain. Absolutely not. I'm just making English sounds with my mouth and like not computing any meaning. To them, like when I ask my students, what do you think this song is about? Do I have an? Answer in mind. Absolutely not. I have. Usually they are all over. They're further along than I am in figuring out what their song is about. Even sometimes the small children I might know all the words inside out and backwards. But do I have? Them connected to my brain, no.

Speaker 1

I think good singers and this is like I'm going to speak about myself but and you as well. We see singing as just random sounds that sound good, and we don't necessarily. We're not saying the words, everything is vowel modification. I don't. I'm not thinking about the text 1st and then singing. I'm let's make this pretty legato line and then I'm going to add in words because I have to. Yeah. Right. And so everything is, but I I really do think the people that are lyric focused, I've seen it where I had students.

Speaker 2

First year, first year.

Speaker 1

Like, really into music. Leader they they, like, knew every single word of this entire musical. They start singing it. It's completely monotone disaster. I'm like, you're not even singing the pitches right? And but they are so focused on the text. Their brain is, like, overwhelmingly. And then it's.

Speaker 2

On the words interesting.

Speaker 1

Like. No, I need to break down the text. You need to now. It's not like water. It's like water, you know? It's like, oh, it's like, that's how I'm thinking about everything. It's like the melody and the sounds. And I don't even know what they're saying. Right. So I think that's just the the singer's brain is more the good singer's brain is more like that. And the people who.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah, yeah, sure. Yeah.

Speaker

Right.

Speaker 1

Are not musical, they just hear the language as language.

Speaker 2

Right. That's really interesting. Yeah, I know that. That. Yeah, that checks out. Interesting.

Speaker 1

It's so weird. All tonal people who speak Mandarin or tonal languages have they have left instances of a museum and like poor pit because it's a tone language. So there is something there. I do think a lot of this could be prevented in like early music education. So I do think there's a lot of implications for just helping the general population.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Just because I I just hate that there's always that person, that there's always that adult who's like 50 years old, who's like, I want to take lessons because my whole life I was told I was tone deaf. Or something. They're not tone deaf, they just never someone told them they were bad when they were.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah. Yep, yeah. And they internalize that and carry it through.

Speaker 1

Five and they're traumatic. Their whole life, they literally carry it to their life, so it takes a long time to undo that. But yeah, OK, so then you. So now. So basically to summarize your kind of point is that you're now at a point where you don't have to take people. It's not necessarily by skill level or age. You kind of just choose the.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Would you know have diversity in the studio? Choose the singers that you want to. With and then even with your other teachers, they may not necessarily take someone who has poor pitch, but not because they. But if the person's really good to work with their parents, cool, they're hard working. They're pleasant. You might still take them even if they're like not not.

Speaker 2

So we have one in particular right now, she's 26, but she's been with me. I think since she was. Like 15 or 16 like she was one of my very first students and she has developmental dyspraxia, which I don't know if you've ever encountered it in your teaching, but is a motor coordination disorder so very poor pitch. But it's the the she was a very late. Speaker and has been through, had been through a lifetime of speech therapy. So her when her she came to singing lessons, her mom said that she came to singing by recommendation of the speech therapist because she had speech had become something like she. Had to work really hard. To talk so her speech was very monotone because it was something that had been really like intellectualized. Like it didn't come naturally to her. It was something she had to work very hard at. So it was very labored, very choppy, very monotone. And so she came to lessons because of a speech therapist thought that singing might give her speech some more cadence. And. Over 10 years later, we're still working on it. I think for that particular singer, we've probably achieved all that we're going to achieve, but it's more that if she were to stop taking singing lessons, I imagine her speech would decline. So we're not improving her singing her speech at this point so much as maintaining the skills that she has gained in her speech through singing.

Speaker 1

Yeah.

Speaker 2

But the pitch is very poor there. But she's lovely. She's super keen. Her parents are delightful. And you were talking about grandfathering. She's been with me for like.

Speaker 1

That makes sense. 12 years. Yeah, I think that also is helping her brain with speech development. So like, even that's a different goal. It's like you're not. You're not like, oh, you're gonna competition. It's like, no, you're just helping someone with their life. And it's like it's always.

Speaker 2

So.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Like OT right so. It's like you're. Yeah, well, that's good.

Speaker 2

Yep, absolutely.

Speaker 1

Yeah, but yes, I do think that in. Well. They're and I just think teachers could market themselves if they knew, oh, I can teach poor rich people and poor rich people knew that they could get better. There'd be a whole nother class of people to teach. It's not just these school theater kids, you know. So I think it's good. So hopefully my my study reveals something. But I do like the fact that you said the thing about matching the singer and someone else said that.

Speaker 2

Totally. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Now that's gonna become a theme. So now I'm like fly.

Speaker 2

Yeah, something else I meant to mention that I have found really useful. In addition to the matching, like matching where the singer is and then getting to them to move from the.

Speaker 1

Half a Steve.

Speaker 2

There is introducing people with poor pitch, especially to the idea of body mapping. This like where does it feel like that sound lives in your body because you were talking about like things that that good singers just inherently observe and pay attention to without even knowing they're doing it versus things that poor pitch singers have never thought about. So if if they if I'm trying to get them to sing a G and they consistently want to keep singing C, then OK, I'll adjust. And now we're singing C so now I'm playing C on the keyboard. Now I'm. Things see and I will get them to pay attention to. Where does that note feel like it lives in your body? Which does it live up here? Does it live here? Does it live here? And then as I try to get them to move, to observe how the sensation in their body changes. And sometimes they've never paid attention to that.

Speaker 1

Hmm, that's great. That's brilliant. Actually, I love it. Know that that makes a lot of sense. I do it cause a lot of it's motor control. Because the studies that have shown motor control are like they tend to sing flat on ascending scales, but they don't sing flat on descending scales. Which would prove they don't have an ear problem. They have a coordination.

Speaker

Interesting. Right, right.

Speaker 1

That's a lot of them, but yes, I know you have a 12, so I don't want to keep you much longer, but I now have your e-mail and if I have any other questions, I can ask you and thank you for helping me. I really appreciate it. Like it means a lot, OK.

Speaker 2

You're better. Awesome. Yeah. Good luck with your research. It's nice to meet you, Erica.

Speaker 1

Thank. Nice to meet you. Good luck. Bye.

Transcript – Participant G – US based Choir Director Trained – now voice teacher

Speaker 2

So much easier.

Speaker 1

So much easier. So it just transcribes everything. OK, so I want this to just be kind of semi structured, but I'll just explain the reason for my research and then I want to hear all your thoughts. OK, so I did a study last year and I was surveying voice teachers about whether they like teaching poor pitched students or not, and overwhelmingly the results came out really in against teaching poor pitch students that they really disliked it, compared to almost every other local problem. And then it turned out that the more. The more education, like if they had a masters degree, they were even less likely to want to teach, which my theory was that traditional vocal pedagogy programs were built for singers like basically singers who end up, they want to become opera singers or something, and then they go into pedagogy as like a fall. Back. But they they were never. They were never a. A bad singer themselves, if that makes sense, so they don't even know how to work with the winners, so I'd love to hear your thoughts on all that and your experience.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So. My general, First off, just a little bit of my background cause I think this will influence some things. I graduated class of 2019 with my degree in music education. I spent the next five years working as a choir teacher and ran into some. So so my background as voice teacher has come from the choir world. And I ran into. I ran into issues of of classroom management and just just really burning out a lot. And so this year I am. I decided to change gears and this is my first year being a private voice teacher. I the I work with two schools where I'm thankfully able to come in during their choir classes and their theater classes and pull them out during those classes and work with them during that time. I have had the. Privilege of getting to work with. A couple students who really struggled to match pitch and I. I I really enjoy it for a couple of reasons. First off. I have found that those particular students, again I've very small sample size, but those particular students are the students who are the most excited to just they they know. Like like I I have yet to encounter a student and I'm I'm certainly this, but I have not encounter a student that like isn't aware that they struggle to to match pitch and struggle with all that. So for me getting in getting to work with them, it it, it becomes a puzzle for both of us. I'm like, OK, how can I help you train your ear and train the muscle, train everything to to do what it needs to do to help you. Match pitch so. I. I really enjoy it because coming from a choir world, I'd run into students like that and I wouldn't have the time to work with them. While I wanted to solve that problem cause I've got a whole class of 2030 kids, I cannot stop and say. Here, let's address this one-on-one so that for me. Is why I really enjoy it. But again my. Background may be a little bit different than a lot of teachers that you like, like your theory is about, you know, wanting to be a professional singer that followed back on on pedagogy. When that doesn't work.

Speaker 1

Out. Yeah. And I was looking over your answers because you are the music. In person I saw that because I actually am most excited when I run the statistics on the question where I said you consider yourself a singer and then a teacher or a teacher, then the singer or equal. I can't wait to run the stats.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Ah.

Speaker 1

On. That against the later questions about the science part. And you know what? What causes poor.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

I don't know. I'm excited because I feel there's going to be a correlation there so.

Speaker 2

Yeah. And. And I will say like. Like it in terms of preparation, I don't feel like I always have a good idea of how to go. About helping those students. I'll say even my degree in music education, I don't feel like always left me with a great sense of how do we help students who just straight up can't match pitch all the time like I.

Speaker 1

Did they focus on were you focused on is it more instrumental music and or Kodai like early music like how does that? Work.

Speaker 2

So my every degree is going to be a every degree program is going to be a little bit different. My particular program was very it was not instrumental. In fact, we did not even have we had a. If. A single band that where at my college I attend a small, small smaller Christian college, but we we were known for our choir and so like we my knowledge of instruments was one survey of instruments class that I'm going to be honest, did not prepare me. For what my certification says, I should be prepared for in that like I definitely would not feel comfortable in a band or like orchestra classroom. But it was very it was very coral heavy like like it was, there was definitely some of those could die elements there, right. And like I got an introduction to ORF and I got an introduction to all like the elementary settings but but from a secondary standpoint it was how do you work with with choral singers? It did take. Two semesters, one or two semesters of vocal pedagogy, which I very much valued, but I don't think I. If I'm being honest, I don't feel like I fully grasped everything like like I. I wouldn't feel like it fully. It was a lot of education and then I never got a chance to really apply that outside of, you know, some student teaching stuff, and even that was again choral ensemble based. So a lot of what I've been doing is is just like things that I know are are factually like, OK, we're going to do some ear training stuff. I know a lot of. It's. Just helping the student recognize that I I I recognize where they're off. I've I've used some apps to help with that. But but personally, I wish I wish I had more resources because I I enjoy these students, because I I think they oftentimes, out of all of my students, are coming with this mindset of I just want to learn. I want to, that they aren't the students that get to me the most of the students that walk in with a preconceived ego of like I. I I'm ready to. I want to be the next big thing and I know I have what it takes to do that. And I'm like, I don't care whether you work.

Speaker 1

Was like I should have gotten the solo in the choir, and I didn't, but I want.

Speaker 2

Yeah, and. And so these do it.

Speaker 1

The next one, yeah.

Speaker 2

So yeah, so I. So that's I just rambled a little bit there. That's some of my thoughts.

Speaker 1

No, it makes sense. I mean, in the paper I did, I studied 5 of the major vocal pedagogy books from the 20th century, like Appleman and Richard Miller. And I actually went through the books and tried to find if they even mentioned pitch at all.

Speaker 2

Ah.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

And they didn't even mention pitch at all. So all the books were about formants and breathing and tone, but they they didn't even talk about the concept of pitch. I couldn't even find the the the word like either fundamental or pitch or flatness or sharp. Like barely. They were just like, oh, some singers.

Speaker 2

Oh, I learned. Yeah.

Speaker 1

I'm saying slightly and there was no and I'm like this is really messed up. So my theory was that. That the the vocal pedagogy is written by these teachers who are good singers and then they think they're writing to the collegiate singer, so they're they're teaching hot because to get into any voice program, you're going to have to have audition to already were singing. No one's coming into their undergraduate voice department having never sang and going to audition with an Aria and getting like.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

These people are already.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

So I'm like, wow, we're self perpetuating the problem and I agree, like in my pedagogy course, we did have like a student teaching aspect where we had to have a student and teach them. But our teacher didn't even give us a goal of it. It was just kind of like work with the student and then show.

