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**A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF THE
EXPERIENCE OF BELTING IN NOVICE ADULT
FEMALE SINGERS OF CONTEMPORARY
MUSIC USING REFLEXIVE THEMATIC
ANALYSIS.**

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1. PROPOSAL

1.1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Belting, a core technique in Contemporary Commercial Music (CCM), is characterised by its speech-like or yell-like quality and is widely used across popular genres (LoVetri, 2002; Edwin, 2007; Sundberg, Thalén, & Popeil, 2012; LoVetri et al., 2024).

As a vocal coach working with adult contemporary singers in both one-to-one and workshop settings, I also support vocalists in church and worship contexts, where belting is crucial due to the genre's emotional and stylistic demands (LoVetri, 2002; Turner, 2008). Many of my students aim to develop a sustainable belting technique that meets both expressive and technical goals, making it foundational to their vocal growth.

1.2. RESEARCH JUSTIFICATION

Most research on belting has focused on physiological and acoustic aspects, with limited attention to singers' subjective experiences, especially novice adults. While Roll (2019) highlights a gap between perception and vocal fold behaviour, the insights of beginner female singers remain underexplored. This study addresses that gap by examining how women aged 18–40 experience and perceive belting. Using a qualitative, practice-based approach, it integrates personal experiences with technical and pedagogical perspectives to inform the literature and support more effective, sustainable teaching for novices.

1.3. OUTLINED INTENTION

- Conduct structured belting sessions with participants.
- Gather participants' perceptions through open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.
- Conduct individual interviews to explore participants' reflections.
- Analyse data to identify key themes in their experiences.

- Triangulate findings with existing literature to inform belting pedagogy (Burnard et al., 2008; Scott, 2022).

This study uses a constructivist, interpretivist approach with a relativist ontology and subjectivist epistemology, recognising knowledge as co-constructed through researcher–participant interaction (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2015; Schwandt, 2000).

Singers' perceptions of belting are understood as shaped by personal experience, training, and context (Burnard et al., 2008; Scott, 2022). Reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) supports a qualitative, interpretive method centred on subjective meaning and researcher reflexivity.

Methods:

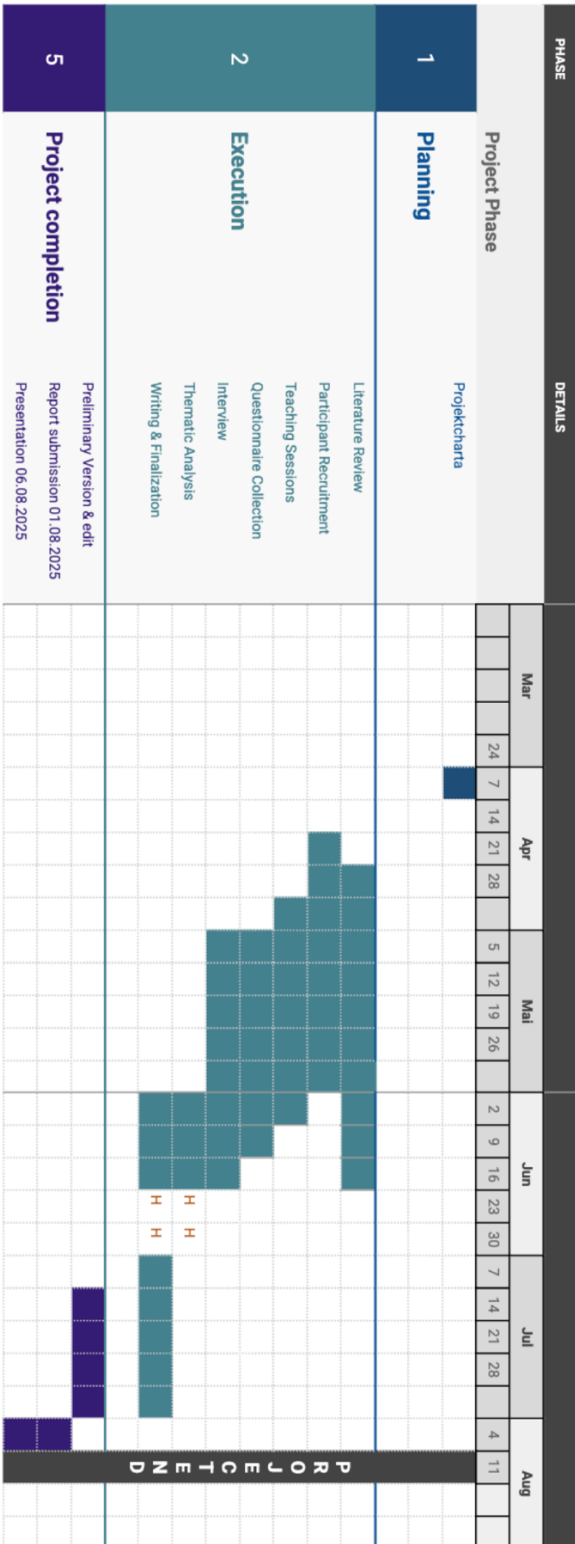
- Literature Review
- Teaching Sessions:
- Open-ended Questionnaires
- Semi-structured Interviews
- Reflexive Thematic Analysis
- Triangulation with Literature

