

Exploring Formants and Vowel Modification in Musical Theatre Vocal Coaching for Belting

Module 1 - BMPF7047D

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Introduction.....	3
Belting in Musical Theatre.....	3
Belting Vocal Technique Overview.....	3
Defining Belting Technique.....	3
Phonatory Mechanism of Belting.....	4
Advocacy and Criticism of Belting.....	4
Chest Belt vs Mix Belt.....	5
Formants and Vowel Modification in Vocal Performance.....	5
Formants in Vocal Performance.....	5
Formants in Belting Technique.....	5
Formants in Chest and Mix Belt.....	6
Vowel Modification in Vocal Performance.....	7
Articulation and Resonance.....	7
Impact on Belting Technique.....	7
Techniques and Challenges.....	7
Conclusion of Vowel Modification.....	8
Limitations.....	8
Strategy.....	9
Developing a Targeted Belting Technique Strategy.....	9
Warm Up.....	9
Integration of Formant Modification Drills.....	9
Application To Repertoire.....	9
Individualised Instruction.....	10
Strategy Conclusion.....	10
Critical Reflection.....	10
Reflective Models: Gibbs and Gayes.....	10
Research Journey.....	11
Personal Journey.....	11
Reflection on Research.....	12
Acknowledging Achievements.....	12
Areas for Improvement.....	13
Appendix.....	14
Personal Development Plan.....	16
Glossary.....	19
References.....	19

Introduction

In my education career, I take on various roles, but for this study, I will be focusing on my role as a Musical Theatre vocal coach. I aim to explore the significance of formants and modifying vowels in aiding post-puberty females in learning and mastering their belt technique. As a musical theatre vocal coach, teaching vowel modification to students learning high belting is paramount for several reasons. Vowel modification allows singers to adjust the shape of their vocal tract, optimising resonance and minimising strain, particularly in the upper register (Sundberg, 1987). By mastering vowel modification techniques, performers can achieve a consistent and powerful sound while navigating the demanding vocal demands of musical theatre repertoire (Miller, 2004). This skill not only enhances vocal quality but also promotes vocal health and longevity, ensuring that students can sustain their performances over time (Appelman, 1967). As I embark on my journey in this career, I've observed a recurring challenge among my college students: grappling with the foundational aspects of the belt technique and understanding how to position their vocal apparatus correctly to unleash the renowned power and resonance of belting without encountering strain or voice cracks.

Belting in Musical Theatre

Belting Vocal Technique Overview

To begin our scholarly journey, let's lay down the basics of the belting vocal technique. This technique is pivotal in contemporary music genres, providing a foundation for understanding its intricate nature. It is prevalent in contemporary music genres like musical theatre, pop, rock, and certain strains of jazz (Popeil, 2007; Edwin, 2007; Coffin, 2011; Titze, 2008). It's known for its robust, chest-dominant sound often associated with heightened emotions or climactic moments within musical compositions, gaining recognition for delivering powerful performances across various musical styles (Miller, 2004; Sundberg, 2019).

Defining Belting Technique

Belting is characterised by loudness and heightened vocal exertion (Bevan, 1989). It's often described as loud, brassy, or akin to yelling (Estill, 1988). Various terms like chest, pop, and mixed singing have been used interchangeably with belting (LeBorgne, 2001). Vocal styles in musical theatre can be categorised into legit, mix, and belt-mix (Tucker, 2009). The absence of consensus on terminology poses challenges for educators in facilitating discourse and conveying a clear understanding to their students.

Phonatory Mechanism of Belting

Moving from definitions to mechanisms, let's explore the physiological processes behind belting. Here, we'll unravel the intricate workings of belting's phonatory mechanism, shedding light on how it produces its distinctive resonant timbre. Belting in musical theatre is produced through a unique phonatory mechanism characterised by a narrowing of the epilaryngeal tube and increased vocal fold mass (Miller, 2019; Appelman, 1967). This mechanism involves a combination of thyroid tilt, aryepiglottic sphincter constriction, and increased subglottal pressure, allowing for efficient energy transfer and resonance in the upper vocal tract (Bozeman, 1993; Stark, 2008). Unlike classical singing, which often emphasises a balanced registration and a lower laryngeal position, belting requires a higher laryngeal position and greater muscular engagement, particularly in the thyroarytenoid muscles (Bozeman, 1993). Additionally, the resonance focus in belting tends to be higher in the vocal tract, with a greater emphasis on the epilaryngeal and pharyngeal spaces, contributing to the characteristic bright and powerful sound.

Advocacy and Criticism of Belting

Emerging from the technicalities, let's engage with the broader discourse surrounding belting. We'll encounter passionate advocates championing its expressive power while also considering valid critiques regarding its potential risks and limitations. Proponents argue belting offers singers a powerful means of expressing intense emotions (Gagne, 2012) and can captivate audiences, especially in musical theatre and contemporary pop music (Tucker, 2017). Critics raise concerns about potential risks such as vocal fatigue or injury, especially when used excessively (Wright, 2018).

Scholarly discourse reflects varying perspectives (Spivey, 2008), with insights from studies offering varied perspectives on its definition and characteristics (Miles & Hollien, 1990; Popeil, 1999; Tucker, 2009). With the advancement of belting pedagogy, several researchers have provided insights suggesting that healthy belting can indeed be cultivated.

Next, we'll navigate through the nuanced landscape of musical contexts. Here, we'll explore differing viewpoints on belting's appropriateness, considering cultural influences and artistic considerations that shape its reception and usage. Opinions differ on the appropriateness of belting in various musical contexts (Hall, 2007). Some advocate for its use in diverse genres (Sabino, 2015), while others suggest it should be used sparingly (Bohnert, 2014). Cultural considerations may also influence its acceptance (Brennan, 2018).