Speaker 2

Us in class one day or something. See, I I wish I even got that. Because I. The like as a music education major, I got student teaching like where I went into classrooms and and was that aspect. But in terms of one-on-one work with a student, the closest I ever got was when the teacher made the IT was like six of us in the class. Give each other like. 20 minute lessons in class, which again and and I. I felt this way at the time and didn't didn't say anything, but we're all in our junior or senior year of of our music of some form of a music degree. We're all not the type of singers that we're we're going to end up teaching, you

know. So it was very much like I. You know and. Some of it is the last thing we need right now in any music degree is in additional one credit class that's actually 3. So I I get that aspect of it, but it is, it was very frustrating.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I'm also interested because there's some people who took my survey who have masters in voice versus masters and vocal pedagogy, right. So I'm going to be able to also see how those people feel versus the non.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

But I have so after this paper I have one more. I have like my big Masters thesis to write and that may end up being where I actually test an app or something like where I actually create a resource or I write guidance. So that's kind of where I'm going with this research is that I'm going to kind of see what everyone says and try to figure out what the big hole is, where the gap is.

Speaker 2

Uh. Yeah. That would be cool.

Speaker 1

And then hopefully come up with a methodology or an app or something, or test two different apps or two different methods and see if we can get something like that. So that's kind of what I'll do on the next project, but I was.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

I think OK, what I noticed about poor pitched students that I worked with is they tend to sing before they even hear the note. Have you? Ever seen that?

Speaker 2

Yes, I and I have noticed too. Like I could think of one student where. UM. It's almost like. I think it ties into what you're talking about with her. It's almost like she doesn't. Her pitch memory, so to speak, is very sure.

Speaker

Port.

Speaker 2

So I will do. If I do a two or three pitch exercise and then immediately have her sing it, she can do it within within a certain range with a, you know, she could do it pretty accurately. But as I either a turn it into a like A5 note dose so like a dog. Doe type exercise. Guys. She really starts to struggle and it's it's like that the ability to even just remember. Those pitches. Starts to come into question too.

Speaker 1

Yes. So yes, and I think that's part of the. So what I was talking about in the survey when I talked about auditory feedback loop, it's this thing I found which was the process that the brain.

Speaker 2

Uh-huh.

Speaker

And.

Speaker 1

It has to like, listen, interpret then it has to coordinate the motor control to actually make the pitch. But then you're you're getting feedback even when we're speaking, we're getting feedback and we're adjusting in real time. And it turns out people who stutter have an auditory feedback disorder, and when they actually slow down the rate at which they hear themselves. Through headphones like, they create a slight delay. They can actually improve their stutter. So like. So like like like basically they can't hear themselves at the right rate to adjust their pitch. So let's say like so there's basically like I think there's gonna be 5. I think there's 5 problems that cause pitch problems. And I think one of them is, this is my theory. And this is where I think if we can pinpoint like there was a diagnostic tool to determine quickly which of the five, then you could help your.

Speaker

OK. Huh.

Speaker 1

Much faster. So there's the people who don't even hear the pitch and interpret it. So like they hear the note, but it doesn't even click in their brain that they have to interpret that into how to then like they can't even they can't visualize the note in their mind like it doesn't exist outside of. You know, I'm saying cause you can hear a kiss in your mind, right? Like when you you said you think it first and then you sing it. Right. OK. So those are the kids who can't even hear. Then there's people who the. So it turns out that people who tend to sing flat on ascending scale.

Speaker 2

Yes.

Speaker

Yes. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Those. End up it's it's motor. It's usually breath control and motor control, so it's like they're unable to get the right amount of change to go up the scale correctly because of the breadth. And then same with the flat. But then it's like on the descending scale, those people might not have problems because it's the air flow that's the problem. On the ascending, it's a really interesting things like that. OK.

Speaker

Yes. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Then there's the. Then there's register changes. So I find that a lot of my younger girls who don't know how to activate their chest voice because maybe they only sing in head voice, they talk in head voice.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

They have trouble when they get down to the break in the ECDEF kind of down there. They don't know how to switch into the chest voice, so they're always kind of off because they don't know how to change their register. And whenever they're and those, those people, you'll notice whenever they have the the break, they'll go out of tune on the break. So they might be in tune. And then as soon as the break hits, they're they're off. And it's because they haven't adjusted how to change the the laryngeal positions to accommodate for the registration. And then it's what you're talking about, which is the total.

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 2

MHM.

Speaker 1

Three, because there's there's this sense that they have to remember to sing it.

Speaker 2

Yes.

Speaker 1

So I think there's people who can hear it, like who can match? It's like what you're saying you can do, like 3 pitches. And that person in that moment repeats it and then they remember. But then let's say they're learning a song and for some reason they just can't memorize the way. It goes, yeah. They just can't like, it's like their brain just doesn't remember the pitches. So what I did for those students at a recital. Is I gave them karaoke tracks that had to guide Melody.

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 1

And I taught them to hear the guide melody, and then that that actually was a huge improvement compared to before. And you're like, OK, so some people just need a guide melody like those people are never going to have the ability to just be in an 8 part choir where they're singing in, like clusters, like Eric Whittaker style. You know what I mean?

Speaker 2

Well, and that's that's the question too is like. Is this a like? I'm going to use the word I. I don't like this word, but like better. Better word. Is this a disability type scenario where where there's no like, that's just you're stuck like this. Do the best you can. Or is this something that over time we can eventually train that skill back, you know?

Speaker 1

I think well, I think besides for the music people are the ones that are actually diagnosed with tone deafness for real like they have, they actually have, they're they've studied their brains and MRI's, and they actually have.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Something like their brains are different, right? So let's say they're not tone deaf, but there's really bad at pitch. I do think they can improve and they can be trained. It's just to what extent. And then to one of my students who had that processing thing. They're one of these, you know, very wealthy students that has, you know, they always have ADHD accommodation and this and that.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah. OK.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Ah. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Well, they had this special thing where they're like, oh, I was tested and I have this auditorial delay. So they wear a gummy in one of their ears because one of their ears hears faster than the other ear.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 2

That's insane.

Speaker 1

So then they actually did improve their singing after they started wearing their gummy.

Speaker 2

My sister-in-law is a audiologist at University of North Texas. And I gotta tell her about that cause I bet she. Would find that fascinating.

Speaker 1

Yeah, ask her about that. If she's ever fit someone for these, this person had to go to Denver to get it done. It's some special place, but they wear this like they created this. It fits in their ear. It's kind of like a gummy thing.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

And apparently they're like, oh, I have an auditorial delay. I'm like, what are you even talking about? Like, how is this even a thing? But then the studies I'm gonna write about that I found for this paper, there's ones about the stuttering that I talked about. So there's other kind of speaking disorders that have to do with auditory feedback. And when they put people with noise cancelling headphones and they change the delay at which they hear themselves, they can improve. It's very interesting.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

And then the other studies are there's been studies on violins, but people learning violin, they took beginners and they taught them how to bow. And they kind of taught them both with just visually learning how to bow by looking at, like, a picture and looking at themselves in the mirror. And then ones that could hear back.

Speaker

Uh.

Speaker 1

They're Boeing versus like they block out the sound of the Boeing. So anyway, this did matter, but apparently for really professionally trained instrumentalists across the board when they test them, let's say they take away their ability to hear. Themselves. The professional pianist and violinist and all that they can still play really well because they've learned it from muscle. Memory. And same with professional singers they've tested. They have these tests for like. They have the singer maintain a pitch and then they have the guide, pitch micro tuning lower, but they're they're they're they're like told those people are told you maintain the original pitch. So the non pane singers will start to like adjust to the micro tones going down. And the professional singer will be able to maintain because they're doing it not just by the.

Speaker 2

Got you. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Auditorial. But they're like they know how to hold the note because of the the motor control.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

Fascinating. So that's why I think if you improve those things in these beginner singers, they do improve. It's just at a slower rate. And I just think the people who start off here are just faster. And then I don't know, but it's it's a, it's a real. I do think that most teachers don't have because it's not taught in pedagogy. When did you ever see in your music education?

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Where they're like. Here's how people learn to sing on pitch.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Well, and I wonder too. You know, and again, you would probably know worth it. How much of that is that our teachers didn't always know. Like like like did because then it then it becomes as you talked about the the cycle right of that you. Get. Those professors who haven't worked with the beginning singer in decades for some of them and probably didn't care. In some cases, you know case by case, but in some cases probably didn't even care to to begin with and only wanted to work with these these. Higher level accomplished.

Errors.

Speaker 1

It even it even perpetual, perpetuates worse because think about. This. There's some, let's say, in the opera world and in musical theater, there's these singers that everyone wants to work with. They charge a ton of money. They're very sought after. And you go, oh, this person has all these famous singers that are in their.

Speaker 2

Uh-huh. Yeah. Ah.

Speaker 1

Studio, right.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Well. What if they, the people who are running the studios, are just very good at auditioning students to come into their studio in the 1st place and they only pick people with the highest talent?

Speaker 2

Ah.

Speaker 1

Begin with and therefore they get to claim that they created that, but really you could have this other person who works with all the bad singers, but their actual teaching is better than the person who just happens to have. So the and then those people will never take the bad singers. Then it makes them look better. Like, oh, look how good of a teacher I am. All my singers won the Met.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Well, and I even feel that way a little bit about my own circumstance where I see my kiddos.

Speaker

Comments.

Speaker 2

Once a week for like 30 minutes. If that like not a lot of time for middle school and high schoolers, but I'm still seeing a lot of progress and I know that a lot of that is because they have these choir teachers as well who have them singing every day and working in a group

setting. And I get to come in and I get to like find. I tuned some stuff, but I also know that a lot of the progress I make here is because of a lot of work that went into the choir classroom as well, you know.

Speaker 1

Yeah. No, that's true. That's true.

Speaker 2

So it it.

Speaker 1

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 2

It's just an interesting.

Speaker 1

So.

Speaker 2

I I think too that that actually again, this may be beyond the scope of your research, but I'd be interested to see how. Professional voice teachers would handle the circumstance versus teachers in the choral classroom. You know, a lot of them, even if they don't teach lessons or have, are having. In fact they have a higher frequency of having to deal with that because a lot of them have come, come all choirs that kids just end up in and whether or not they can match. Pitch and they're having to and some of them. Some of them are just gonna be like, OK, place you in. The back corner. Be quiet. We're gonna do our thing. But I also know plenty of of great teachers. Who who are gonna have techniques and and ways to help help those singers and. That that would again beyond the scope of your research right now. But it fascinates me. What?

Speaker 1

No, but there are articles on that. If you're just and I know there's a lot of choral literature in the UK. Well, cause in the UK they have a lot more choir as part of the culture, like all the schools have fires, elementary schools, kindergartens, whatever. And they, and there's a lot of good coral research like, that's how they came up with.

Speaker 2

Uh. Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

You know, male puberty, like voice change. That was all classified by the choral teachers who were teaching like the the Turner is the medical ones and then it's the.

Speaker 2

Yep, Yep. Yeah.

Speaker 1

There's like the stages Cooksey, the Cooksey stages the Cooksey stages, but he's a coral pedagogue, right? He's like the leading.

Speaker 2

Let's see. I love cooksey. Good stuff. Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Person in that and I actually had to use those research because I did a paper on teaching a transgender male who was going through voice change, who was only 14, which there was no documented cases of testosterone given at 14. And I basically had to teach. This is during COVID a student basically is like, oh, I'm starting testosterone. I was.

Speaker 2

Huh.

Speaker 1

OK, this is like on zoom and they're like, and I'm like there's no data on this like basically it was like, this is uncharted. So I wrote a paper on it. And so I actually had to then think about, like, how would we create a system because there was only like 7 studies ever done on a transgender voice change. And most of them are.

Speaker 2

No. Yeah.

Speaker 1

On adults.

Speaker 2

Yeah, that.

Speaker 1

So there was like no. Of it was basically like evidence. I'm like, well, hopefully this works out. And then it turns out there's all sorts of issues with it in the sense that.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

The female larynx, like biological female larynx, doesn't double in size like the male larynx during puberty. But the vocal cords double in size from the testosterone. So when you have the transgender voice, what you're going to end up getting is.

Speaker 2

Yep. No, it does not. Oh.

Speaker 1

Thicker vocal cords and a less resonant box.

Speaker 2

Oh, no. I mean, no, no. And like.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I didn't know about this. No, I'm saying but nobody knows about this. Nobody is like no one has. There's no research on it. But now we're having a big population that's going to be. And you're gonna see it in your choir is you're going to see it. Kind of trans male.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

Baritones. And trans male bases and trans male tenors. And you're going to hear a different tonal quality than you would maybe expect, but it's because the larynx.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Pleasant. Double in size the same way, but the vocal cords double in size.

Speaker 2

Interesting.