PROJECT TIMELINE

PROJEKTTITEL

A qualitative exploration of the experience of
being in adult female singers of
contemporary music using Reflexive Thematic

PROJEKTMANAGER	DATE
Gloria Kull	29.03.25 - 04.08.25



1.1. GANTT CHART AND TIMELINE

1.2. ETHICS AND INSIDER RESEARCH CONSIDERATIONS

This study will follow ethical principles, including informed consent, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw (Scott, 2022). As the researcher is also the participants' vocal coach, steps such as reflective journaling and pre-planned interview questions will help minimise bias. Insider research poses ethical challenges, requiring attention to trust, objectivity, and personal bias (Ferguson, 2001; Coghlan, 2007; Mercer, 2007). The researcher will critically reflect on their positionality and maintain high ethical standards to protect participants and research integrity.

1.3. PERSONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Learn to identify codes and themes through reflexive thematic analysis
- Develop skills in qualitative data collection (interviews, questionnaires)
- Apply ethical principles in insider research
- Deepen understanding of belting and its effects on learners
- Reflect on and improve my vocal teaching practice

REPORT

A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF THE EXPERIENCE OF BELTING IN NOVICE ADULT FEMALE SINGERS OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC USING REFLEXIVE THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Research Question:

**How Do Adult Female Novice Singers Perceive the Experience of Belting
Within the Contexts of Contemporary Commercial Music?**

2. INTRODUCTION

Belting is a vocal technique characterised by its speech-like or yell-like quality (Popeil, 2007), widely used within Contemporary Commercial Music (CCM) (LoVetri, 2002). It represents both an expressive and technical skill for many adult female singers (LoVetri, 2002; Edwin, 2007; Sundberg, Thalén, & Popeil, 2012; LoVetri et al., 2024). As a vocal coach specialising in adult contemporary singers, my practice focuses on one-to-one tuition and workshop-based teaching. My experience with singers in church and worship settings has highlighted belting's importance in genres demanding emotional intensity and stylistic range (LoVetri, 2002; Turner, 2008). Many of my students aim to develop a belting technique that supports expression and vocal health, underlining its foundational role in their development. Concerns about vocal health often stem from belting's perceived loudness, as noted by singers themselves (LoVetri et al., 2024), and from the increased power and effort it requires—challenges for those without sustainable technique (Sundberg, Thalén, & Popeil, 2012).

Although prior research has focused largely on the physiological and acoustic aspects of belting, little attention has been paid to novice singers' subjective

experiences, particularly adult females (Roll, 2019). This study seeks to address that gap by exploring the lived experiences and perceptions of novice female singers (aged 18–40) engaged in belting and CCM. The focus on women reflects the demographics of my students. A qualitative approach was adopted, using open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews following structured singing sessions. Guided by a constructionist paradigm and interpretivist epistemology, the study is grounded in a relativist ontology and subjectivist understanding of knowledge (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012; Schwandt, 2000). Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used to analyse the data.

2.1. RESEARCH AIM

To explore how adult female novice singers perceive the experience of belting within the context of Contemporary Commercial Music (CCM), using reflexive thematic analysis.

2.2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- Conduct semi-structured belting sessions.
- Collect experiences and reflections via open-ended questionnaires and interviews.
- Identify common perceptions, challenges, and emotional responses.
- Analyse data using Reflexive Thematic Analysis.
- Triangulate findings with existing research (Burnard et al., 2008; Scott, 2022).

2.3. PERSONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Develop RTA and qualitative data collection.
- Apply ethical principles in insider research.
- Deepen understanding of belting's impact on novice singers.
- Reflect on and improve personal vocal teaching practices.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature search was conducted via the University's online portal and Google Scholar using keywords such as "belting," "Broadway belt," "singers' perception of belting," "vocal pedagogy," "contemporary commercial music," and "reflexive thematic analysis." Inclusion criteria focused on studies published since 2000 involving adult female singers and addressing perceptual, pedagogical, or physiological aspects of belting, to capture recent research developments. Studies on male singers, exclusively classical technique, or published before 2000, were excluded.

Over the past four decades, research has reframed belting as legitimate and safe (Edwin, 2007; McGlashan et al., 2017; LoVetri et al., 2024). This shift is credited to Jo Estill's scientific approach (Estill, 1988) and Jeanie LoVetri's formalisation of CCM pedagogy (LoVetri, 2002; Popeil, 2007; LoVetri et al., 2024).

A glossary of key terms used throughout this literature review is provided in Appendix 1.