Chest Belt vs Mix Belt

In vocal performance, discerning the differences between chest belt and mix belt techniques is essential for singers aiming to refine their abilities and achieve specific tonal objectives. Chest belt embodies a forceful and authoritative timbre conveying strength and intensity (Jones, 2018), commonly observed in musical theatre and contemporary pop genres. Physiologically, chest belt involves the engagement of the thyroarytenoid muscles, responsible for controlling the vocal fold thickness, and the lower chest muscles, including the external and internal intercostals, which aid in diaphragmatic support (Miller, 2004). This engagement results in a lower laryngeal position and a thicker vocal fold mass, producing a fuller, more resonant sound (Sundberg, 1987).

In contrast, mix belt offers a balanced and versatile sound characterised by clarity and agility (Roberts, 2017), enabling singers to navigate complex melodies and execute dynamic vocal embellishments with precision (Roberts, 2017; Johnson, 2019). Physiologically, mix belt requires coordinated muscle control between the chest voice mechanism and the head voice mechanism (Miller, 2004). This coordination involves a moderate engagement of the chest muscles and a higher laryngeal position compared to chest belt, allowing for a more even distribution of tension across the vocal folds (Miller, 2004). As a result, mix belt maintains the resonance and warmth of the chest voice while facilitating smoother transitions into the head voice register, leading to a more seamless vocal production (Peckham, 2005). Understanding the distinctions between chest belt and mix belt techniques empowers singers to broaden their vocal range and excel across various musical contexts.

Formants and Vowel Modification in Vocal Performance

Formants in Vocal Performance

Formants, shaped by vocal tract resonances, define a voice's timbre and affect vowel and consonant sounds (Nelson, 2022; Cook, 2016). Singers skillfully adjust formants by manipulating the vocal tract's shape, altering vocal resonance and quality (Stokes, 2019). In belting and classical singing, formants play a crucial role in defining tonal characteristics (Nelson, 2022; Boberg, 2018).

Formants in Belting Technique

Let's now delve into the specific role of formants in belting technique. Mastering optimal formant configurations enables singers to achieve acoustically resonant belted sounds

(Nelson, 2022; Coffin, 2011). Belting, characterised by a brighter, more speech-like acoustic quality, necessitates adjustments in vowel selection compared to classical singing (Stokes, 2019). In vocal acoustics, F1 and F2 denote the first and second formants, respectively, crucial for understanding vocal tract resonant frequencies (Miller, 2019; Titze, 2008). F1 represents the frequency of the first resonance peak, influenced by the vocal tract's vertical length and indicative of vowel height, while F2 reflects the frequency of the second resonance peak, influenced by horizontal constriction and reflective of vowel frontness or backness (Sundberg, 1987; Titze, 2008). Belting often favours vowels like [æ], [e], [ɛ], bright [a], and [Y], impacting either F1, F2, or both. However, certain vowels, including [u], [i], [I], and [o], pose challenges for high belting due to their closed jaw positions, resulting in a lowered formant pitch. To optimise formant configurations for high belting, modifications are necessary, such as altering [i] to [e], [o] to [œ], [I] to [ɛ], and [u] to [Y] (Figure 1). These adjustments align the vocal tract to enhance desired harmonics, contributing to the belted sound's distinctiveness (Nelson, 2022).

Formants in Chest and Mix Belt

We'll now investigate how formants shape the distinct qualities of both chest belt and mix belt techniques. Vowel formants play a crucial role in shaping the timbre and resonance of vowel sounds, influencing the characteristics of both chest belt and mix belt techniques. In chest belt, formants contribute to the robust and resonant qualities of the voice, enhancing the perception of power and intensity. The emphasis on lower frequencies in chest belt aligns with the natural resonance of the chest cavity, resulting in a fuller and more dominant sound (Roberts, 2017).

On the other hand, in mix belt, formants are manipulated to achieve a balanced blend of chest and head resonance, creating a versatile and agile vocal quality. By adjusting formants to optimise the combination of chest and head voice frequencies, mix belt technique achieves clarity and flexibility across the vocal range, allowing for smooth transitions between registers without compromising tonal quality (Smith, 2020). Thus, while formants contribute to the distinctiveness of both chest belt and mix belt techniques, their manipulation serves different purposes in shaping the tonal characteristics of each approach.

Vowel Modification in Vocal Performance

Shifting our focus from formants, we'll now examine the intricate mechanics of vowel modification and its impact on overall vocal performance. Vocal performance, especially in the context of singing, is deeply influenced by the intricate mechanics of vowel production and modification (Nelson, 2022). Understanding these nuances is crucial for vocalists seeking to refine their technique and optimise their sound quality (Stokes, 2019).

Articulation and Resonance

Vowels are articulated with minimal obstruction in the vocal tract, allowing for a free flow of air without constriction (Popeil, 2007). The resonating spaces above the glottis, including the oral, labial, and nasal cavities, shape the timbre and quality of vowels (Edwin, 2007). The strategic positioning of the tongue within the oral cavity is a cornerstone of vocal technique, influencing not only the resonating cavities but also the unique acoustic qualities of each vowel sound (Gebhardt, 2016; Winnie, 2014).

Impact on Belting Technique

This intricate movement between tongue placement and vocal resonance is fundamental to the art of belting. Delving deeper, this manipulation of tongue position not only shapes the resonating cavities but also affects formants, those concentrated frequency bands that define the timbre of a voice (Nelson, 2022; Cook, 2016). By understanding how subtle adjustments in tongue placement influence formant frequencies, vocalists can unlock new dimensions of expressiveness in their performances, achieving resonant and powerful vocal delivery that captivates audiences across musical genres. Spectrograms provide valuable insights into the acoustic energy and formant patterns of vowels, aiding in the analysis of vocal production (Dawe, 2018). Formants, represented as dark bands, highlight frequency ranges that contribute to vowel identification and differentiation (Nelson, 2022).