Speaker 1

So that's something to look into too, just so it's like this is going to become more and more research. But I wrote a paper where it was like literally there were articles published that were like, this was scientific articles saying testosterone has never given before the age of 16. And then I'm.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Like. I literally am working with someone who on their 14th birthday started testosterone. So. Clearly this data is not correct because I can tell you that this is not what's going. This is going on, and so we're just dealing with a totally different thing. So there's just so many and all those things are going to influence everything like it's all. And so anyway, I used the cooks you stated to try to say what if we could have our own, like, apply the cooks you states to the process.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Of but by the way, the difference was the testosterone voice change happened really fast. It was like it was within.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

A month. Whereas the cooks you say just take like a year and then even then it takes another year for their voice to even out.

Speaker 2

Oh wow. Yeah. Yeah. Interesting.

Speaker 1

Actually, my son is playing. He's 12 and he hasn't had his voice change yet, but he's playing Ralphie in a Christmas story in like 2 months and I'm like, we just got to.

Speaker 2

Uh.

Speaker 1

Get two more months. I'm like, we just have to get two more months, but I started to see some of the right, you know, early puberty changes, but his voice has not changed at all. But I'm like anytime he feels a little vocal strain, I'm like, oh, no, it's beginning because the beginning.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yep. Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1

And you start to struggle with the high notes, but not yeah. So I'm like, OK, we just got to get to December 22nd, the day the show closes, and then your voice can change.

Speaker 2

Yep. I had a student. I have a student in my studio right now who I never saw such a clear example of someone speed running through the Cooksey stages until like he was like he really struggled the match pitch super tiny range, right in the middle of it all. And it's been really fun week to week. I'm like. Oh, oh, oh. And now. OK, like like, just I've never seen. I've never seen a such a clear cut textbook like. This is this is exactly what I was. Trained on, you know.

Speaker 1

Yeah. No, I lunch. Had to do that. I had a student his. He was going normally slow. And you would expect. And then I'm like, oh, look, here's the stage where you lose all those notes. But then your low note, your low range only goes to here. He actually stopped voice lessons this year because of that, because he loved being a soprano. He was singing, like, Boy, case up that day. And he was like, so happy. And then all of a sudden, his voice started changing. And then he was all like.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah. Uh. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Squeaky and he hated it. So for him he was going this slow, normal route. But it's the thing because it followed the exact chart of like where the where the range was. I was like, how is this so accurate? Like how could it be?

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yep, yeah.

Speaker 1

And then I have this a new boy student who's like, 16, and he just finished his whole voice. He was a. Soprano last year?

Speaker 2

Yeah. Wow.

Speaker 1

Like basically was singing the same. He's now kind of and I don't know if he's a baritone or tenor yet, but he just like he just now as a junior is like, finally my voice change is complete. But he was like singing soprano in.

Speaker 2

Uh.

Speaker 1

Last year. 'S competitions and now he's a baritone, so I'm like, OK, but it's late 16th. Very late. So that's why, yeah. So it's just kind of interesting. So again, you just never know.

Speaker 2

While. That's very late.

Speaker 1

But there I do know there are kids who they go from soprano and like, 2 weeks later they're a base and you're. Like, OK, that was fast.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yep.

Speaker 1

So time to. Sections. Yeah. So anyway, I will definitely like e-mail. Everyone, once the the paper is done, just so you guys can get a copy of my like research. But I would definitely want to take all your suggestions and it will be interesting feedback because I this is my second interview, but I had I had at least 10 people signed up for interviews, which is great because last time I only did four and this will just give me a much better.

Speaker 2

For sure.

Speaker 1

Example where I can compare like music education to these other backgrounds.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Then kind of get a sense. But yeah. No thanks.

Speaker 2

10s and 10s. Impressive. I know for for research stuff. Just sometimes the hardest part is just getting people to give you feedback.

Speaker 1

Hey, I'm lucky for these Facebook groups because they have thousands of people and so I just keep badgering everybody and like my mats and everything. I'm like, you guys fill out the survey. I have 87. I just want 13 more to make it to 100 and it's.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yep.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Like. A better sample size but yeah, but thank you so much and I appreciate your time and good luck. And I think it's exciting. You're doing the individual.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker

1st.

Speaker 1

Choice, and hopefully you'll also get to do your choir directing sometime too, because that's that's beautiful too. They're.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah. Awesome. Well, I'll let you go. Have a wonderful day and good luck on your research.

Speaker 1

So. Bye. Thanks.

Speaker 2

Bye.

Transcript – Participant H –Australian Trained teacher based in Asia

Speaker 1

How are you?

Speaker 2

Yeah, I'm doing well. And you? How's? Your research going.

Speaker 1

I'm behind, but it's going to get done one way or the other. I let's see. How have I been? I've had a lot more responses this time. Last time I had about 25 and this time I have about 100.

Speaker 2

Oh, nice, that's really big.

Speaker 1

It's gonna be much better. Yeah. The data is gonna be much better. And I've had a lot of people sign up for interviews, so I think I've already done. I don't know like 7 or something, so I have even more. I only had four interviews last time, so yeah, just trying to get more.

Uh. Clarity, thoughts, whatever. Anything. One thing I'm looking at. This time is I'm going to be able to compare. The. I'm thinking of like how to subscribe. OK, so I asked people like

did you want to be a professional singer or did you want to be a teacher and? Then what are you now? So it's like I'm going to be able to statistically compare how those people feel about. Tone deaf people like versus the singers versus you know what I mean? Like very.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

So I look, I'm kind of excited just to run those statistics. UM. And then. Yeah, but mainly what I'd love to hear is. What you think? Is helpful. For working with poor pitch students or could be like reasons why you think poor pitch happens, what you've seen in your studio and then like what you think helps.

Speaker 2

OK, so I think. There's a few factors that affect it from like why it happens. Obviously everyone every human is born a little bit differently. We're not all the same, so you know, some people might have. A natural tendency towards what lies in the music world called good pitch. A big thing I noticed in the studio where I teach that is that my boss does music garden program for little kids. She used to do it from the age of about nine months, 3:00 to 5:00. But now she mostly does three to five year olds with it, and so it's like a it's, I think another one that's similar would be candidate which is sort of like, you know, kids playing with music and movement and like the cushion, things like the sticks, you know, all those kind of things. From what I understand, I haven't taken the course or studied on the classes, but you know she has a lot of material like the blocking skills and the styles and tambourines, and you know, there's a lot of movement and exposure to music, and I found a very. And I think as they get to the the hopefully the higher levels of the four and five year. Olds. They start to actually explore things like self age a little bit with broomsticks and things like that. So what I. Noticed is for students who came to my junior choir group, which was aged 5 to 8. He had done music garden. Well, already much better at matching pitch. Compared to those that didn't come from music garden, so I feel that it could be just that they had that exposure and the other students didn't. But I do think that the early exposure to music in a way that letting kids just be musically aware, you know, getting them to listen. And move to the music. You know, using boomsticks, I guess like those kind of things, it seems to just help them have that a bit of awareness earlier on which I I might be jumping to a conclusion here, but because I'm a speech therapist, I also know that the there is a thing with the neuroplasticity in the brain and. The the fact that earlier years we tend to have the ability to make quicker connections in that early up to about I think six or seven, it still continues to be possible as you get older. But you know when the young child is learning. They have a lot more. Like they're they're able to take in and make a lot more pathways. So I suspect that also the fact that it happened so early in their childhood, there's like encouragement of music awareness ends up with that result as well. The other thing I noticed is compared with Australia, when I used to teach in Australia. Versus Malaysia, the culture of. Keeps his seeing a lot at school for like players and things like that. Also, just when they grow up singing a lot as a thing that they do. They will, overall, not everyone has perfect pitch, but overall they will have better pitch than some of the kids who come to me. With. Poor pitch. They don't. They don't really sing at home and they haven't had an environment where they've grown up singing or being they're engaged with music. So most of them who I have, who have poor pitch come from, they haven't played another musical instrument, they don't sing in a choir. At school. They they don't really sing along to their favorite Disney song very much. It's not. Really. A thing in their household to just. Make noise and music so when they come to me at about 8-9 or ten years old, they're not really. They don't even have necessarily an awareness of of pitch like. Maybe we can get to the

point of some of them is like getting them to pick whether the note I played was. The same or? Different like that level, we can usually get within. I can usually get that within the first person or two for a kid who's really poor, pitched, but then, but I realized that the concept of. Higher or lower?

Speaker 2

It's kind of foreign to. Them.

Speaker 2

In in many ways, like usually if you.

Speaker 1

Or the Malaysian kids.

Speaker 2

Well, most of my poor pitched ones that I've experienced mostly as being in Malaysia, but I have been teaching here longer than I taught in Australia, so it's no more recent seven years of experience. But yeah. So I think the the awareness of up and down in music. For a singer who hasn't been exposed to another musical instrument. Is, I think, a little bit more abstract than we realize for most of us who teach music. I think we, I I could be just generalizing here, but most of us grew up learning music and had access to other instruments and and things like that. So when I talk those piano visually. They see a direction with the pictures that they associate with the pictures. But children who don't? Have that. That reference point and that they haven't. Had much exposure. To music or singing, I think part of it is also developing that reference point in their minds. And sort of just helping them know that. Ohh, when we go, this means they're going up and it sounds like this kind of thing. It feels like this. So it feels like this to go down. And usually they do get it. But it did surprise me the 1st. Time. That a student didn't know what was our first system. Do. You know what I mean? She was like.

Speaker 1

I've had that too where I mean the sales will slowly start with low and high versus loud and soft.

Speaker 2

I was like, OK. Yeah.

Speaker 1

And very surprisingly. They're like, oh, what's that? We're, like, going up, going down.

They're, like, very confused.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

And they don't even get to the page when they see.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Sheet music either.

Speaker 2

Exactly, yeah.

Speaker

That's so weird.

Speaker 2

Yeah. So I I think that's for me that's sort of like there's a broad section of why Paul Pitch will. Be there. Though the Uptown awareness I did have that with one particular student who was she was amazing at pitch like she loves to sing so much she like, took herself to

sing at home A. Lot from like. Do you know those kids that sung? All the time. As a little kid and then when she got to save. And her mum and dad were like, oh, let's let you. Do do singing lessons. And she did play a little bit of violent, but when it came to her hearing, if she's saying like when she sometimes got the melody wrong, like she'd seen an alternate melody instead of the one that we were trying to sing, it would still be in tune with the song. Like, it wouldn't sound bad, so it wouldn't be off pitch. She would be perfectly in tune. It would match the chords and everything. But it wasn't. The direction the melody had actually gone and.

Speaker 2

Then getting her.

Speaker 2

To realize that she had moved the note down instead of up. Was just very tricky for her, so we we that was a very odd one because she has brilliant pitch like she's just thought on all the time with her pitch. But the concept of direction in pitch was still quite.

Speaker 1

So she hears it. But when you ask her, did that go up or down? She can't answer it.

Speaker 2

At at the beginning. Yeah. OK, so but that was, I mean we worked through it. We did a lot of, we started working a lot on scales and drawing them out because we. Were. On COVID time at the time, so drawing them out on there and I would just do like a scale going up and a scale going down. And then I've seen one and say, which one did I do? Did I? Do this one with this one. And then you know, I get her to sync this one or this one, and eventually we we got more of the direction. But even now, like she's one of those kids that wins loads of competitions and stuff. But if I put her in or working on her harmonies, there's a lot. But if I put her in my like, she's in my advanced choir. Group. If I put her on the part that's got a harmony note. Like she will usually struggle a lot. To not jump back to the melody when she hears that someone else singing the melody. So it's just, you know, it's something I'm still working on with her, but like, she's one of the most innately talented students I have that in this area. She's it's just sort of a bit of a a different thing. I don't think it's a pitch issue as such, it's probably a. Perhaps awareness? Kind of issue because she's not office, she like.

Speaker 1

Yeah, the theory I'm kind of testing now is. This auditory feedback loop, which no, no, no singer, no voice teachers have seemed to be taught this at all. The idea.

Speaker 2

I mean I think because I. Did it with speech therapy. Then I'm a little bit.

Speaker 1

You get it right.

Speaker 2

More aware, yeah.

Speaker 1

So you. Yeah, because you get it. Cause speech therapy. Most voice teachers have. Never. Heard of it? And I was thinking about it. And I'm like, OK, well, stuttering is an auditory feedback disorder. When they slow down, the rate of the stutterers listening to themselves, they then stopped. They can find the rate at which their brain is. It's like In Sync. It like syncs. Up. The rate that they hear themselves, so that's what causes stuttering, is like the rate that they hear themselves is not matching what?