3.1. PHYSIOLOGY AND ACOUSTICS OF BELTING

Studies by Edwin (2007), Roll (2016), and Popeil (2007) identify key features of belted vocal production: thickened vocal fold edges producing a metallic timbre, increased thyroarytenoid muscle tension, clapping-like vocal fold closure, a closed phase exceeding 50%, and elevated subglottal pressure supporting vocal intensity and projection. Additionally, a higher but flexible laryngeal position, jaw position, and extrinsic laryngeal muscle engagement affect resonance and timbre (Edwin, 2007; Popeil, 2007; Roll, 2016). Although there is some consensus on the physiological traits of belting, definitions remain varied and inconsistent across teaching and styles (Popeil, 2007; Roll, 2016; McGlashan, Thuesen, and Sadolin, 2017).

3.2. PERCEPTION OF BELTING

Despite advances in the physiological and acoustic analysis of belting (LeBorgne et al., 2010; Sundberg, Thalén, & Popeil, 2012), its perception from the singer's viewpoint remains under-researched and conceptually fragmented (Popeil, 2007; Bourne & Kenny, 2016; Maxfield & Manternach, 2018; Roll, 2019). Existing

perceptual studies indicate that understandings of belting are shaped by stylistic context, pedagogy, and individual experience (Popeil, 2007; Roll, 2019). However, much of this research privileges experienced raters such as pedagogues or external listeners, with limited attention to how belting is perceived and understood by singers, particularly novices.

This gap is especially apparent in perceptual and acoustic studies that, while insightful, are largely rooted in expert frameworks (LeBorgne et al., 2010; Bourne & Kenny, 2016; Maxfield & Manternach, 2018). Bourne and Kenny (2016, p. 128.e9) examined how expert international pedagogues define belting, commonly describing it as “loud,” “bright,” “emotionally intense,” “forward,” and “speech-like,” distinct from “legit” or “mix” qualities. However, terms like “chesty,” “twangy,” and “belt mix” also appeared, highlighting belting’s conceptual ambiguity (Bourne and Kenny, 2016, p. 128.e10). Similarly, Popeil (2007) emphasised belting’s dramaturgical function, arguing that vocal timbre conveys emotion and narrative beyond its measurable acoustic properties. These findings reveal a lack of consensus even among experts and underscore the socially and contextually situated nature of belting (Popeil, 2007; Bourne & Kenny, 2016). Yet, such studies remain grounded in pedagogical or listener-based models, often overlooking singers’ subjective, embodied experiences, particularly at early stages of development (Popeil, 2007; Bourne & Kenny, 2016).

LeBorgne et al. (2010) also relied on external evaluators—casting directors—to assess belt performances from first- and second-year students alongside professionals, using perceptual criteria such as vibrato, ring, loudness, and focus. While this study also included singers’ perspectives, they were limited. Participants agreed on the presence of vibrato in belting, though they differed on whether it resembled classical vibrato (p. 683). Opinions on nasality varied: some associated it with brightness, others regarded it as a perceptual artefact (p. 685). Judges and singers agreed that elite belters produce a more focused tone, typically described as “forward” and “bright,” though terms like “focus/clarity” were undefined and open to interpretation (p. 685). It remains to be seen whether such expert and singer perceptions align with the findings from this study. Despite including singer questionnaires, the study ultimately prioritised expert perception over embodied singer experience. Maxfield and Manternach (2018) included novice and

professional musical theatre singers, whose vocal samples were rated by casting directors on style and tone. While offering insight into expert evaluations of novice belting, the study does not explore novices' perceptions or experiences. Given the dominance of expert-led literature (LeBorgne et al., 2010; Bourne & Kenny, 2016; Maxfield & Manternach, 2018), the present study seeks to foreground the lived experience of novice adult female singers (Maxfield & Manternach, 2018; Roll, 2019), addressing a significant gap in the literature.

As the literature review functions as a method in this study, it was challenging to locate peer-reviewed sources that directly examine singers' perceptions of belting. Two studies by Christianne Roll (2016, 2019) offer valuable insights into how female musical theatre singers experience the technique. Roll (2016) focuses on novice adult singers, while Roll (2019) extends to seventeen professionally trained or conservatoire-level performers. Although both studies centre on high belting (D5–F5), they include broader reflections that resonate with the aims of the present research.

In both studies, singers consistently described belting as speech-like and intuitive. One participant stated, "When I do it, I just feel where I would say it in that range and that's where I put it" (Roll, 2016, p. 639.e6; Roll, 2019, p. 158). Another said, "It is just an elevated version of speech, so it is not screaming," highlighting speech as central to their understanding, irrespective of pitch (Roll, 2019, p. 158). It will be important to explore whether my own participants find speech-based exercises similarly effective for developing belting.

Forward resonance is also frequently cited as a key aspect of belting (LeBorgne et al., 2010; LoVetri et al., 2024). In LoVetri et al.'s (2024, p. 543.e17) retrospective analysis of their 2007 study, singers described belting as "brighter, more forward," while in 2019, many indicated they focused on "shape/resonance/placement" when belting. These responses suggest forward placement is a common part of singers' experiential vocabulary. Participants in Roll's (2019, p. 156) study also described a "correct placement" that felt forward. My study's coaching sessions included forward resonance exercises, offering a chance to explore whether this sense of placement supported the development of belt tone.