Understanding formant dynamics and spectral characteristics enhances vocal control and resonance management (Gebhardt, 2016).

Techniques and Challenges

In vocal performance, sustaining notes on vowel sounds optimise resonance and acoustical energy (Popeil, 2007). Singers must prioritise vowel clarity over consonant articulation to ensure efficient resonance and vocal projection (Edwin, 2007). Moreover, integrating text into vocal training enables singers to practise vowel variations in different linguistic contexts, promoting versatility and expressive delivery (Kayes, 2014). Certain vowel sounds pose challenges for singers, such as the [i] sound in "meet," which requires careful management of vocal tract openness and resonance (Leborgne & Rosenberg, 2019).

Conclusion of Vowel Modification

With our exploration of vowel modification complete, let's now synthesise our findings and draw conclusions regarding its significance in vocal performance. Vowel modification serves as a vital tool for achieving balanced resonance, smooth registration, and dynamic control in vocal performance (Gebhardt, 2016). By aligning acoustical principles with artistic expression, singers can enhance their vocal clarity, projection, and emotional delivery (Popeil, 2007). Embracing natural resonance adjustments through vowel modification facilitates vocal health and artistic freedom (Edwin, 2007). Recent studies by Chen et al. (2023) have explored the neural mechanisms underlying vowel perception and production in singers. In essence, an understanding of vowel acoustics and modification empowers singers to unlock their full vocal potential. By integrating technical proficiency with expressive interpretation, vocalists can cultivate a resonant, compelling sound that captivates audiences and enriches musical performances.

Limitations

Despite the valuable insights provided by existing research on formants and vowel production, several limitations hinder our comprehensive understanding of these phenomena. One notable limitation is the predominantly descriptive nature of much of the existing literature. While studies have identified correlations between vocal tract configurations and acoustic outcomes, there remains a lack of understanding regarding the underlying physiological mechanisms driving these relationships (Story et al., 2017). The generalisability of findings across different vocal contexts and populations presents another challenge. Much of the existing research has focused on trained singers or speakers of specific languages, potentially overlooking the variability in vocal production techniques and perceptual preferences observed in diverse cultural or clinical settings (Patel & Wong, 2019). Conducting cross-cultural or longitudinal studies could address this limitation and provide a more comprehensive understanding of vocal acoustics and perception. Moving forward, there are several promising areas for further research in the field of vocal acoustics. Longitudinal studies tracking vocal function and performance outcomes in singers who engage in belting or other high-intensity vocal styles could shed light on the long-term effects of intensive vowel modification techniques on vocal health and longevity (Titze & Verdolini Abbott, 2012). Exploring the intersection of vocal acoustics with other domains such as emotion expression or social perception holds potential for advancing our understanding of vocal communication (Banse & Scherer, 1996). Lastly, leveraging advances in technology such as machine learning or virtual reality simulation could enable researchers to analyse large datasets of vocal recordings or simulate vocal tract

configurations in real-time, opening new avenues for research into vocal production and perception (Kim et al., 2020).

Strategy

Developing a Targeted Belting Technique Strategy

To facilitate effective and safe belting techniques among college students, a targeted approach involving practical application and tailored vocal exercises is essential. Drawing from research on vowel modification and formant optimization (Nelson, 2022), the strategy begins with the design of practical exercises specifically tailored to belting.

Warm Up

Firstly, warm-up exercises are crucial to prepare the vocal apparatus for belting. These warm-ups should encompass breath support, vocal relaxation, and resonance exercises to ensure the vocal folds are adequately prepared for the demands of belting (Popeil, 2007). Examples of such exercises are included in the Lesson Plan in the appendix.

Next, the focus shifts to vowel clarity and resonance. Students engage in exercises aimed at sustaining vowel sounds across their vocal range while modifying vowels as needed for belting. This includes practising forward resonance placement and experimenting with vowel modifications such as altering [i] to [e], [o] to [œ], [l] to [ɛ], and [u] to [Y] to optimise formant configurations (Hall, 2007; Nelson, 2022).

Integration of Formant Modification Drills

Furthermore, formant modification drills are integrated into the curriculum, allowing students to refine their technique systematically. Through guided exercises, students learn to manipulate their vocal tract to enhance desired harmonics, contributing to the bright, speech-like quality characteristic of belting (Nelson, 2022).

Application To Repertoire

These exercises are seamlessly integrated with repertoire relevant to belting, such as selections from musical theatre known for demanding belting passages. By applying the techniques learned in exercises to their performance repertoire, students reinforce practical application and develop a deeper understanding of how vowel modification and formant optimization translate into performance (Gebhardt, 2016).

Individualised Instruction

Individualised instruction plays a pivotal role in the strategy, with instructors offering personalised feedback and guidance tailored to each student's vocal needs and goals. This individual attention allows students to address specific challenges in their belting technique and receive targeted support for improvement (Popeil, 2007). Examples of individualised instructions can be found in the Lesson Plan in the appendix.

Strategy Conclusion

The strategy I've laid out for nurturing proficient and secure belting techniques in college students revolves around a holistic approach that blends practical exercises with personalised instruction. This plan draws heavily on insights gleaned from scholarly research, particularly in the domains of vowel modification and formant optimization (Nelson, 2022). Complementing these insights are meticulously crafted warm-up routines that prioritise breath support and vocal ease, as detailed by Popeil (2007). Through consistent practice in vowel clarity, resonance refinement, and formant manipulation, students gain a nuanced understanding of belting technique, which is further reinforced by the integration of relevant musical theatre repertoire. Additionally, the provision of individualised mentorship ensures that each student receives tailored feedback and support to address specific challenges and refine their belting skills further, as emphasised by Hall (2007). By embracing this comprehensive approach, students not only enhance their technical proficiency but also elevate their artistic expression, thereby enhancing their ability to deliver captivating performances in the industry of musical theatre.