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 1

Would be normal. Which is crazy if you think about it.

Speaker 2

I think I mean settling like I have decided different view because what I did settling our lecture was. He's one of the ladies. He's the one who developed the kind of program which has been one of the best research and most successful stuttering treatments for children who start stuttering before the age of five. He basically designed a program where they could we kind of retrain the brain before we reached. Last, the neuroplasticity thing. His theory was actually it might have something to do with the white method the thing, but I'm not sure like it was like a completely difference. I I don't know. He he sort of, he said he was. He definitely said it was a theory. He hadn't reset, like gotten the thing that he was.

Speaker 1

That's bad. You like? Am I the people?

Speaker 2

Because it was to do. With the fact that he could treat it before the neuroplasticity went too far, like after kids got to about 7 or 8 years old, his method does not work so much. So it's it's reliant on using that time to help the child reprogram. A different pathway in the mind, but you have to it's more. It's almost like a behavioral awareness kind of program for the child, so you keep it very positive and you say, OK, we're going to work on. Today we're going to have a look at your working on your bumpy words and like you go like that and then ohh that was very smooth. Great job.

Speaker 2

Can do another.

Speaker 2

Smooth one and you're trying to like, get the play and get them aware of. Those moments, but also aware of the fact that. Can speak smoothly and yeah, it actually it actually I don't know the program is it that way or not that that was not understanding of it and and it has a very high success rate if his protocol is followed the right way and the children who use it the right way haven't been shown to rewraps later on because. Other times, kids who have it. Early on, they might. Seem to grow out of it, but there's it might come back like a little bit later. So yeah, so it's a. But I I think the difference is it relies on. It relies on that early great development stage, but for it to be successful.

Speaker 1

You're right to be. Language as well, right?

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah. So.

Speaker 1

And then even we're now, I think we were arguing earlier is early. Music.

Speaker 2

Yeah. I mean, I think the the way that the brain develops in this kind of thing is fairly scientifically well established that we have more like neuroplasticity in the early years. That seems to be a fairly general consensus in science. I know even in Australia. The health department, because they we have a more universal healthcare system, right? They will allocate more researchers, more more resources to early intervention of children with learning difficulties and speech, and all these speech therapy and all these things because they know their research says that the more they put into a child's. You know, in those early years, the better the long term outcome is, so more funding goes towards that because of that. So the fact that even government agencies are like. On board with. This as a as a research standard. I think it's, you know it's like.

Speaker 1

Well, I mean, it's saving money in the long run. They're like, what's what's the best bang for a buck? And they're like, well, if we if we catch it earlier, we get a bigger impact. So a dollar goes up speaker than the American Dollar institute.

Speaker 2

Yeah, exactly like and I mean. But that doesn't mean like it's it. It makes sense. It makes sense like, and I'm glad that they pull the money into early intervention because. It does make sense like. You know, and building awareness and getting kids help early, especially as a speech therapist with kids who have speech difficulties. It is one of the saddest things if kids, you know, if parents are ignoring the issue, usually because they're worried and they don't want to face it, that they kid could have like a. A speak a language problem, but then if? They ignore it. To the point that you get to. The school and then in early primary and then only the parents are willing to explore speech therapy as a speech therapist. I'm sort of like, you know, you could have just brought them to me. When there was really like. This sort of you know, but at least there's a lot more awareness now and and doctors and nurses, when they do the checkups. With the family. Are pretty good at advocating for. Like early, early intervention as well. So you know in that way it's good. It's getting there. Yeah. So yeah, I think that that side is a big part of, as I was saying, like. So I think the reason pitch, develop issues develop is quite broad, you know got off topic a little bit there and what was this like your next question was how how to help them.

Speaker 1

UM. I think I mean that could that can be a way. I mean that we can talk about that. Do you think that given this emphasis on the young brain, do you think that adults to some extent that have pitch issues, can't improve that much or like, do you think they're still?

Speaker 2

I mean, I think it's a case of how long is a piece of string, right? Like so I I guess it's impossible to really. Say outright that just because someone has bad teaching comes to you as an adult, they will never get better. Right. You you can't. You can't make that statement because I. Know the bone. Is capable of a lot of things, and I think even the adult can improve like I had a lady who.

Speaker 2

I'm not sure of her.

Speaker 2

Age, but I'm pretty sure she's over 60 and she came to me with like. She she's.

Speaker 2

Sort of got a.

Speaker 2

Little bit of definitely a bit of pitch issues, but it was more vocal technique and things and I don't know if you've worked with older singers very much. I haven't worked with a lot of them, but I do know the flexibility in their voice starts to be less as they get older. And she had a voice that, because she's been doing she's thought list. So she did a lot of chanting. And she was finding she was losing her voice. Trying to chant and couldn't chant the high passages as soon as she wanted to do something to help with her chanting, basically, and it was quite slow, like our progress at the beginning and I was like, you know, at first. I kind of. Thought. You know, I'm not sure this is going to get it. I'm not sure I'm going to be able to help very much, but I just thought you know, it's good for me as a teacher to learn as well and to try and see, you know, what does a student like this look like and? What can I do? And it's like surprisingly, after I think we working together three to six months something like that. And in the past, just getting her to do one song and getting you know that connected sound through the woods and like accessing the higher register. You know, we were

working on like maybe two to four bars in a lesson and then I think because of her age, sometimes we come back and she sort of forget what we've done the week before. So it was like it took us like, I think almost a month to do the first. Song like to get through. The first song, and it wasn't a tricky thing like I've made it. It was adults enough, but it was like, you know, the then then actually the the rate at her picking up stuff like improved a lot. Like we're doing a news. We could do a new song nearly every second week. Still like a a beginner kind of level. But, you know, and she's able to use a higher register. And she's more on pitch now and. She's got awareness of how she not heard her voice by like over pushing and things when she champs. So I've been I've been really pleasantly surprised to see that like how someone who's older also can improve even when their body is like, you know, the cartilages are less flexible anyway, so there's. So many factors. So I think adults first pitch definitely can improve, I find. I would, I would say that maybe it's easier for younger children, but I would not say it's impossible for adults. You know, and if if you're talking about the length of a piece of string, I would feel like the child's piece of string is longer like they they potentially have more, but whether they also realize their full potential is a completely different question. You know, so it's. Yeah. I'm. I'm not sure it's easy to say, and I think adults backgrounds too can be varied, so you might have an adult who did a lot of music in their early. Years. And then, you know, came back to it in later years, but they may not have touched music for 30 or 40 years. So it might come back to them. After a fade and then suddenly. Remember all the things I used to do kind of thing or you know it might be someone who's, like, literally never sung their entire life. All the more heartbreaking ones, the ones that tried out for choir when they were like 6, and the teacher told them they Can't Sing and they never sing again like those ones are like. Yeah.

Speaker 1

All psychological. That's like I'm here. That's trauma.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I really honestly, I just, I I do wish I could just like send an e-mail to all the teachers who've ever said that to your child. And so like, just don't like if you don't want them in quiet, just say, keep practicing, try next year. Don't say.

Speaker 1

They're like.

Speaker 2

You know you're no good at. Singing never come back. Kind of. Thing.

Speaker 1

Yeah, no. It's.

Speaker 2

Anyway.

Speaker 1

Sad.

Speaker 2

So I think for helping the student, it depends on the student themselves to what approach I take. I try and find like find a way in with them, so usually that usually it looks the same. It's you know, getting the awareness of. Like I said, the I think difference. OK, we're back, OK.

Speaker 1

I'm here bad, but I'm here.

Speaker 2

So so we get the like getting the awareness of up and down, usually doing sirens and things like that to get them used to how their voice can go up and how it can go down, seeing if they can, like teaching them to match pitch, if they can't match the piano, usually they can

sometimes match the. Voice, voice first. Then I also like to use visual supports, not just like pictures of like, you know drawing or siren on the board or whatever, which I do do that like we we draw the siren or I get them to draw one or get them. To draw amount. Of different loops and we follow it up and down. To see what it would sound like. So I would do that, but I also like using. I've got an app called vocal pitch monitor.

Speaker 1

It's on your phone or computer.

Speaker 2

Which? It's on my phone, it's Android and Android based one I think on I found an apple ones. It's not as I think you have to pay for it if you use Apple, but it's free on. But I haven't found many on Apple that are. I think I did find one the other day, but I'll have to check the name of it. Many on Apple that are as good. As this one so. Both of the monitor is very straightforward. It doesn't tell you whether the right or wrong, it just it's just got the notes written along the side and then align that follows. And I find it super helpful for. When a child is making a pitch mistake and they can't seem to hear that they're making it. And so I would like show them the monitor and I will send it first and it will show the pattern of me singing. Then get them to sing and then it will show their singing, which the line will. Show that they went. To a different part, like a different. It doesn't look like mine basically.

Speaker 2

And then I.

Speaker 1

Is that frustrating for them or do they like?

Speaker 2

Usually they like it because.

Speaker 2

They they find that. Then I noticed they stopped. Like they stopped playing with the sound around the note that they're having trouble on, so they'll they'll try again, but they'll try and push it up or try and push it down, and then the the line will actually reflect what they did. So it's actually really helpful for that in, in a way that feedback like, not quite over. Group but like it gives them a visual representation. Of what's going on. Auditorily and then usually from there they do get it right or they or they just like come around or if they can't find it, I will help them. Like I'll be like, OK, let's just try and find this. You know, we're going to siren up here and around here and like, we'll make shapes around the note and then we'll come and land on it because sometimes I find they. I don't know if you've seen this, but let's. Get stuck a little bit flat of. A note sometimes. It seems they can't push, they just can't push it out, so I don't get them to come from above and.

Speaker 1

Who's that?

Speaker 2

You know, try and find it again and then once they find it that node and we. Put it back in, it's. It's usually fine, like they can, they can put it back in again, so most of them, like I haven't had them find the experience frustrating. I think it's important how you use the tool though, like if you use it in a way that you're not helping them get a result. And you just sort of say I'll do it too, you can. Find the right. Note like get, just use this to get it right and then you just sort of sit there and. Be unhelpful. That's not. That's not going to. Work, but if you're there with them and be like, OK, so you can see from that you're just a little bit under, we're going to try doing this or do you want to play around with this note a little bit? Let's try this. Let's try that and letting them see the changes that they're make. Thing. Every time you get them to try something else, it sort of. I think it is more empowering because they see that.

Ohh yeah, my voice can. Change like my voice can't adjust and then helping them find that that spot, yeah.

Speaker 1

OK. Do you think that like voice teachers should have more training in this? Like, do you think that this is important? Like I don't know, like do you think that?

Speaker 2

Honestly, I think it's important, but I also. How do I say I don't feel that?

Speaker 2

This is going. To sound a bit harsh, but I am not.

Speaker 2

Sure, it's a lack of training or a lack of interest. For my voice, you just respect it. Because I have quite. A few teachers who I've heard that are sort of not interested in taking. You know, chronically poor fish students, if that makes sense. Right, you know, so I'm not sure. I think some teachers. Yeah. Some teachers, perhaps just when they go to pulpit student, they feel overwhelmed and out of their depth. And they don't know how to handle it. So maybe if they felt more empowered. To know how to help a student like that, they would be more accepting of students like that. But some teachers are more. I think some do have mindsets that things can't change, and maybe those mindsets are outdated and they, you know, I even had so recently at our internal competition for students, we do an internal singing competition and the. Ones that do. Or we do internal for the whole studio. The students that perform well, we then look for outside competitions as a studio to take them to and things like. That so one. Of my students, he was my chronic shortage student like he honestly one of the worst Portage students I've ever had. I mean, when he came, I was like.

Speaker 1

Yes.

Speaker 2

I'm not sure. Like he. Started with me when he was eight. He's now 13. And every year that he did the internal competition, he only just got like, our lowest score is like a bronze. So everyone who participates kind of gets a bronze. And then if you get up to, you know, 70 points or something, you might get a silver if you get up to 80, you get gold and then the higher ones, there's prizes for the top. Talk to you kind of thing. So so does to give kids a broad perspective to work on, trying to get up to that next bracket the next time, but then at the top there's like. You know star, rising star and overall winner kind of. Things right, so this year? He he the. Last thing is he's gone. He's gotten bronze. He didn't do the last two years of competition. And a year ago, we did his grade. Run for six, Sam. Which? You know, I I was like, you know, he's sort. Of gonna be. OK, he got he got a credit like credit score. So I was. I was happy that.