Roll's research further highlights the role of bodily engagement in belting. Singers reported the importance of abdominal effort in reducing throat tension. One participant reflected, "I was pushing, very hard. I got really tired [...] I realised clearly this is not a good system" (Roll, 2019, p. 159), demonstrating an awareness of how physical effort relates to vocal ease. I asked participants whether they noticed specific muscular engagement during belting to explore their bodily awareness and whether these findings align with Roll's.

Roll (2019) also found that belting was viewed as empowering and liberating when performed successfully, fostering pride and a stronger connection to vocal identity. This study likewise examines whether novice singers describe such experiences. Additionally, Roll's participants identified their teachers' input as essential to their development, with pedagogical suggestions offering redirection when difficulties arose. The process was described as co-constructed, with voice teachers guiding and students adapting techniques to suit their voices. This view of belting as a collaborative, teacher-guided process influenced my own approach: I employed Reflexive Thematic Analysis to interpret participants' experiences as co-produced, and my role in sessions involved real-time guidance to support vocal experimentation and adaptation.

In conclusion, Roll (2016, 2019) offers essential insights into singers' perceptions of belting that align with the present study's focus. By concentrating on the experiences of complete novices, this research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of belting from the perspective of those at the earliest stage of vocal development.

4. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a constructionist paradigm and employs Braun and Clarke's Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019, 2021, 2023). Within this paradigm, reality is understood as socially constructed through discourse and interaction, rather than objectively fixed (Scott, 2022). Aligned with the constructionist end of Braun and Clarke's epistemological continuum, the study views language as producing meaning rather than reflecting internal experience (Burr, 1995; Braun & Clarke, 2019, 2021). As Braun and Clarke (2019, 2021) stress, RTA foregrounds the researcher's active role in interpreting and constructing meaning from the data, making it particularly appropriate for exploring belting development, which Roll (2019) describes as a reciprocal process between student and teacher.

RTA was chosen for its theoretically flexible—though not atheoretical—approach to qualitative inquiry (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2021). It rejects purely descriptive methods and rigid coding procedures in favour of interpretative engagement and reflexivity, both of which Braun and Clarke (2019, 2021) identify as central to high-quality qualitative research.

Alternative qualitative approaches were excluded for practical and theoretical reasons. Ethnography required extended immersion, which was unfeasible (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019), while generic inquiry lacked the epistemological clarity needed for interpretive depth (Percy, Kostere & Kostere, 2015).

4.1. PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLING

A purposive and convenience sampling strategy was employed to recruit two adult novice female singers (aged 18–40) from the researcher's singing studio. The decision to work with only two participants was driven by time constraints rather than being an intention from the outset. The selection criteria comprised the following:

- The subject is at the novice stage in terms of proficiency in the belting technique.

- The subject has indicated a personal predilection for the vocal technique known as belting.
- The provision of availability for coaching sessions, questionnaires and interviews.

Despite its modest size, the sample size is consistent with qualitative research objectives that prioritise depth over breadth (Clarke and Braun, 2017).

4.2. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The data collection process encompassed a variety of methods, including:

Coaching Sessions:

The coaching sessions constituted the intervention, introducing belting techniques in a supportive environment. During these sessions, participants kept personal diaries to record their reflections and experiences. These were not analysed or coded but served as tools to support articulation in the subsequent open-ended questionnaire. Similarly, the researcher maintained a reflexive journal to document personal insights, which, although not coded, informed the interpretation of findings.

- Three vocal coaching sessions per participant focused on belting, delivered both in person and online to accommodate scheduling and participant preferences.
- Across all sessions, a variety of tools were used, including microphones for amplification, speakers, phones, and computers to facilitate clear communication and interaction.
- The sessions followed a semi-structured format, starting with pre-planned vocal exercises aimed at developing belting technique. The exercises selected are grounded in my professional experience as a vocal coach and further informed by various online instructional resources, alongside relevant literature on belting, especially Roll's studies (2016, 2019). A detailed description and presentation of the exercises are provided in Appendix 4. This was followed by a more flexible phase, where the participant chose and performed a song segment to apply and explore the techniques. No recordings were made.

Open-Ended Questionnaires:

Participants completed open-ended questionnaires following coaching sessions 1 and 2. These included guiding questions with space for written responses.

Participants were encouraged to reflect freely and in detail on aspects such as physical sensations during belting exercises, engagement of specific muscle groups, difficulties encountered, and factors supporting their confidence.

Semi-Structured Interviews:

Semi-structured interviews were conducted in person after the final coaching session. One took place three days later, the other after one week. Interviews were audio-recorded and manually transcribed. Pre-planned questions explored participants' belting experiences, focusing on helpful exercises, technique adjustments, comfort levels, and overall vocal performance.

4.3. DATA ANALYSIS

The present study employed Braun and Clarke's six-phase model of reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019; Byrne, 2022), comprising familiarisation with the data, systematic coding, theme generation, theme review, theme refinement and naming, and report writing (Braun & Clarke, 2021, p. 331). Reflexive Thematic Analysis was applied to data from open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

Familiarisation was undertaken by the researcher, who transcribed the interviews using an automated function in the Voice Memos app, followed by detailed manual correction and repeated listening. Questionnaire data were read multiple times. OpenAI was used to improve grammar and clarity while preserving participants' original language and intent.