Critical Reflection

Reflective Models: Gibbs and Gayes

In this critical reflection, I am actively engaging with both the Gibbs (Gibbs, 1988) and Gayes (Gayes, 2014) reflective models to deepen my understanding of my research and enhance professional development. The selection of these models is underpinned by a thoughtful assessment of their respective strengths and alignment with my teaching philosophy. Having previously employed the Gibbs model during my PGCE studies, I recognised its utility in providing a structured framework for reflection (Hussain & Sultan, 2010). Its cyclical process facilitated a comprehensive exploration of teaching experiences, guiding me through stages of description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action planning (Moon, 1999). However, my experience also revealed a potential limitation: the Gibbs model's tendency to

foster a critical lens, emphasising areas for improvement over acknowledging strengths (Rolfe et al., 2010). As an educator who values positivity and encouragement in teaching, often being described as 'aggressively positive', I recognise the importance of maintaining a balanced perspective while still keeping students motivated with improved self-esteem. Hence, I am incorporating Gayes' reflective model into my practice, attracted to its emphasis on positive reinforcement and celebration of successes (Gaye, 2014). By integrating both models, I aim to cultivate a reflective practice that embraces both constructive criticism and affirmations of achievement, fostering a growth mindset essential for continual professional growth and enhancement (Johns, 2017).

Research Journey

In conducting my research, my aim was to explore diverse pedagogical strategies and approaches that could enhance the proficiency of my college students in achieving success with their belt vocals, particularly in anticipation of university auditions and their upcoming production of "Six." As a teacher in the early stages of my career, my professional training has been limited. My background in vocal instruction is primarily self-taught, with occasional guidance from lecturers during my college and university studies. Consequently, I embarked on this research with a relatively blank canvas, possessing minimal prior knowledge or preconceptions in this domain.

Initially, I embarked on a broad exploration of pedagogical approaches for teaching belting. However, as my investigation progressed, I found myself increasingly drawn to the intricate mechanics of the larynx and the concept of formants—an entirely novel term for me.

Specifically, I found certain resources and literature such as Popeil (2007), Edwin (2007) and Miller (2004) instrumental in refining my focus on the role of formants and vowel shaping in aiding students' mastery and refinement of their belt vocals.

Personal Journey

Throughout the course of my research journey, I encountered a spectrum of emotions and experiences. Much of the time, I grappled with feelings of overwhelm and imposter syndrome, particularly when delving into the more scientifically oriented aspects of the subject matter. My experience with ASD contributed to heightened anxiety, particularly concerning potential misinterpretations of assignments and tasks stemming from communication challenges. Given my personal experience with various diagnosed conditions and neurodiversity, such challenges are not unfamiliar to me; rather, they are recurrent themes in many aspects of my life. However, drawing upon my familiarity with navigating and addressing such emotions, I was able to confront and manage these feelings with a degree of resilience. Amidst these challenges, there were also moments of clarity and

revelation—those "aha" moments—that served as powerful motivators and bolstered my confidence. These instances of insight not only energised me but also facilitated subsequent research endeavours, rendering them less daunting and more approachable.

Reflection on Research

In reflecting on my research journey through the lens of Gibbs' model, I engage in a critical evaluation of my strategies and decisions as a Musical Theatre vocal coach. Delving into the intricacies of belting technique, I encounter a spectrum of perspectives regarding its emotive expression and potential risks (Popeil, 2007; Edwin, 2007; Miller, 1996), shedding light on the ongoing scholarly debates surrounding its definition and characteristics (Spivey, 2008; Miles & Hollien, 1990; Bevan, 1989). Transitioning to the exploration of formants and vowel modification, conflicting viewpoints emerge concerning their influence on vocal quality and health (Sundberg, 2008; Titze, 2008). Nonetheless, promising avenues for enhancing vocal clarity and resonance through strategic modification and optimization are revealed (Nelson, 2022). As I integrate these findings into my instructional approach, I tailor practical exercises to address the nuances of belting while prioritising vocal health and well-being (Popeil, 2007; Hall, 2007). This strategy, distinguished by its thoughtful design, seamlessly blends theoretical insights with hands-on practice, starting with fundamental warm-up exercises to prepare students for the demands of belting (Popeil, 2007). As students progress, the focus shifts towards mastering vowel modification and formant optimization, crucial elements in developing a powerful belting technique (Hall, 2007; Nelson, 2022). By incorporating these techniques into relevant musical repertoire, students not only acquire theoretical knowledge but also apply it in practical settings, enhancing their understanding (Gebhardt, 2016). What sets this approach apart is its personalised nature—each student receives tailored feedback and guidance to address their unique vocal challenges (Popeil, 2007). This student-centred approach not only recognises the diverse needs of learners but also cultivates a supportive environment for growth and improvement. In essence, the strategy strikes a harmonious balance between theory and practice, providing college students with an effective and safe pathway to develop their belting skills.