Speaker 2

You know, he's been with me for four.

Speaker 2

Years and he's already. 12 at that stage, so I thought it's. A bit it's. Still a bit later than I would normally want someone going for a grade one if they'd be training with me for that long. That's OK, you know, he did well. And then somehow after his first change and I think was during voice when he was doing voice change, like changing to the adult guy voice, he suddenly we had this one lesson on zoom. Where he suddenly managed to pitch. You know, the descending 5 notes go perfectly and I was like acapella and I was like. Oh, how would you do that? That's so good. You know, I haven't heard you do that so confidently before. And he was like.

Speaker 2

He was like, yeah, well, you know, after you played the note, I just kind of heard it in my head how the notes would go down. So I just followed along in my.

Speaker 2

Head and I. Was like, OK, so I don't know what's which suddenly happened that he could. Maybe it was that he could suddenly more easily hear in his mind the music, or or not. But like you know, and so this year he went for the internal competition. And, you know, given he'd had bronzes all the other times. It's been a few years since he went in. This time, he got rising star. So he was the 3rd. Top in the category across like piano, violin and singing like it was. You know only one of my other singers was higher than him. Out of the singers in that group. And you know my boss, who, one of the partners of the business, he is not familiar with this kid and was saying to me, oh, he's such a good singer. He's got so much good expression and and this. And then I took some I took.

Speaker 2

Him and I said.

Speaker 2

Do you know that when he started with me, he could? Not even match pitch to the piano.

Speaker 1

Right.

Speaker 2

And and and and my. Boss looked so shocked like he look. Completely shocked. It was like, are you, are you serious? Really. Really. I'm like, I'm like. Yeah, yeah. He really could not. And like, he slept really hard. But like, you know, this is a huge, huge thing for him. And then he's like, OK, well, but I could just see, like, there was like, this huge level of. Disbelief that a child that could not match pitch would one be able to? Sing this well.

Speaker 1

I mean it is pretty, but no one expects it.

Speaker 2

Yeah, but those two things, I think there's a lack of even we don't have patience to let someone fully develop. We judge them a little bit too. Really. You know it's it's it's tough because then you kind of self fulfill your own ideas as a teacher, if you if you decide after this long, I've just decided that means I can't do it and then I'm giving up. You you're never going to. See that kid? That maybe. Just needed a few more years than the others. And would get it, you know, so I think.

Speaker 2

There is a strong lack. Of awareness because we kind of. Teachers tend to weed out students that aren't progressing as fast as they'd like. And so we we fulfill our own, you know, self fulfilling prophecies pretty much like. In that way.

Speaker 1

True. I mean, psychology tells us that on everything.

Speaker 2

Yeah. So I don't know, I I don't know if it's a training thing or a mind thing.

Speaker 1

Yeah. No, I think it's good, I think. Well, believe it or not, a lot of people who did interviews with me, they seem to like doing it and they have opinions on. It. It's not just you. I'm just saying it's not like. I'm sure there's voice teachers who don't, but I did get 100. I got 96 survey responses this time, and I just need four more to 100. I just put it in the Facebook group again because I'm like, come on, guys, just four more so I can get my cider cushion, friend said. If we get 100 just gives.

Speaker 2

This bar.

Speaker 1

Us a better like.

Speaker 2

It's so much easier so much.

Speaker 1

Like data things you can do. That are better.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

So should I try to?

Speaker 2

Have you tried putting it in the? Are you? If you if you don't have the last four like, you can try the young singers voice teachers group maybe? It's another brick that I'm on I'm facing, yeah.

Speaker 1

I'll place it on there. Because. I.

Speaker 2

They're really sweet too, I think.

Speaker 1

Yeah, that would be nice, Sir. Yeah. The with the new form of voice teachers is pretty like.

Snooty. You know? So yeah, I know.

Speaker 2

I I find that professionally teaches 1 where I start from you. I think it's. Like they're pretty. Rounded like I find they're pretty rounded like some of them are. A bit like either, but they're pretty well-rounded. The young fools teaches them is I found them just overall feels a bit warmer. I'm not sure. I'm not sure why they're like a little bit little bit more that way, but every group has its dynamic. So it's just interesting to me. Great. I I haven't.

Speaker

Oh.

Speaker 2

Can I ask you one other like kind of unrelated pitch question, which I'm not sure you've come across in your research or not? Do you notice a difference of perception of pitch? Based on the instrumentalists or versus vocalist versus pianist like.

Speaker 1

You mean the student is a pianist versus a violinist?

Speaker 2

I mean, if you have like a pianist who has perfect pitch judging a singer versus a singer who has like a professional singer judging his singer.

Speaker 1

Well, I would never. I would never let a pianist judge a singer.

Speaker 2

OK. OK. 'cause, I I had an experience recently where I did a recording. Of that high level recital which I sent away for one of the, you know, one of those like examination board things. And I had two piano players with perfect pitch. Listen to it and tell me that my pitch is all fine. There was no problems with my pitch. My vocal coach listened to it. And said that he felt some of the. Pitch wasn't as stable, but when I looked at his examples, I think it was he felt the tone wasn't stable, if that makes sense.

Speaker 1

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Like the frequency may be cycled, but the quality of the sound. The the color in the sound might not have been as consistent across that.

Speaker 1

Because of the timber change.

Speaker 2

I suspect it is more a temper change thing than an actual frequency of pitch thing. And then when I got my feedback back from the examination board, they kept saying that it was quote, poor pitch. But I'd had two professional pianists look at it and tell me that. The pitch was there was no issues with pitch at all. And these are like high level performing.

Speaker 1

Oh, you mean they? Put it in a. Let's see if. It was pitch wrong.

Speaker 2

I I don't know. Like I feel like a pianist with perfect pitch is. I don't know how to say it's a machine, but it's pretty much gonna, you know? So I was.

Speaker 1

Their incident was the button. I mean, it's not even like a violinist has to find inner pitches.

Speaker 2

Yeah, but with this thing like I found it, I found it just weird that like. You know, because these I I'm telling you, these people that I asked to look good at are, like very high up in their field. They judge major international competitions. They're not. They're not just a random pianist. They asked like they're.

Speaker 1

So these are honest judge singers.

Speaker 2

They're very good so.

Speaker 2

Well, I mean a.

Lot of the examination boards, they don't necessarily have. Singers judge the singers. You can get up.

Speaker 1

But this is for the performance part of the.

Speaker 2

Yes, yes. So like. So, like Trinity College, Trinity College address and these ones they will use like, even for diplomas, they will have say they might have a harness and they will judge us. Singer are singing a TCL or singing out CLSC cell over it is. And so you can get whatever instrumentalist.

Speaker 1

OK.

Speaker 2

Judging whichever one kind of thing which I know, it's weird like it's it's weird to me too, but I was just so shocked at the variation of opinions. On my pitch, when it was exactly the same recording and these. Are all apparently. The good musicians. Yeah, it was just something I found weird, like, and I wondered if it's anything to do with. You know, I I. Think singers perhaps look more at timber. It's probably, you know.

Speaker 1

Yeah. No, we care. Well, I I literally judged the singing competition yesterday. So we have Nats, so we have natural teachers, right? So we have a fall festival with classical. They have divisions for every single age group, every.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Singer. There's three judges per room, per group, and so I heard the girls who were junior and seen like. The higher high school, so the high of the, the higher the last two of high school. And then I heard the higher university students as well. Troubles. So all girls basically.

Speaker

In.

Speaker 1

And we have 5 categories. We have. UM, tone. Breathing slash alignment. Musicianship. Slash accuracy. Then we have. Artistry and slash expression and we have diction. OK, so we're getting them on those five things and then we're giving them a score. So someone could have a really awful tone, but have good pitch and still have high addiction, high everything and still score.

Speaker 2

OK.

Speaker 1

We go from 70 to 100 to make them feel good about. Themselves. So. It's like, yeah. That's the worst 100 of this, but I'm saying someone who's like has all the other things. Like they're good actresses, they're good. Could. They have breath like, let's just say their only. Thing is, they're off pitch. You would only dock them in one. Of those five categories.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

That's a better rubric for a singer, so I don't know how a RSM is doing it, but my suggestion would be if you have a pianist judging them and they're just going off like that is not what the note was on the page like that is bad, you know, because you know.

Speaker

Right.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I mean exactly like. Yeah. Because I mean, I actually the reason I sent it to these payments and asked them to look at it first was because I was like, I could get judged by someone who's not a singer. You know someone? Who thinks it's easy to hit a right note because you just like press the right note down and it's correct, right? So yeah. But anyway it was. Just something I thought like I'm. Not sure if there is a difference in.

Speaker 1

I I just think.

Speaker 2

Slight difference in terminology.

Speaker 1

That pianists are going to be hearing pianos their whole life all the time, so they're going to be very tuned into the tuning of a piano. So pianos are tuned. Typically, in even tempered tuning, right? But.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

But. Not all songs are kind of played in even tempered tuning. Like, I feel like a violinist is going to have microtones and they're playing based on like. The Ketin based on like expression. You know they might have like you could make a half step, a little more sharp even like you can like have it be so like pushing because it's so, you know the pianist can't.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 1

So I just think they're going to have a more finite sense of. Pitch. They only have this pair of the pitch. Singers can choose to sing wider. A vibrato is technically a variation of pitch.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Right. So they can't understand that. And then singer some?

Speaker 2

Oh yeah, they actually told me that my bottle was too wide and I'm like, it's actually my rebuttal is not that wide like, you know, offer situation. My brother is considered.

Speaker 1

I don't think.

Speaker 2

Quite small, so it's like.

Speaker 1

You can really worry. I mean, if I were you, I would find some kind of competition to give yourself like. A score that's judged by the other singers because. That's ridiculous. Like.

Speaker 2

I I mean, yeah, I'm not. I'm not like, it didn't actually upset me as much. I was just confused by like. Like the comments, compared to what others had said, but I just decided, you know, it's it's one person.

Speaker

And.

Speaker 2

You know, I I think now that you mentioned the broader thing, I think. It makes more. Sense if they were on like a very. You know, because I used to pitch monitor myself when I was preparing and I double checked that whenever I did the right at the center was.

Speaker 1

No, but you're going to have slavery thing. So like.

Speaker 2

It's the same like it's.

Speaker 1

What's your day? I judged a high school girl and she's saying, and maybe this was a college girl, so it's even harder on her. No, it's high school girl. She's saying quantum and go. And she on she had the Aria Great. She had one of the best voices of.

Speaker

In.

Speaker 1

The. Whole thing, but on her. Took my cheater. That hurt, she.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Was on the wrong like timing the wrong half steps and she put the words in the wrong place.

Speaker 2

Honor.

Speaker 1

And it has bothered me so much because I'm. Like. This is a really well known Aria.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

And you can't do it. And then another one of the college singers, he messed up slightly. She like, changed her rhythm or something. Or she, like, missed a beat. And I was like, you know, skipping. So I'm going to be, like, hard on him, where I'm like, hey, if you're singing really standard Rep, it's good. You have a pianist that follows you, but everybody's going to know when you. Mess up quantum involved.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I I tell my students that when they're taking a competition song so like if they're picking something that everyone knows it has to be perfect because. Everyone will know, like the judge will know this. Then you know. Be a bit strategic about these things sometimes. But yeah, no, that that's helpful. Thank you. Sorry, I just thought I'd ask you that because you seem quite aware of kids things. So it was just a.

Speaker 1

Yeah. No, I mean I I would, I would.

Speaker 2

Question I think that came through.

Speaker 1

Assume that a violinist is going to be more lenient and under because they have vibrato and violence they have, and they have, they have a flexibility of pitch. Because they can decide where to put their finger.

Speaker 2

Exactly. Yeah. Even on two set like on 2 sets, they were talking about because they simply rolling as well. They're talking about some violinists actually purposely like you say let the note be a bit flat or let the note be a bit sharp because they want to enhance that moment like they want to enhance the moment musically because it's an expressive.

Speaker 1

They have Internet. I think I do that. I think when I do like in Devyani when you do the friska that one. Yeah, I like having that half step. Very. Prominent like, very like discordant. Like I don't know why, so that one I'm going to tune. Is it the exact piano, F# or something like I don't know. Whatever it is you know, like I don't know. But it's like there's a way I like it tuned that to me. Sounds like it's supposed to have more the way it sits on top of the chords of the piano. It sounds more in the like shape of the chord I want. I don't that's. How I sing is like if I'm singing the French art song and you hear all the Debussy and all that. I'm listening to the piano coming to it. And then I'm voicing myself over that chord and I'm. Thing, what is the tuning for this cord? Because I'm thinking of the color of the timbres mixed together, if that makes sense. So that's how my brain works.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

So when I'm.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I mean, it makes more sense. It's more. It's not expressive and like.