The researcher conducted coding manually using Taguette (see Appendices 2 and 3), ensuring sustained engagement with the dataset (Byrne, 2022). To support reflexivity and check for overlooked codes, OpenAI was subsequently used to code the same dataset. These AI-generated codes were carefully reviewed, with final decisions grounded in the researcher's interpretation.

Each data source (interviews and questionnaires) was initially coded separately to ensure method-specific insights were captured. However, themes were developed across the entire dataset, with all codes analysed collectively to identify overarching patterns in response to the research question (Byrne, 2022). These were reviewed and refined using Braun and Clarke's (2012, p. 65) guiding questions, which assist in assessing the depth, coherence, and meaningfulness of each theme within the overall dataset.

4.4. INSIDER RESEARCH AND REFLEXIVITY

As both a vocal coach and a researcher, I adopted an insider researcher position, which afforded credibility and a deep understanding of vocal technique, pedagogy, and participant challenges (Mercer, 2007; Tracy, 2010).

This status also introduced ethical and methodological challenges related to potential bias and influence (Scott, 2022).

To mitigate these risks, I practised reflexivity by:

- Maintaining a reflexive journal documenting impressions, feelings, and decision-making throughout data collection and analysis (Scott, 2022).
- Using open-ended questioning and avoiding leading teaching language to minimise undue influence or suggestive prompts (Patton, 2014).
- Engaging in regular supervision and peer debriefing to reflect critically on interpretative choices and positionality (Nowell et al., 2017; Scott, 2022).

4.5. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The project received ethical approval from the UWTSD ethics committee and adhered to key principles: informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation (Coghlan, 2007; Scott, 2022). Given the researcher's dual role as vocal coach, ethical risks were mitigated through the following strategies:

- Power dynamics: Participants were assured that involvement was voluntary and would not affect their coaching or academic standing (BERA, 2024).

- Bias and social desirability: Open-ended questions encouraged honest responses, with reflexivity used to monitor researcher influence (Braun & Clarke, 2021).
- Emotional distress: A supportive environment was maintained; participants could skip questions or withdraw anytime (BERA, 2024).
- Physical discomfort: Participants were advised to stop if in pain, with no pressure to continue.
- Confidentiality and data security: Pseudonyms protected anonymity; data were stored securely, and recordings were deleted post-transcription, per the UK Data Protection Act 2018.

A reflexive journal tracked assumptions, emotional responses, and positionality, enhancing transparency and analytical rigour (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Nowell et al., 2017).

5. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

This study's data were collected through open-ended questionnaires and interviews. Each data source was coded separately (see Appendices Two and Three for the coded documents). Rather than developing separate thematic structures for each method, themes were generated across the full dataset. In line with the flexible nature of reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019), data from interviews and questionnaires were analysed as a single dataset to develop themes. This approach aimed to identify overarching themes that reflected shared meanings among all participants (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Five interpretive themes were developed through RTA, supported by verbatim participant quotes and triangulated with the literature:

- Redefining Belting as a Release
- The Role of Speech and Guided Imagery in Making Belting Exercises More Accessible and Familiar for Novice Singers
- Embodied Awareness in Belting: Exploring Vocal Resonance, Register, Placement, and Support
- Developing Confidence in Belting Through a Gradual Process of Vocal Training and Vocal Coach Support
- Belting as an Instrument of Emotional Expression and Storytelling

A glossary of key terms used throughout this literature review is provided in Appendix 1.

Theme 1: Redefining Belting as a Release

This theme signifies a meaningful redefinition of belting, aligning with the changing view in vocal pedagogy that no longer considers it a strained or harmful technique (Edwin, 2007; McGlashan, Thuesen & Sadolin, 2017; LoVetri et al., 2024). The results of this study support this change, showing that participants' understanding of belting shifted from one of force to one of release.

Participants indicated a noticeable change from their original view that belting was associated with effort or pain. Participant 1 reflected that she initially thought of feeling tense, but instead: *"it felt like a release. But a powerful release"*. Following

the exercises, this shift contrasted with her earlier assumption: “*I always thought, ‘Oh, I think that should hurt.’ And it never hurt [...] I really felt belting is pushing, and now I know that belting is letting go*”. Similarly, Participant 2 stated: “*I learned to let the sound out and not be hesitant and to not to push it but just freely let the sound out*”. These reflections echo Roll’s (2019) findings, in which singers described belting as a freeing and empowering experience when performed correctly. For example, Singer 10 noted: “It feels really good. I feel like I am completely free” (Roll, 2019, p. 159).