Acknowledging Achievements

In applying Gaye's reflective model, I find particular value in the aspect of acknowledging achievements. Through my research, I have significantly enhanced my teaching skills, particularly evident in the recent production of 'Six' where several of the Queens faced challenges with belting on higher notes. Drawing from insights gained, I implemented targeted warm-ups and vowel modifications, resulting in a noteworthy improvement. On the night of the performance, all Queens successfully executed their high notes without

encountering voice cracks or pitch inconsistencies. This marked a notable advancement from the beginning of the academic year when belting proficiency was limited as none of them could attempt it, except for the student who played Catheryn of Aragon, who struggled with constant voice cracks. Despite being early in my career and this being my first production involvement, the positive feedback received from colleagues and parents underscores the impact of my instructional support on student progress and performance outcomes.

Areas for Improvement

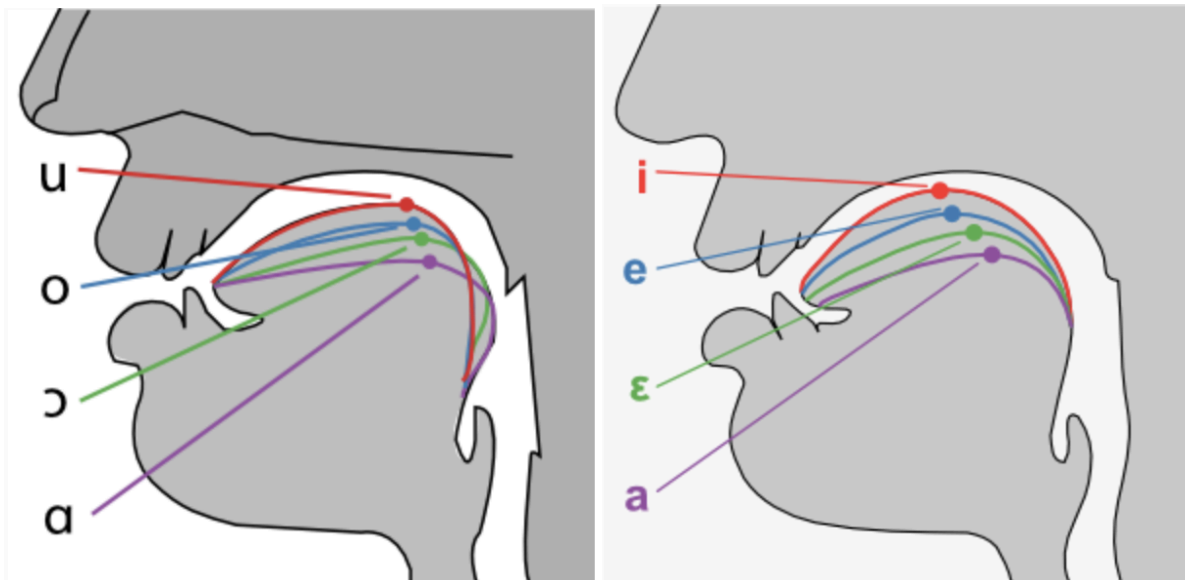
While I readily acknowledge my achievements, it is imperative for me to identify areas necessitating improvement to enhance my research skills, teaching efficacy, and overall professional growth. One prominent aspect for enhancement is more effective planning, particularly concerning time management. Balancing responsibilities as a further education teacher across various roles, alongside commitments as a peripatetic singing instructor and personal musical endeavours, has highlighted deficiencies in time allocation for research and writing. I typically defer university-related tasks to school holidays, resulting in a lack of downtime. To address this, I plan to integrate dedicated study periods into my weekly schedule, despite anticipated challenges due to executive dysfunction issues. Nonetheless, with disciplined effort, I am confident in incorporating this adjustment. Another critical area for development is exercising greater scrutiny in source evaluation. While I believe my current practices suffice for this module, I recognise the need for a more thorough examination of peer-reviewed sources and scrutinising references to ensure credibility and legitimacy.

Considering the identified areas for enhancement and my aspirations for career advancement, I will present a comprehensive professional development plan in the appendix. This plan outlines my intentions for the next five years, aimed at honing my skills and expertise to excel as a music and singing teacher.

Appendix

IPA	Example Words	IPA	Example Words
æ	bad, cat, trap, black, lad	e	bait, great, late
ɑː	father, palm, cot, arm	uː	soon, through, goose, blue, food
ɒ	not, wasp, lot, hot, rock	aɪ/aj	my, wise, high, price, five, eye
ɔː	law, caught, all, call, halt, talk, thought	ɔɪ	boy, hoist, choice
ə	about, spotted, comma	o/ou	no, toe, soap, goat, tow, soul, roll, cold, folk, go, home
ɪ	sit, kit, hit	au/aw	now, trout, mouth, about, cow, flour, out
i	heat, see, city, happy	ɪu:/juː	cute, few, dew, use, pupil
eɪ	date, day, pain, whey, rein, face, say, eight	ɪər	deer, here, near
ɛ	bed, dress, met	ɛər	mare, there, bear, where, air
ɜr	burn, herd, nurse, earth, bird, turn, learn	ɔɪ/ou/ɔər	tore, boar, port, sort
ər	winner, letter	jʊər	pure, Europe, cure
ʌ	run, won, flood, strut, but, cup, luck	oːr	sort, warm
ʊ	put, hood, foot, could, good	uːr/uər	tour, poor

(Figure 1)



(Figure 2)

LP

LESSON PLAN AND EVALUATION

Name: C Turvey		Date: 20/03/24	LP Ref: MTSix
Course & Level: Level 3 Musical Theatre		Topic/Unit: Belting/Vowel Modification	
Session Start Time: 9:30		Session Duration: 2.5 hours	
Location: Itchen College	Room: Dance Studio	No. of Learners on Register: 13	No. of Learners Present: 13
Context			
This lesson is a mix of both first and second year Dance and Musical Theatre students who are preparing for a production of 'Six' the musical.			
Learning Outcomes			
To develop students' understanding and proficiency in belting technique and vowel modifications, with a focus on preparing them for songs from the musical 'Six'.			