Speaker 1

It's micro tuned, almost like I'm saying. It's like it's so microtune. So when I'm helping my. Adult student and. She's taking a prison live or whatever she's like.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Having sometimes she. Goes sharp or flat from the amp. And I'm like, what are you listening to? And I think she's kind of listening to herself and I'm like. No. No, no, you have to only exist as with the piano, you are a part of this piano. Do, do, do you. And then whenever you're having trouble with the pitch, like, just listen to that chord. Sing your note above it and then like tune that. Entire cord because there's a lot of, like, dissonance.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I think that makes that.

Speaker 1

So every time I think I think.

Speaker 2

That makes perfect sense to. Me. Yeah, I. I just think. That it works.

Speaker 1

Yeah, yeah. But even if you're any sort of flexible, I'm not sure if amature on like a oboe would impact slight thing.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I'm not. I'm not very well versed on with with adult smoker.

Speaker 1

You know, depending on armature it might slightly. Change the length of the tube right? So technically it could alter the pitch. Maybe flute? I don't know island for sure. All the string elements. Yes. OK.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

So then I just wonder, so yes, that's why I would never let a pianist the summer would be. I would never let a pianist judge my singing.

Speaker 2

Yeah, that's why I I actually had a very direct conversation with my boss about this a few years ago because the first one that they had seen was in the internal competition. Chief of pianist to judge the singers. And I like was not happy with the results and I talked to.

Speaker 1

You're you're living in a weird society.

Speaker 2

Her like. You know quite directly about it, and since then I've been, like, very insistent. Every single competition, internal competition and like you, bring in a a singer judge or you let me be on the panel. That's like the the bottom line because there's no other singing teachers. So, you know, that's. That's what it is. But she did. She did sort of agree. Like I it took a bit of convincing, but in the end, I'm glad I advocated for my students.

Speaker 1

OK. So yes, I would. I'm sorry. You're living in like a no man's land of life. Weird. I'm like, you need a Nats chapter, I'm telling you.

Speaker

Where?

Speaker 2

Oh, we do, I think need one. I don't even think we have like a like in Australia. At least we have Annette, which is the Australian National Association of Teaching Singing or something like. Similar to that, I think, but I don't.

Speaker 1

There's an international. Chapter I think that you can adapt, you can. Like use their. I don't want to call it, but you it's like you can use their kind of like they. We have, you know, we have rubrics, right? We have like rules, right. So I think there is an international voice teacher. I know there's a European based funds like International Congress of voice teachers. There's probably Asia Pacific, there's probably something.

Speaker 2

And. It probably is 1 I haven't.

Speaker 1

Probably a Nats chapter following that kind of thing. So what I would do is I would find other voice teachers in Malaysia.

Speaker 2

Haven't heard of one?

Speaker 1

There must be some of you other singers and I would make your own little thing like we do for an ads. We charge a fee for people to enter and. Then. They can win prizes and it's just they get feedback. So we basically have to write a lot of feedback. So we have to give like we give the the number score. But the more important thing is we're writing all these like comments. And is to have other voice teachers like. Give you feedback on your students, right, and they'll, they'll, they'll see or hear something that you missed because you're saying that.

Speaker

Hey.

Speaker 1

Student all the time. So that's what I would.

Speaker 2

Hi.

Speaker 1

Do if I were you, because you're in this country and I can see it's hard for you because you're. I remember your music school was, like, very rigorous, very Chinese, very like instrumental focused. So you're kind of thing with not the. Right. Kind of people.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

So I'm sorry about that, but it was. I'm only just coming fresh off of the Nats, so that's why I'm. Like. It's really helping me. I only started doing it like two years ago. And already I've met so many friends and mentors. Yours. I'm feeling better about myself as a teacher. I I was judging only the kids categories at first. Like the kids in middle school and then up to like age 1213. And then they started getting me a little older and then this was the first time they assigned me to do the college girls. And I was like, wow, you know? So it's like, I don't know.

Speaker 2

So.

Speaker 1

I I used to like I was low on the totem pole because the the, the teachers there who are working in the universities that are teaching all the voice. Teachers, they have PHD's and they just have that they just have that stature, you know, like there's somebody right. And so then like, I'm going, I teach all these like 10 year olds, you know? So they're like, Oh yeah. But now they had me judge their students, so I had to write a lot of comments. They're also annoying because. Four out of the five girls saying. And then there.

Speaker 2

That's so tricky. Like it's so.

Speaker 1

Was a really there was there was a there. Was a chance before.

Speaker 2

I really don't like. It when you go to a competition. Everyone sees the same thing.

Speaker 1

They did so I had to judge that. Which just makes it more apparent who did it. Worse then there was a foreign student. Sometimes we have in America these. Let's say there's someone from China. They want to go to school in America. So they will get in somehow because they pay a lot of money. And they are voice majors. But some of these girls cannot sing. So anyway, I had to hear a voice Casa pet day that was. Interesting. So yeah.

Speaker 2

Yeah, but there's also quite. Quite tough, quite tough, but I think. It's it's good to. Finally, go to do the the older group like.

Speaker 1

Yeah. No, I know they're and.

Speaker 2

It would have.

Been so much more fun like, I mean, because we've done the.

Speaker 1

Then there's even there's even a professional.

Speaker 2

Others like you know.

Speaker 1

Provision, I mean it goes pretty, there's also the senior citizen division or like there's one called late bloomers, it's adults who started after 35. So there's all sorts of categories. But I was in the like I was in the like difficult category like this is the category of like these are the voice majors who are I'm like.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

Oh, right, I've made it before the because I know organize it now that they know me, they're like, oh, she can do it. But at first, like, oh, good. She teaches kids. Put her on the kids. Oh, she does. Kids put her on.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

The kids, it's almost like. They were happy that someone to do the kids.

Speaker 2

Actually, as a teacher, I'm always happy when it's someone who knows kids versus judging the kids, yeah.

Speaker

Every night.

Speaker 2

Many times like lost like you can't like.

Speaker 1

Oh yeah. That's why they rolled. He's winning and keep the high school seniors and they teach the college. They don't want to teach. They don't want to judge the kids. Hopefully the other two ladies that was judging with were older, like in their. 50s, fifties, 60s. So they had that qualification, I guess. But then they take our three scores and average them. But when I saw the results of the scores, the way I ranked the girls was exactly the 1st through 4th places that they got.

Speaker 2

OK.

Speaker 1

Which means those two teachers probably gave the same ranking.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I judged our internal competition recently and they actually put all the instrumentals and focus into one thing. So I was judging. I was actually judging piano and violin as well. And the irony was that, like my boss, he was like overseeing the overall judges. But there were three teachers of us doing the judges, and then he was calculating the averages. And as one girl, she stopped playing in her violent hollow. It completely stopped and then sort of started going again and then stopped again and then kept going again and so I marked it quite a bit lower because even though she can play, you know, she's stopping mid performance twice in any outside competition. That's like a big. A big red flag. So I put her in a bed like. Blonde, almost silver kind of level, which I thought was fair because you stopped fully stopped twice. In your song. And I mean, as a violinist like.

Speaker

You would never do.

Speaker 1

That I would just never stop in the middle of like an art song and then just cut out for a few measures and be like I guess I'll come back now, missed a few lines.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Exactly like. I mean, it's a little kid. She's obviously. Just. You know, got nervous, but the other two teachers who were piano teachers. Just kind of overlooked the fact she had stopped. And when they averaged our schools that she had landed above. 80 points which would have put. Her in at gold. Ranking, but her private teacher is also one of the partners in the business and was about to write up the certificates. And then he said to her husband, who's that boss was like, she shouldn't be getting gold, she said. Student and like. She saw the. Performance. And she's like, how did this happen? And so he went back to the averages and then it came back to us as a judging pedal and was like. Told the other two teachers. Like I'm going to. Change this school because. You know this kid stopped twice and I was just like, but I was feeling pretty good about myself because I was the one person who had stopped her correctly in my boss's mind. Like I actually said to the other two teachers. I said this, this internal competition. We're setting up our students to prepare for outside competition. You know, if you go to an outside piano competition and you stop playing twice in your song. Is there a chance that you're going to get a gold drink and they both? Went no, I'm like so then why? Why would we make them like that? Like.

Speaker 1

You're dealing with. You're in such a weird you're in compared to the school that has, like, very strange practices.

Speaker 2

Yeah. I I was just so confused like, but then I was glad because my boss and his wife like they both like sided with my school like they both they they actually overruled the other two judges in this case. But yeah that's why I was like. Also search and like happy people's appearance. You should do like walk like that like you know. But anyway, it's the weirdest thing. But anyway I think also they made it. Maybe they haven't let these guys judge before either because we have a lot of stuff. So I think they were just giving different people a go so. They will also know who, who can manage judging and who can't in due course, I guess. That's probably why my boss was kind. Of overseeing it as well. To try and. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Business, I mean, clearly.

Speaker 2

Yeah, just sweet brother.

Speaker 1

If I were you, I would just do your job just. Judge the kids bring up once in a while. Like, hey, if we were preparing them for us and competition, they wouldn't. Be ready.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Well, I mean, I thought it. I I only brought it up when like, because the the boss came over and addressed all three of us and said can we discuss this because I think. This isn't the right score. And I just. Said yeah, I agree. Because of these reasons. Because, like you know, that was the moment for discussion and the other two, like, were sort of. You know, they discussed among themselves and they looked over at me and said, oh, so you're OK if we drop this and like other one who gave her 58, like, I gave her like, 62 or whatever I gave her. Like, I'm like, I'm not the one who's worried about it not being gold yet, you know, then they're like, OK.

Speaker 1

So.

Speaker 2

But it's, you know, it's it's interesting.

Speaker 1

Therefore, in the time we've been talking, I got one or two responses on the the survey.

Speaker 2

Yay, I'm so happy for you. And we got two more to go.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I was like I was.

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 1

No, I got it. I hit.

Speaker 2

It 100. Yay. Congratulations.

Speaker 1

100 so I needed 100 and I was at 96. So then I was like hey guys, I need. Four more. And now I'm at 10. Too, because a few extra people did it. I'm. Like yay, I seen it. A minimum of 100 because it's a statistics thing. It's like if you don't have 100, then you can't apply all of these.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Rules. Technically. Yeah. It's morning there, right?

Speaker 2

Yes, it's like now it's 10:30.

Speaker 1

Wow, we're at 6:30 in the evening, and we also changed our clocks last night.

Speaker 2

Ohh, I hate it when that happens. It doesn't happen here, but when I lived in Australia it used to happen.

Speaker 1

Anyway, so now, now America's off another hour. If you were curious. Just we went back.

Speaker 2

I I don't. I don't think up. I just like whatever until it turns like an American based thing. I was just like typing to Google, you know, the time zone this time. What time in Malaysia. And then it'll tell. Almost 90% of the time, it means I can't attend whatever online thing it is because it will be something.

Speaker 1

He only puts the trick.

Speaker 2

Like 2IN. Morning.

Speaker 1

If there's only gonna be California evenings, West Coast, so it's like Seattle, California. Nevada, California, Oregon and Washington. If we have evening things, it's your morning.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

But anytime it's our daytime, it's the middle of your night.

Speaker 2

Yeah. So many of them are like 2:00 AM in the morning or midnight or 4:00 AM. You know, so I have to just decide whether I'm.

Speaker 1

You say what's for? You, I mean does are you able to get on? The UK stuff or?

Speaker 2

UK is slightly easier if they do it in the morning. It's night time and if it's late enough in their nighttime, it's very early morning for me so.

Speaker 1

It's your night size animal.

Speaker

OK.

Speaker 2

It's it's slightly easier. OK, but.

Speaker 1

You're like 12 hours off from the UK. Then.

Speaker 2

Yeah. So I'm like, just in the middle of the like, it's like nothing is. Going to be. On my time, so the Australian once when I was, because I still get my membership with ANNETTS for quite a while. I'm actually on the same time zone as the western side of Australia, so that means that like if they're planning a national. Yeah. So they're planning a national online

workshop. They will make it appropriate for Perth time as well as Sydney time. So that works.

Appendix G: Quantitative Survey

Survey

Section 1 of 8

Survey for voice teachers

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I am conducting a survey of voice teachers as part of my MA in Vocal Pedagogy at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David in conjunction with the Voice Study Centre in the UK.