Although this redefinition was shaped through a process, vocal practice and support—explored further in Theme 4—the present theme focuses on how participants reconceptualised belting. Participant 2 described this realisation: “*The exercises in the beginning helped me a lot to go on the journey of letting the sound out and to not hold back with my voice*”. Participant 1 similarly highlighted the psychological dimension of letting go, which extends beyond mere physical release. Belting is something you have: “*to first get comfortable with: to just let go. It doesn’t have to do with your voice or your muscles or anything [...] just feel confident to let go*”. This finding aligns more cautiously with Popeil’s (2007) analysis of belting as a multifaceted practice, shaped by a range of physiological, stylistic, and pedagogical variables. Participant 1 emphasises the psychological aspect of ‘letting go’ in their approach, while Popeil’s work highlights the complex nature of belting as a technique that defies a single definition and necessitates flexibility in various contexts.

Participants in this study viewed belting not as physical effort but as an expressive release grounded in trust and guided development. This aligns with Roll’s (2016; 2019) description of belting as an intuitive and freeing act and supports the study’s view of belting as an emerging, empowering technique marked by liberation and expressive power.

Theme 2: The Role of Speech and Guided Imagery in Making Belting Exercises More Accessible and Familiar for Novice Singers

Subthemes encompass the utilisation of familiar speech-based exercises within belting training, as well as the influence of metaphorical and spatial imagery in the development of belting techniques.

Participants consistently emphasised the significance of familiar, speech-based exercises in enhancing their belting voice. During coaching sessions, I incorporated speech and shout-like exercises such as “HEY MUM”, “THAT’S MINE,” AND “HEY, TAXI”, which were perceived as accessible entry points into a previously unfamiliar vocal technique. Participant 1 reflected: *“It really helps because it’s a sentence that you know, and it’s like recalling something.”* She added that it *“helps you to get in that place to let out the tone [...] that you need for belting – that I may not be so familiar with”*. In her questionnaire, Participant 1 further noted that these exercises were helpful because they used *“kind of speaking voice that I’m confident in using”* and she explained how exploring these sounds first gave her the confidence *“that they are doable and gave me a vision that I could use the seemingly normal sounds for singing”*.

Participant 2 similarly described how *“Then we did the exercise “HEY MUM”, where you do not have to be hesitant or push it, but just freely let the sound out”*. These responses suggest that incorporating familiar speech patterns into vocal exercises encourages novice singers to adopt a more confident and technically secure approach to belting.

This connection between speech and belt technique is echoed in existing literature. Roll (2019, p. 159) found that singers described belt as *“an elevated version of speech so it is not screaming”*, while Roll (2016) documents how master teachers incorporated speech-like elements into belt exercises. Similarly, LeBorgne et al. (2010) argue that effective belting is closely related to the functional use of the speaking voice. LoVetri et al. (2024, p. 543.e16) report that participants in their study—professional belters—consistently described belting as an intensified form

of speech, often referring to it as “supported yelling or calling” and “singing with a speech-like quality above normal speaking range”.

Participants also described imagery as integral to their vocal development, often interwoven with the speech-based exercises. As a practitioner-researcher, I intentionally incorporated metaphor and guided imagery into these exercises to support technical development and encourage a more practical approach to belting. Participant 2 explained: “And the ‘Hey taxi’ always helped me [...] *to let it out, like ‘Okay, there is someone in the distance’*”. She added “*Just to tell, like a picture — that really helped me. I think you have a picture where the sound has to go — how loud, how open, how free*”. She also recalled metaphorical imagery used by the vocal coach, such as the sound being “*like a hammer*,” which helped her produce a tone more aligned with the intended vocal quality. Participant 1 similarly noted that “there are exercises that help you [...] with visualising stuff [...] really gave me confidence”. These comments illustrate how spatial and metaphorical imagery offered participants a structured and intuitive means of exploring, shaping, and refining their belting production.

De Lillis (2021) positions imagery as a historical tool in vocal pedagogy to compensate for the invisibility of the vocal mechanism, but warns that it must be grounded in scientific knowledge and shared understanding to avoid confusion. In this study, participants found imagery not only clear but also technically supportive. These findings align with DeSantis, Deck, and Hall (2021), who argue that singers use metaphor and spatial imagery to clarify technique, build confidence, and shape expression. Brown (2023) further advocates for a pedagogical balance between scientific explanation and intuitive imagery, suggesting that the latter, when grounded in anatomical knowledge, acts as a “lens” that connects empirical concepts with embodied experience.

Overall, the integration of familiar speech patterns and informed imagery enabled participants to approach belting with confidence, clarity, and expressive intent, thus offering a connection to the familiar.

Theme 3: Embodied Awareness in Belting: Exploring Vocal Resonance and Register, Placement, and Support

This theme consists of three subthemes: developing register awareness and coordination, increasing perceptual awareness of vocal placement and resonance, and the role of support and abdominal engagement in belting.

Participants reported increased awareness of vocal registers and physical sensations during belting practice, with targeted exercises—focusing on forward placement, head voice development, and abdominal engagement—designed to enhance perceptual awareness and bodily control for improved vocal function and sustainability.