Timeframe	Activity (What will the learners be doing)	Resources
Starter - Warm up		
9:30-10	Physical warm up: ● Head side to side (like a 'no' head shake) ● Head up and down (like a nod) ● Ear to shoulder without raising shoulders ● Head semi circles ● Rub underneath the ears the ensure jaw isn't stiff or tight ● Shoulder and back stretches-anything that feels good Breathing exercises: ● Deep breathe in, then breathe out in 8 pulses (as if you were blowing out 8 birthday candles individually) then breathe out for as long as you can, focusing on limiting the air flow out of the mouth like your breathing through a cocktail straw. ● Same thing but instead of just breathing out, make an 'F' sound with your mouth. So 8 pulses of 'F' and then hold for as long as you can. This should feel easier due to teeth acting as a barrier for the air flow escaping. ● Same again, but with a 'shh' sound. Vocal warm up: ● Lip trills in a 5 note ascending and descending major scale, started on middle C then D, then E. ● Humming the same scale of F, G and A ● Legato ahh on same scale starting on A, G and F ● Changing to a more staccato 'lalala' as softly as possible on E, D then middle C. ● Belting staccato 'Mah-mah' on B, A, G and F focusing on the position of the larynx, ● Belting 'Nyah-nyah' on G, A and B, focusing on it resonating in the 'mask' area of the face.	Keyboard

LP

	- Sliding 'Nay' starting on root notes and sliding up the 5th and back to root, focusing on keeping the same power and resonance all the way through. When students start to struggle, they are asked to change the 'ayy' into a more 'ehh' sound for vowel modification. - Sliding 'Go' starting on root notes and sliding up to the octave and back to root. Focusing on keeping power all the way through. When students start to struggle, they are asked to change the 'O' sound into an 'Uh' sound for vowel modification - Going to the higher end of their capabilities, do staccato 'Gee-gee' in a 5 note ascending and descending major scale, focusing on resonance in the head, with an open throat and raised soft palate.	
Main		
10-10:40	Go through group songs from 'Six' such as 'Ex Wives', 'Haus of Holbein', 'I Don't Need Your Love' and 'Six'. Focusing on harmonies, projection and diction.	Backing tracks Lyrics Keyboard
10:40-11	<i>*Break*</i>	
11-11:30	Queens-Go through individual songs giving individual feedback focussing on vowel modification to make belting easier. Film songs for plenary. Aragon- Last chorus: 'There no way'=change 'ayy' sound into more of an ehh, 'there's no w-ehh'. 'End of my life'=change the 'eye' sound to more of an 'ah' sound Boleyn- Last chorus: 'Go to hell' run, change the 'eh' into more an 'ey' so it is easier to hold for longer and add more melisma. Seymour- Bridge: River runs dry. Change the 'er' at the end of river to 'ah'. Ending: Stone runs, change the 'oh' to 'uh'. Cleeves- Pre-chorus: Agree, change the 'eee' to a more 'eyy' sound so it is easier to hold. Get Down-really over enunciate the 'ow' in down to add character to the song. 'I'm' change 'eye-m' to an 'ah-ym' to make hitting the higher note easier. Howard- Pre-chorus: 'Different' change vowels so it's 'dif-fuh-ruh-hunt' so it is easier to hit all the note changes and hit the higher notes. End chorus: Fairest of the fair-change fair to 'f-ehh' Parr- Throughout the song, the word 'love' depending on how high/long the note is change 'oh' to 'uh' and if going higher modify again to 'ah'	Backing tracks Lyrics Keyboard Whiteboard to write vowel modifications on Camera to record
Plenary		
11:30-12	Listen through the recorded songs from the rehearsal. Each student needs to pick out one thing they have done well in the lesson, and one thing they need to focus on before the next rehearsal.	

Personal Development Plan

Overall Goal:	Development opportunity to meet my overall goal?	What I will do to achieve this?	Resources and support needed	What success looks like	Target date for completion
Get a better understanding of Extreme Vocals and how to teach it.	Mastering the techniques of extreme vocal effects will expand my teaching repertoire and allow me to cater to students interested in non-traditional vocal styles.	- Study relevant literature on extreme vocal effects, including "How to Teach the Extreme Vocal Effects" and "Let's Scream: Vocal Distortions Introduction." - Attend workshops or seminars conducted by experts in extreme vocals. - Complete 'The Ultimate Guide to Extreme Vocals' course at 'My Musical Voice' - Practice techniques under the guidance of experienced vocal coaches.	- Access to educational materials and resources on extreme vocal effects. - Opportunities to attend workshops or seminars on the topic. - Guidance and feedback from experienced vocal coaches. - Time allocated for practice and experimentation with vocal techniques.	- Mastery of various extreme vocal techniques, including distortion, growling, and screaming. - Ability to effectively teach and demonstrate these techniques to students. - Positive feedback from students on the clarity and effectiveness of instruction. - Opportunities to incorporate extreme vocal effects into performances and teaching repertoire.	Tuesday 4th June 2024
Get a better understanding of how to become a self employed singing teacher and how to effectively run a business	Acquiring knowledge of business management for voice teachers will enable me to establish and grow a successful private teaching business while effectively managing administrative tasks and client relationships.	- Enrol in the course "Teach Voice, Make Money: How Professional Voice Teachers Do Business." - Research and study additional resources on business management and entrepreneurship. - Develop a business plan tailored to my specific goals and target market.	- Access to the course materials and online platform. - Mentorship or guidance from experienced voice teachers or business owners. - Financial resources for course fees and business start-up costs. - Time allocated for learning, planning, and implementing business strategies.	- Successful completion of the business management course with a solid understanding of key concepts. - Development of a comprehensive business plan outlining goals, target market, pricing structure, and marketing strategies. - Establishment of a professional brand identity and online presence for the teaching business. - Acquisition of clients and steady growth of the teaching business over time.	Tuesday 25th June 2024,