The purpose of the study is to conduct additional research to follow up on 2023 Pilot Study which aimed to test if voice teachers avoided working with poor pitch students.

My findings will be published in a paper and presented to my faculty as part of my masters studies.

All of your answers will remain anonymous and no personal or identifying information will be published.

If you have any questions please email me at 2217738@student.uwtsd.ac.uk

Email *

Valid email

This form is collecting emails. [Change settings](#)

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Consent to take part in research

- I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time
- I understand that I can refuse to answer any question involved during the research process without any consequences of any kind.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that participation involves responding to an online survey and having my responses analysed and reported anonymously in a research paper.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous.
- This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in published papers, dissertation, academic presentation and conference presentation.
- I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.
- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in Microsoft one drive and local computer hard-drive until exam board of university confirms results of research assignment the latest date being December 31, 2025.
- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for two years following the date of researcher's exam board date.
- I understand that under freedom of information legalisation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.
- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Thank you,
Erica Waxer

Masters of Arts in Vocal Pedagogy Candidate
University of Wales Trinity Saint David

2217738@student.uwtsd.ac.uk

Please type your first and last name to consent and start survey

Short answer text

Part 1 - Demographic Questions



Description (optional)

Gender

1. Male
2. Female
3. Non-Binary
4. Decline to state

Current country of residence

Short answer text

Age

- ☐ 18-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-59
- ☐ 60-69
- ☐ 70-79
- ☐ 80+
- ☐ Decline to state

Part 2 - Education



Description (optional)

Years of Post-High School (secondary school) voice studies (private voice lessons or academic)

1. 0
2. 1
3. 2
4. 3
5. 4
6. 5
7. 6
8. 7
9. 8
10. 9
11. 10 or more years of voice study

Which of the following best describes your highest education achieved?

- ☐ Not a High School Graduate
- ☐ High School or High School Equivalent
- ☐ Some college (no degree)
- ☐ 4-year college graduate (undergraduate equivalent)
- ☐ Some Post-Graduate education
- ☐ Completed Master's Degree/ Currently Pursuing Master's Degree
- ☐ Completed PhD/ Currently Pursuing PhD

Education Continued - Higher Education



Description (optional)

Which of the following best describes your Undergraduate University Major

- ☐ Music Performance (Voice)
- ☐ Music Performance (other instrument besides voice)
- ☐ Music Education
- ☐ Vocal Pedagogy
- ☐ Music History or other non/performance Music Degree
- ☐ Bachelor of Arts (any subject except music)
- ☐ Bachelor of Science (any subject)
- ☐ N/A

Which of the following best describes your Graduate Degree (Earned or in Progress)

- ☐ Music Performance (Voice)
- ☐ Music Performance (other instrument besides voice)
- ☐ Music Education
- ☐ Vocal Pedagogy
- ☐ Music History or other non/performance Music Degree
- ☐ Master of Arts (any subject except music)
- ☐ Master of Science (any subject)
- ☐ N/A - No Grad Degree

Employment History



Description (optional)

What was your desired career when you began your musical training and/or post-secondary education?:

(Rank top 3, with 1 being your most desired career path)

	1	2	3
Professional Singer	☐	☐	☐
Voice Teacher	☐	☐	☐
Choir Director	☐	☐	☐
Music Teacher for Prim...	☐	☐	☐
Music Teacher for Seco...	☐	☐	☐
Other Music related field	☐	☐	☐
Academia (university fa...	☐	☐	☐
Non-music related field	☐	☐	☐

Which best describes your primary employment?

- ☐ Professional Singer
- ☐ Voice Teacher
- ☐ Choir Director
- ☐ Music Teacher for Primary Schools
- ☐ Music Teacher for Secondary Schools
- ☐ Other Music related field
- ☐ Academia (university faculty/part time faculty/ PhD student)
- ☐ Non-music related field

Please Rank your preference for teaching voice lessons to the following populations:

	Would definitely te...	Would likely teach	Would maybe teach	Would not teach
Children 5-9	☐	☐	☐	☐
Children 9-12	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teens 13-17	☐	☐	☐	☐
Young Adults 18-24	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adults 25-34	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adults 35-44	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adults 45-54	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adults 55-64	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adults over 65	☐	☐	☐	☐

Which types of teaching are you currently working in or within the last 6 months (select all that apply):

- ☐ Teaches/taught private voice lessons within past 6 months
- ☐ Teaches/taught group voice lessons within past 6 months
- ☐ Directs or conducts a choir or has directed or conducted within the past 6 months
- ☐ Teaches non-voice related music class
- ☐ Teaches non music related class
- ☐ Not currently working in music
- ☐ Not currently working in education

Which Populations do you currently teach/taught music lessons within the last 6 months (select all that apply):

- ☐ Children 5-8
- ☐ Children 9-12
- ☐ Teens 13-17
- ☐ Young Adults 18-24
- ☐ Adults 25-34
- ☐ Adults 35-44
- ☐ Adults 45-54
- ☐ Adults 55-64
- ☐ Adults over 65
- ☐ None of the above

Which populations do you currently teach in a group voice, class or choir setting (select all that apply)?

- ☐ Children 5-8
- ☐ Children 9-12
- ☐ Teens 13-17
- ☐ Young Adults 18-24
- ☐ Adults 25-34
- ☐ Adults 35-44
- ☐ Adults 45-54
- ☐ Adults 55-64
- ☐ Adults over 65
- ☐ None of the above

Which vocal styles do you teach: (check all that apply)

- ☐ Classical
- ☐ Musical Theater
- ☐ Commercial Music
- ☐ Jazz
- ☐ Gospel
- ☐ Eastern modality (such as Indian classical)
- ☐ Other...

Please select the statement you most identify with

- ☐ I am a singer who also teaches voice
- ☐ I am a voice teacher who also sings
- ☐ I am equally a voice teacher and a singer
- ☐ I am a voice teacher and not a singer
- ☐ I am a singer and not a voice teacher
- ☐ I am neither a voice teacher nor a singer

$$\begin{matrix} \vee & \vdots \\ \wedge & \vdots \end{matrix}$$

The following questions are going to ask you to reflect on your opinions about tone deaf and poor pitch students,

For the sake of this survey “tone deaf” and “amusic” will be used interchangeably to describe someone with congenital amusia and defined as follows: “A fully developed congenital amusia is characterized by a deficit of perception of tune, melody, and rhythm, which together form a structure of music. A formal term in use to define amusia (congenital or acquired) is “tonal deafness,” used in connection to both perception and production of music.” (Wigowska-Sowinska 2022)

Based on your own understanding, what percentage of the population is tone deaf (has congenital amusia)

- ☐ 0-5%
- ☐ 6-10%
- ☐ 11-15%
- ☐ 16-20%
- ☐ 21-25%
- ☐ Other...

Read the following statements and select how strongly you agree or disagree

Description (optional)

Poor Pitch Singers without congenital amusia can learn to sing with more accurate pitch

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

I believe there's nothing I can do to help a tone deaf student improve their pitch matching ability.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

I believe that most voice teachers can help a tone deaf student

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

I enjoy teaching voice students who struggle with pitch matching.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

I specialize in teaching voice to singers that have trouble matching pitch or are considered “poor pitch singers”

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

I believe I have the skills necessary to help a non amusic poor-pitch singer improve their ability to sing pitch accurately

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

I would like to improve my ability to help students with pitch matching deficits

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

It is best practice to require an audition before working with a new voice student

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

I usually will not teach students who have poor pitch matching abilities

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

I would teach a voice student who is a tone deaf

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

I would teach a student who is a poor pitch singer without congenital amusia

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

I am usually bothered by singers with minor pitch issues (singers who sing slightly flat or sharp)

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

If I already had enough clients and a long waiting list of clients I would still choose to work with poor-pitch singers

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

**If money/income was not a consideration I would prefer to work with the following populations
(check all that apply)**

- ☐ Children 5-8
- ☐ Children 9-12
- ☐ Teens 13-17
- ☐ Young Adults 18-24
- ☐ Adults 25-34
- ☐ Adults 35-44
- ☐ Adults 45-54
- ☐ Adults 55-64
- ☐ Adults over 65

The Role of Auditory Feedback in Voice Production

Read the following statement and select how strongly you agree or disagree

I have a strong understanding of the auditory feedback loop.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

I have received training and/or education on how auditory feedback affects pitch matching.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

I have a strong knowledge of the neurological and motor processes involved in singing.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

Voice teachers should receive more training in "hard sciences" as they relate to teaching voice and singing.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

I would like to learn more about the auditory feedback loop as it pertains to singing.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

Rank the following causes of poor pitch production in poor pitch singers based on your knowledge (there are no right or wrong answers): Use the scale 1-5 (1 greatest cause of issues)

	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of ability i...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Deficit in reme...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Insufficient or i...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Registration is...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Limited vocal r...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

After section 7 Continue to next section



Section 8 of 8

Would you like to be interviewed?



I am looking for survey participants who would want to be interviewed for my research regarding teaching poor pitch singers. If you select yes I will contact you via email to arrange time for a 30-minute interview.

Would you like to be interviewed?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Appendix H: Ethics Form

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically. A researcher may not be covered by the University's insurance if ethical approval has not been obtained prior to commencement.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of research activity: "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications". As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the "principal researcher".

Ethical approval is not required for routine audits, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal educational requirements, and literary or artistic criticism.

Please read the notes for guidance before completing ALL sections of the form.

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity. Please see Checklist for details of process for different categories of application.

Delete the Guidance Notes at the end of the form BEFORE submitting your application

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Erica Waxer			
2	Tick all boxes which apply:	Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
3	Undergraduate Student	☐	Taught Postgraduate Student	☒	Postgraduate Research Student
4	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	WAPPAR			
5	Campus:	Carmarthen			
6	E-mail address:	ewaxer@gmail.com			
7	Contact Telephone Number:	+1 650 906 0399			
<i>For students:</i>					
8	Student Number:	2217738			

9	Programme of Study:	MA Professional Practice (Voice Pedagogy)
10	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Louise Emanuel/Julie Crossman/Debbie Winter

SECTION B: Approval for Research Activity

1	Has the research activity received approval in principle? (please check the Guidance Notes as to the appropriate approval process for different levels of research by different categories of individual)	YES	☒	NO	☐
				Date	
2	If Yes, please indicate source of approval (and date where known): <i>Approval in principle must be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval</i>	Research Degrees Committee	☐		
3		Institute Research Committee	☐		
4		Other (write in) WAPPAR Ethics Board Representative	☒		

SECTION C: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

	Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines.	
1	<u>UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice</u>	☒
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy	☒
3		☐

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

1	Does the research activity involve collaborators outside of the University?	YES	☐	NO	☒	
2	If Yes, please provide the name of the external organisation and name and contact details for the main contact person and confirmation this person has consented to their personal data being shared as part of this collaboration.					
3	Institution					
4	Contact person name					
5	Contact person e-mail address					
6	Has this individual consented to sharing their details on this form?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
7	Are you in receipt of a KESS scholarship?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
8	Is your research externally funded	YES	☐	NO	☐	
9	Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?	Voluntary	YES	☐	NO	☐
10		Employed	YES	☐	NO	☐
11	Is the research being undertaken within an existing UWTSD Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership (APLP)	If YES then the permission question below does not need to be answered.	YES	☐	NO	☐

12	Permission to undertake the research has been provided by the partner organisation	(If YES attach copy) If NO the application cannot continue	YES	☐	NO	☐
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Where research activity is carried out in collaboration with an external organisation

13	Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?	YES	☐	NO	☐
14	If Yes, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation				

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	Does knowledge of the auditory feedback loop encourage voice teachers to work with poor pitch students?			
2	Proposed start date:	1/08/2024	Proposed end date:	1/11/2024	
3	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the three points below: <i>Purpose of Research Activity</i> <i>Proposed Research Question</i> <i>Aims of Research Activity</i> <i>Objectives of Research Activity</i> Demonstrate, briefly, how <u>Existing Research</u> has informed the proposed activity and explain <i>What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge</i> <i>How it addresses an area of importance.</i>				
4	Purpose of Research Activity To build upon previous research surrounding teacher perspectives on teaching poor pitch students and testing the hypothesis that possibly knowledge of the auditory feedback loop and other neurological processes involved in singing would aid voice teachers in their practice specifically when working with poor pitch students.				
5	Research Question To what extent does the knowledge of neurological processes, specifically the auditory feedback loop inform teachers when teaching poor pitch students?				
6	Aims of Research Activity To compare the responses of teachers regarding their perspectives on working with poor pitch singers at baseline and then once introduced to the concept of the auditory feedback loop (AFL). Testing whether adding the knowledge of the AFL in pedagogical training could be beneficial to voice teachers or whether this information is superfluous and creates more confusion.				
7	Objectives of Research Activity				

	To explore whether gaining a deeper understanding of the AFL would be useful for voice teachers in their practice. The findings will guide the researcher to either pursue a deeper exploration of neurological processes or perhaps abandon this approach altogether in lieu of more practical and conventional methods.
8	Proposed methods (maximum 600 words) Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed.
9	I will carry out a base-line quantitative survey to voice teachers to clarify findings from an earlier pilot study which surveyed voice teachers and their opinions on working with poor pitch students. In order to test the hypothesis of the AFL's place in vocal pedagogy, a pre-recorded video training session will be provided to survey participants in order to gauge their reactions and evaluate any change in opinions after receiving this new information. I plan to use mixed methodology in my research employing both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The methods below are potential options but may not be exhausted during this study depending on what is required. Quantitative methods would include: -surveys, -polls -questionnaires Qualitative methods may include: -Interviews -case studies -focus groups -surveys -secondary research -observations. Data may be collected by: -audio and/or video recording -audio transcription -written responses -emails -forms data. Quantitative data may be analysed through statistical analysis and/or data coding. Qualitative analysis may include: -content analysis -thematic analysis -textual analysis -discourse analysis.