Physical sensations were a recurring aspect of participants' experiences with belting and were explicitly explored through direct questions in the questionnaires. Participant 1 noted feeling *"the muscles I use for support (abdominals and back muscles)."* She also felt *"muscles in my face, like my cheeks"* during forward placement exercises. Participant 2 similarly noted: *"In the 'HIIHI' exercise I felt the muscles in my chest and abs. In the 'WE' exercise, I felt like I was using muscles back in my throat"*. These responses confirm the somatic nature of belting and align with literature that highlights the importance of breath support in vocal performance (Roll, 2019; Bourne & Kenny, 2016; LoVetri & Weekly, 2003; Lovetri et al., 2024). Roll's (2019) observation that belters often depend on abdominal support to avoid laryngeal tension. Bourne and Kenny (2016) likewise found that most teachers explicitly taught abdominal breathing for belting. LoVetri & Weekly (2003) reported that the majority of singing teachers—both classical and contemporary—advocated for low belly support, while Lovetri et al. (2024, p. 543.e17) reaffirmed that singers perceived belting to be "dependent on strong support."

The establishment of awareness was identified as a pivotal area of development. Participant 1 reflected that *"at the start it was very difficult. I didn't even notice much when I was switching between the chest and the head,"* and later added that, with training and guidance *"you helped me to feel the difference"*. Participant 2 experienced similar challenges: *"While singing the song I felt it difficult to switch the chest-, mixed, or head voice. It feels like the switch isn't very natural yet"*. Although

participants were at the early stages of this process, It can be concluded that training the head register contributed significantly to participants' improved register coordination, in line with Roll's (2016) study, in which master teachers were observed to employ exercises aimed at developing their students' head voice for developing belting, particularly in the higher range.

Forward resonance was cultivated through nasal and childlike sounds such as "NYAE." Participant 1 explained: *"It really helped me to visualise like this part of the head – everything up from the nose – and it really helped me to do the higher tones and tunes"*. Participant 2 echoed this: *"The 'NYAE, NYAE' exercise was engaging all the face muscles and the sound could really be felt"*. These exercises supported participants' awareness of resonance and aligned with Roll's (2019) findings, which emphasise the importance of forward placement in achieving a sustainable belt. The "NYAE" sound, produced through forward resonance and sung on a pitch pattern, was inspired by Roll's (2016) observations.

The integration of head voice exercises—consistent with the approaches recommended by Roll (2016, 2019)—alongside register and resonance training contributed to participants' technical development and vocal awareness. Additionally, guided instruction and targeted abdominal support exercises played a key role in facilitating sustainable belting and building vocal confidence.

Theme 4: Developing Confidence in Belting Through a Gradual Process of Vocal Training and Vocal Coach Support

This theme comprises the following subthemes: building confidence through vocal training, auditory modelling and the significance of vocal coach guidance and encouragement in developing belting.

Participants explained that developing confidence in belting occurred gradually through training, guided exercises, and auditory modelling. As Participant 1 reflected, *"You kind of trust yourself to hit a bump [...] you'll go there"*. This aligns with Roll's (2016, 2019) emphasis on the collaborative and adaptive nature of belting pedagogy, where teacher feedback and student experimentation play central roles in vocal development.

The findings of this study indicated that preparatory exercises played a pivotal role in facilitating progress. Participant 1 explained, "*Doing the exercises first really helps [...] by doing them over and over again, I get confidence I can produce these sounds later on*". Similarly, Participant 2 noted, "*but overall I think it helped me — 'Oh, I can sing high, actually. I can [...] It needs training, yes. I just have to have training'*". This gradual training process aligns with Edwin's (2007) emphasis on the importance of systematic practice to develop muscular coordination and vocal control necessary for healthy belting.

The findings of the present study indicate a positive correlation between auditory model use and learning. Participant 2 remarked, "*It really helped me to hear how Gloria makes the sounds and then try to get the same sound. When I got it, she told me right away.*" Participants also attributed their progress to the vocal coach's prompts and encouragement. Participant 1 noted, "*It really helps when someone is encouraging—not always pushing [...] just getting encouraged helps you let go.*" Similarly, Participant 2 shared, "*Gloria encouraged me to let it all out [...] to not be afraid and to move as well.*" Specific feedback, such as vocal placement cues and reminders to avoid pushing, was cited as particularly effective: "*When you told me' [...] 'don't push' [...] that helped me get a clearer tone*", said Participant 1. These findings align with Roll's (2019, p. 156) observation that students benefited from coach prompts such as "just say this sentence," which helped them access belting with greater ease. Novice singers often enter the learning process with uncertainty about their vocal ability and limited bodily awareness, making the teacher's role as guide and encourager particularly significant (Roll, 2016, 2019).

The participants' focus on trusting the process, learning from mistakes, and gradually building awareness highlights a pedagogical approach based on supportive and embodied learning. Roll (2016) similarly describes belting development as a collaborative process, involving guidance from the teacher and responsive experimentation by the singer. These findings confirm that vocal confidence and technique in novice belters develop not through sudden breakthroughs but through supported exploration.