Set up my own private singing teaching business	Establishing a private singing teaching business will provide me with opportunities for autonomy, flexibility, and financial independence, allowing me to pursue my passion for teaching while building a sustainable career.	- Conduct market research to identify target demographics, competitive landscape, and potential niches or specialties for my teaching business. - Develop a business plan outlining the vision, mission, goals, target market, services offered, pricing structure, marketing strategies, and financial projections. - Register my business, obtain necessary licences or permits, and set up administrative processes such as scheduling, invoicing, and client management. - Create a professional brand identity, including a business name, logo, website, and marketing materials, to establish credibility and attract clients. - Network with local music schools, community centres, performance venues, and other relevant organisations to promote my services and build referral networks.	- Access to market research tools, business planning resources, and industry-specific guidance on starting a teaching business. - Support and advice from mentors, peers, or professionals with experience in entrepreneurship, music education, or small business management. - Financial resources for initial startup costs, including registration fees, marketing expenses, equipment purchases, and overhead expenses. - Technology tools and software for website development, online scheduling, payment processing, and digital marketing campaigns. - Time and commitment to developing and implementing a comprehensive business plan, including ongoing marketing, client acquisition, and business operations.	- Launch of a successful private singing teaching business, with a professional brand presence, clear service offerings, and a strong value proposition for clients. - Acquisition of clients through effective marketing strategies, word-of-mouth referrals, and networking efforts, leading to a steady stream of students and consistent revenue generation. - Positive feedback and testimonials from satisfied students and parents, indicating the impact of my teaching on their vocal development and musical growth. - Growth and expansion of the business over time, with increased demand for services, expansion into new markets or specialties, and opportunities for hiring additional instructors or staff members.	Summer 2024
Get better at time management	Enhancing time management skills will allow me to balance various responsibilities effectively, allocate time for professional development, and	- Implement time management techniques such as prioritisation, goal setting, and scheduling. - Utilise tools like calendars, planners, and task management apps to organise tasks and deadlines.	- Time management tools and techniques, such as planners, calendars, and apps. - Accountability partners or mentors who can provide guidance and support.	- Consistent completion of tasks and deadlines within allocated timeframes. - Feeling of control and satisfaction in managing various responsibilities effectively.	Ongoing
	maintain a healthy work-life balance.	Set aside dedicated time for professional development, business activities, and personal pursuits.	- Self-discipline and commitment to following through with time management strategies. - Flexibility to adjust schedules and priorities as needed.	- Reduced stress and overwhelm associated with time pressures and deadlines. - Improved work-life balance and ability to dedicate time to personal pursuits and relaxation.	
Continue personal musical endeavours	Continuing my personal musical endeavours, particularly through collaborating with my current originals metal band, 'The Lazarus Effect,' presents an opportunity to express creativity, hone musical skills, and contribute to the development and success of the band.	- Schedule regular band rehearsals and songwriting sessions to work on new material and refine existing songs for the set list. - Collaborate with band members to brainstorm song ideas, melodies, lyrics, and musical arrangements that align with the band's artistic vision and style. - Set specific milestones and deadlines for completing songwriting tasks, such as composing lyrics, crafting guitar riffs, or structuring song arrangements. - Experiment with different musical techniques, genres, and song structures to push creative boundaries and explore new sonic territories. - Seek feedback and input from bandmates, peers, or mentors to improve songwriting skills, address creative challenges, and enhance the overall quality of the music. - Utilise recording technology to demo and track song ideas, allowing for easy sharing.	- Access to musical instruments, recording equipment, rehearsal space, and other resources necessary for band rehearsals and songwriting sessions. - Support and encouragement from bandmates, friends, and family members to stay motivated and focused on achieving musical goals. - Opportunities to perform live shows, showcase new material, and connect with fans and fellow musicians within the local music community. - Time management skills and dedication to balancing personal commitments, professional responsibilities, and musical pursuits effectively. - Willingness to embrace challenges, setbacks, and criticism as opportunities for growth and learning in the creative process.	- Completion of a 40-minute set list featuring a mix of original songs from 'The Lazarus Effect,' showcasing the band's unique sound, style, and artistic vision. - Positive feedback and engagement from band members and audiences during rehearsals, performances, and listening sessions, indicating the impact and appeal of the music. - Opportunities to record and release new music, produce music videos, and promote the band's brand and identity through online platforms and social media channels. - Growth and development of 'The Lazarus Effect' as a cohesive musical unit, with improved chemistry, communication, and collaboration among band members.	December 2024
		collaboration, and refinement of musical compositions.			
Obtain relationships with other extreme vocal teachers	Building connections with other extreme vocal teachers, especially female or non-binary individuals, will provide opportunities for collaboration, mutual support, and shared learning experiences.	- Attend conferences, workshops, or online events focused on extreme vocals. - Join online communities or forums for vocal instructors specialising in extreme techniques. - Reach out to individual teachers or mentors for networking opportunities and informational interviews.	- Access to networking events or platforms where extreme vocal teachers gather. - Communication skills for initiating and maintaining professional relationships. - Time allocated for attending events, engaging in networking activities, and following up with contacts. - Willingness to learn from others and contribute positively to the community.	- Establishment of connections with multiple extreme vocal teachers, fostering ongoing communication and collaboration. - Opportunities for knowledge exchange, resource sharing, and mentorship within the extreme vocal community. - Positive feedback from peers on contributions to discussions, events, or collaborative projects. - Enhanced sense of belonging and support within the extreme vocal teaching community.	Summer 2026
Learn more about directing musical theatre	Expanding my knowledge of directing musical theatre will enhance my understanding of performance artistry, storytelling, and stagecraft, providing valuable insights for teaching and creative endeavours.	- Enrol in courses or workshops on directing musical theatre or stagecraft. - Study scripts, scores, and recordings of musical theatre productions. - Seek mentorship or apprenticeship opportunities with experienced theatre directors.	- Access to educational resources, courses, or workshops on directing musical theatre. - Opportunities to observe or assist in rehearsals and productions under experienced directors. - Guidance and feedback from theatre professionals, mentors, or instructors. - Time allocated for studying scripts, scores, and recordings, as well as attending rehearsals and performances.	- Acquisition of knowledge and skills related to directing musical theatre, including staging, blocking, and character development. - Ability to apply directing techniques and principles to teaching vocal performance and musical storytelling. - Opportunities to assist in or direct musical theatre productions, gaining practical experience and recognition. - Positive feedback from actors, musicians, and audiences on the quality and impact of directed productions.	Summer 2025