	The listed methods above will enable me to get a thorough understanding of current practices of voice teachers regarding instructing poor-pitch singers. Quantitative data could be useful to see general trends whereas qualitative surveys and interviews will allow me to get a deeper understanding of perspectives surrounding pedagogical methods and teacher perceived challenges and the potential role of AFL in the field of vocal pedagogy.
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10	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
11	Primary research to take place in Palo Alto, California, USA at my home studio and also online.
12	Research activity outside of the UK If research activity will take place overseas, you are responsible for ensuring that local ethical considerations are complied with and that the relevant permissions are sought. Specify any local guidelines (e.g. from local professional associations/learned societies/universities) that exist and whether these involve any ethical stipulations beyond those usual in the UK (provide details of any licenses or permissions required). Also specify whether there are any specific ethical issues raised by the local context in which the research activity is taking place, for example, particular cultural and/or legal sensitivities or vulnerabilities of participants.
13	My country and state does not have additional requirements to those of UWTSD.

14	Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents <u>NOT</u> publicly available?	NO	☒
		YES	☐
15	If Yes, please provide details here of how you will gain access to specific documentation that is not in the public domain and that this is in accordance with prevailing data protection law of the country in question and England and Wales. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

1	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
2	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☒	☐
3	Use of interviews?	☒	☐
4	Use of diaries?	☒	☐
5	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☒	☐
6	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
7	Use of video or audio recording?	☒	☐
8	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒
9	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒
10	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☒
11	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☒

12	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☒
13	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☒
14	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☒
15	Other primary data collection methods, please explain in this box For example, 'focus groups'. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) in this box and tick the accompany box.	☒	☐
16	Details of any other primary data collection method: Focus Groups		

If NO to every question, then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and may be exempt from some of the following sections (please refer to Guidance Notes).

If YES to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

SECTION G: Intended Participants

1	Who are the intended participants:	YES	NO
2	Students or staff at the University?	☒	☐
3	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☒	☐
4	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
5	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	☒
6	Prisoners?	☐	☒
7	Young offenders?	☐	☒
8	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
9	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒
10	Others (please identify specifically any group who may be unable to give consent) please indicate here and tick the appropriate box.	☐	☒
11	Other – please indicate here:		

12	Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
13	How many participants are expected?	Online survey of 50-100 participants accessed via social media. Interviews will take place on a smaller scope of 5-15, subject to time and availability.
14	Who will the participants be?	Professional Voice teachers 18 years+ and people who have taken voice lessons currently or in the past who self-identify as a poor-pitch singer 18 years+

15	How will you identify the participants?	Participants will be recruited by the internet through social media groups, online special interest forums and voice teachers who may recommend students to participate in the research. Voice teachers will be recruited through my local NATS chapter and Facebook groups for voice teachers I belong to such as "Voice Teachers of Young Singers" and "New Forum for Voice teachers". Voice students will be recommended through their voice teachers reached in the same forums and also through singing interest social media group such as r/singing on Reddit. When survey is shared in known voice teacher groups, snowballing will be encouraged to reach a broader audience of voice professionals.
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16	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
17	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☒	☐	☐
18	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
19	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☒	☐	☐
20	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☒	☐	☐
21	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☒	☐	☐
22	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
23	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
24	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☒	☐	☐
25	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☒	☐	☐
26	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
27				

28	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
29	Will participants be paid?	☐	☒	☐
30	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☒	☐	☐
31	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☒	☐
32	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☒	☐
33	If YES to any question, please provide full details			
34	Computer may record videos of participants on video platform such as zoom. An phone, ipad or computer video camera or voice recorder may be used.			

SECTION H: Anticipated Risks

1	Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them.		
	If you have completed a full risk assessment (for example as required by a laboratory, or external research collaborator) you may append that to this form.		
2	Full risk assessment completed and appended?	Yes	☐
		No	☒

3	Risks to participants For example: emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information	
4	Risk to Participant: Potential emotionally triggering questions if participant has past traumatic experiences relating to voice lessons. Data Transfer Voice Teacher Methods shared could have an impact on their income if individuals are working with methodology they have themselves developed and I inadvertently share this.	How will you mitigate the Risk to Participant Disclose in advance that questions may ask about participants' feelings and perceptions of their own voices which may be triggering. Websites with information on trauma and self-help numbers will be provided. Use secure Microsoft 365 encrypted tools such as Microsoft Word to store collected data. Disclose that interview findings will be included but anonymised and that intellectual property will be respected. Participants can choose not to share certain information or redact information/ withdraw from the project at any time.
5	If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities	
	No embarrassing or sensitive topics.	
6	Risks to investigator For example: personal safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest	
	Risk to Investigator: If interviews are conducted in person there is a risk of: physical harm or harassment by participant. Data exposure. Accusation of improper procedures. Lack of participants	<i>How will you mitigate the Risk to Investigator:</i> Arrange interviews in public places or online. Will not disclose personal information or allow participant see any sensitive data. Use encrypted password protected systems such as Office 365. Follow university ethical guidelines and recommendations and consult the advice of graduate advisor. Use multiple avenues to recruit participants such as local and state NATS Chapter,

	Participants withdrawing from research.	Facebook Groups, Reddit Groups, Email lists of colleagues. Keep in regular contact with participants through email.
7	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	Risk to University: University could be scrutinized for research outcomes. Data protection.	<i>How will you mitigate the Risk to University:</i> State clearly that research and view of the researcher do not reflect the University. All data will be securely protected as stated below.

8	Disclosure and Barring Service			
9	If the research activity involves children or vulnerable adults, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate must be obtained before any contact with such participants.	YES	NO	N/A
10	Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?	☐	☒	☐

SECTION I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

1	Feedback What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?
	<i>My email will be provided for participants to contact me if they want to request a copy of the report.</i>
2	Informed consent Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation.
	Participants will be required to fill out a consent form prior to participating in the study. In the case of online survey the consent form will be a required page at the start of the survey that is required before they can proceed. For scheduled interviews the consent form will be sent out and obtained in advance of any conducted interviews.
3	Confidentiality / Anonymity Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case.
	Names will not be collected and no names or identifying information will be written in any publication related to the research. All identifying information will be anonymised.

SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

In completing this section refer to the University's Research Data Management Policy and the extensive resources on the University's Research Data Management web pages (<http://uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/>).

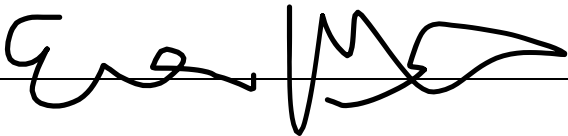
1	Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 “GDPR” and the Data Protection Act 2018 “DPA”)?	YES	NO
	<i>“Personal data” means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (‘data subject’). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person.</i>	X	☐
2	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
	Consent forms, survey data, emails, audio and video data. Data needs to be collected in order to be able to conduct my research.		
3	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
	“Special category data” means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects’ – (a) racial or ethnic origin, (b) political opinions, (c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) physical or mental health or condition, (f) sexual life, (g) genetics, (h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),	☐	X
4	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		

5	Will the research activity involve storing personal data and/or special category data on one of the following:	YES	NO
6	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	☐	☒
7	University computers?	☐	☒
8	Private company computers?	☐	☒
9	Home or other personal computers?	☒	☐
10	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	☒	☐
11	“Cloud” storage or websites?	☒	☐
12	Other – specify:	☐	☒
13	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation:		

	All data will be kept in password protected cloud storage on the university's Office 365 system which will not be shared. Audio/visual data will be transcribed and would be shown to participants to check accuracy of reporting. Any USB sticks used to store or transfer data will be password protected. All participants will be given a unique identifier to ensure confidentiality and this list will be kept securely in the password protected folder.		
14	All Data Storage		
15	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
16	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☒	☐
17	Sharing of data with others at the University?	☐	☒
18	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☒
19	Export of data outside the European Union or importing of data from outside the UK?	☒	☐
20	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☒	☐
21	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	☒
22	Use of data management system?	☐	☒
23	Data archiving?	☐	☒
24	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and DPA (and/or any international equivalent):		
	All data will be encrypted and kept in password protected cloud storage and will not be shared. Any USB sticks used to store or transfer data will be password protected. All data transfers will be encrypted and password protected. All participants will be given a unique identifier to ensure confidentiality and this list will be kept securely in the password protected folder. The data will be stored until the completion of the project and then deleted. In accordance with the DPA2018, participants will have the right to ask to see what data is held relating to them, and this data will be deleted immediately if the participant requests this, in which case the data will not be used in the project.		
25	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	Myself – Erica Waxer		
26	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:		
	Myself, Erica Waxer		
27	Give details of data storage arrangements, including security measures in place to protect the data, where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form. Will data be archived – if so how and if not why not.		
	All data will be encrypted and kept in password protected cloud storage on the University's Office 365 system which will not be shared. Any USB sticks used to store or transfer data will		

	be password protected, and will be reformatted at the end of the project in order to destroy the data. The data will be stored until the completion of the project and then deleted.		
28	Please indicate if your data will be stored in the UWTSD Research Data Repository (see https://researchdata.uwtsd.ac.uk/). If so please explain. <i>(Most relevant to academic staff)</i>		
	no		
29	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	YES	☒
		NO	☐
30	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	YES	☒
		NO	☐

SECTION K: Declaration

31	The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants. In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
	Signature of applicant:		Date: July 30, 2024

For STUDENT Submissions:

32	Director of Studies/Supervisor:		Date:
33	Signature:		

For STAFF Submissions:

34	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:		Date:
35	Signature:		

Checklist: Please complete the checklist below to ensure that you have completed the form according to the guidelines and attached any required documentation:

☒	I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.
☒	I have completed ALL RELEVANT sections of the form in full.
☒	I confirm that the research activity has received approval in principle
☐	I have attached a copy of final/interim approval from external organisation (where appropriate)
☐	I have attached a full risk assessment (and have NOT completed Section H of this form) (where appropriate) <i>ONLY TICK IF YOU HAVE ATTACHED A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT</i>
☒	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice.
☒	I understand that before commencing data collection all documents aimed at respondents (including information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires, interview schedules etc.) must be confirmed by the DoS/Supervisor, module tutor or Academic Director.
☒	I have deleted the guidance notes before submitting the PG2 for consideration

RESEARCH STUDENTS AND STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk , with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name.

You will be informed of the outcome of your claim by email; therefore **it is important that you check your University and personal email accounts regularly.**

STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.

This form is available electronically from the Academic Office web pages:
<https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>

Application Process

All staff research projects and all research students must submit the Ethical Approval Form to the University Research Ethics Committee via the Academic Office (pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk). Staff research directly in relation to personal study for taught undergraduate or Masters programmes should be submitted via the Institute procedures explained below.

Taught masters and taught undergraduate research Ethical Approval Forms are considered within Institutes. Institutes will provide details of the specific processes for this. Where the Ethical issues within any single ethical application are of particular concern the Institute will refer these to the University Research Ethics Committee. Any student activity that involves the collection of primary data needs to undergo Ethical approval, this includes assignment work as well as dissertations.