Get more competent at piano	Improving my proficiency in piano playing will enhance my musical skills and support my teaching and creative endeavours as a vocal coach and musician.	- Enrol in piano lessons or courses focused on developing technical skills and musicality. - Practice regularly, incorporating exercises, repertoire, and sight-reading into my practice routine. - Explore resources such as tutorials, books, and online platforms for learning piano techniques and repertoire.	- Access to piano teachers, courses, or resources for learning and practising piano skills. - Piano or keyboard for practising at home or in a studio environment. - Sheet music, method books, and instructional materials for learning piano techniques and repertoire. - Feedback and guidance from piano teachers, mentors, or peers on progress and areas for improvement.	- Improvement in piano proficiency, including technical skills, musicality, and repertoire knowledge. - Ability to play piano accompaniments for vocal exercises, songs, or performances with confidence and accuracy. - Integration of piano skills into teaching and creative endeavours, enhancing musical understanding and expression. - Recognition from peers, students, or audiences for improvements in piano playing and musical performance.	December 2024
Get more proficient with studio recording	Improving my proficiency in studio recording techniques will enhance my ability to produce high-quality recordings for teaching, performance, and personal projects.	- Enrol in courses or workshops on studio recording techniques, including recording, mixing, and mastering. - Practice recording sessions in a studio environment, experimenting with microphone placement, signal processing, and editing. - Study resources such as books, tutorials, and online courses on studio recording fundamentals and advanced techniques.	- Access to recording studios or home recording setups equipped with recording hardware and software. - Studio recording equipment, including microphones, audio interfaces, monitors, and software plugins. - Educational resources, courses, or workshops on studio recording techniques and technologies. - Feedback and guidance from recording engineers, producers, or peers on recording projects and techniques.	- Proficiency in recording, editing, mixing, and mastering audio tracks using studio recording software and hardware. - Production of high-quality recordings suitable for teaching materials, performance demos, or personal projects. - Application of studio recording techniques to enhance vocal recordings and musical productions, achieving professional results. - Recognition from peers, clients, or audiences for improvements in studio recording skills and quality of recorded materials.	Summer 2025
Publish something!	Publishing scholarly articles, educational	Identify suitable topics or themes for publication based	Access to research materials, data analysis tools, and writing	Publication of scholarly articles, educational materials, or creative	2027
	materials, or creative works will contribute to my professional development and recognition as a vocal coach, educator, and researcher.	- on research interests, teaching experiences, or creative projects. - Conduct research, gather data, and analyse findings to develop content for publication. - Write and revise manuscripts or articles for submission to journals, magazines, websites, or other publishing platforms. - Seek opportunities to present or showcase creative works, educational materials, or research findings at conferences, workshops, or events.	- resources for manuscript development. - Guidance and feedback from mentors, colleagues, or collaborators on manuscript preparation and submission. - Opportunities for presenting or sharing work at academic conferences, professional events, or online platforms. - Support from academic institutions, publishers, or funding agencies for publication fees, open access options, or dissemination efforts.	- works in reputable journals, magazines, websites, or other platforms. - Recognition from peers, colleagues, or audiences for contributions to the field of vocal coaching, education, or research. - Impact of published works on the advancement of knowledge, practice, or discourse in vocal pedagogy, performance, or related areas. - Opportunities for further collaboration, networking, or professional development resulting from publication achievements.	
Apply for PhD	Pursuing a doctoral degree will deepen my expertise in vocal pedagogy, research, and academia, opening up opportunities for advanced teaching, research, and leadership roles.	- Research potential doctoral programs in vocal pedagogy, music education, or related fields, considering program offerings, faculty expertise, and research opportunities. - Prepare application materials, including transcripts, CV, letters of recommendation, and statement of purpose, highlighting academic achievements, research interests, and career goals. - Seek guidance and feedback from mentors, advisors, or faculty members on the application process and program selection.	- Access to information and resources on doctoral programs, application requirements, and deadlines. - Support and encouragement from mentors, advisors, or colleagues in navigating the doctoral application process. - Time and dedication to preparing application materials and completing application requirements. - Financial resources for application fees, test preparation materials, and potential relocation or tuition expenses associated with doctoral studies.	- Submission of strong and competitive applications to doctoral programs in vocal pedagogy or related fields, meeting all requirements and deadlines. - Acceptance into one or more doctoral programs with funding, scholarships, or assistantships to support tuition, fees, and living expenses. - Engagement in doctoral studies, research projects, and academic activities that contribute to personal and professional growth. - Graduation with a doctoral degree in vocal pedagogy or related field, equipped with advanced knowledge, skills, and credentials for career advancement.	September 2026

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