Theme 5: Belting as an Instrument of Emotional Expression and Storytelling

This theme explores the expressive, artistic, and dramaturgical dimensions of belting, well-documented in the voice pedagogy literature and discussed by Popeil (2007), LeBorgne et al. (2010), and Bourne and Kenny (2016). Two sub-themes emerged: Belting as a Means of Emotional Expression and The Role of Belting in Storytelling and Performance Impact.

Participants described belting as a powerful tool for emotional communication.

Participant 1 noted, “I think is a good tool because you can express power with it [...] you’re reaching for something. You want to make a statement [...] building up to a climax.” Participant 2 similarly reflected, “*Belting is full of emotions [...] it expresses the sadness of the text or the emotions in a beautiful and expressive way.*” These experiences support Popeil’s (2007) claim that belting timbre is not merely acoustic, but conveys emotional and narrative intensity.

Adding to this, Bourne and Kenny’s (2016) insight that belting is not a static sound but a flexible, stylistically and emotionally nuanced tool resonates with Participant 2’s observation: “*Belting can transport feelings like energy, hurt, joy, and emotional distress, and helps to still sound strong.*” This highlights belting as not only a vocal technique but an embodied, subjective experience deeply intertwined with emotional expression.

LeBorgne et al. (2010) also highlight belting’s emotional function in music theatre. Participant 1 reinforced this by stating, “*The emotions I think of when I belt are strong ones. Emotions you can build something up and I can see it giving a great dynamic to songs*”

Significantly, this study builds upon previous research by focusing on novice singers, thereby illustrating how emotional expressiveness through belting can manifest even in the early stages of learning. Their insights reveal that belting plays a crucial role in shaping vocal identity and fostering performance confidence, thereby highlighting its artistic significance beyond that of mere technical mastery.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study explored how novice adult female singers perceive belting, addressing a gap where most research focuses on acoustic or physiological aspects and trained voices (LeBorgne et al., 2010; Roll, 2016; Maxfield & Manternach, 2018).

OpenAI, DeepL and Grammarly were used as supportive tools for translation, correction and structuring in the production of this report. They were also used for summarisation and to enhance comprehension of the literature.

The reflexive thematic analysis revealed five key themes:

- Redefining Belting as a Release
- The Role of Speech and Guided Imagery in Making Belting Exercises More Accessible and Familiar for Novice Singers
- Embodied Awareness in Belting: Exploring Vocal Resonance, Register, Placement, and Support
- Developing Confidence in Belting Through a Gradual Process of Vocal Training and Vocal Coach Support
- Belting as an Instrument of Emotional Expression and Storytelling

These themes collectively demonstrate that belting, for singers, is not only a technical activity but a deeply embodied, emotional, and psychological process (Roll, 2019). The findings show that belting requires time, practice, and tailored guidance, with participants identifying speech-based phrases, imagery, and modelling as crucial to developing freedom and confidence in belting (Roll, 2016; LoVetri et al., 2024).

This study offers new insights by focusing on novice female singers rather than professionals, emphasising the pedagogical value of speech-like phrases and visualisation to aid technique, reinforcing the need for supportive, scaffolded teaching for beginners (Roll, 2016; Popeil, 2007), and addressing the gap in understanding novices' perceptions and development of belting in studio contexts (Maxfield & Manternach, 2018).

These findings have refined my pedagogical approach. Student insights confirmed that speech-based phrases and targeted exercises help novices explore belting

safely and without strain. Training, auditory modelling, and encouragement are vital in shifting perceptions from fear or pain to release and control.

The findings suggest that:

- Teachers should employ speech-like prompts, visual metaphors, and demonstrate belt qualities.
- A supportive, low-pressure environment fosters student confidence.
- Vocal health is maintained when students are guided to feel rather than force their belt.

Strengths of this study include multi-modal data collection and Reflexive Thematic Analysis, allowing nuanced interpretation within a constructionist framework (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2018), supported by the researcher's insider status (Dwyer & Buckle, 2019). Limitations involve a small purposive sample (Smith & McGannon, 2018), focus on novices, limited academic experience (Cousin, 2009), and time constraints.

Future research could build on this by involving larger, more diverse novice samples, comparing novice and intermediate experiences, and further exploring emotion and identity in belting development.

My personal learning outcomes included developing skills in reflexive thematic analysis and qualitative data collection, applying ethical principles in insider research, deepening understanding of belting's impact on novices, and reflecting on vocal teaching practice.

This study provided practical experience with qualitative methods and heightened my awareness of ethical responsibilities as an insider researcher. Listening to novices enhanced my understanding of belting's challenges and perceptions, inspiring a more learner-centred, supportive teaching approach. I now appreciate the importance of integrating voice pedagogy with scientific knowledge to promote sustainable singing and belting.

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8. APPENDIX ONE (GLOSSARY)

- Abdominal engagement:
Abdominal engagement refers to the activation of the abdominal muscles to support controlled airflow during singing. It helps stabilise the breath and contributes to vocal power and stamina.
- Belt mix: A vocal technique combining characteristics of both chest (belt) and head (mix) registers.
- Breath support:
Breath support is the coordinated use of the diaphragm, intercostal, and abdominal muscles to manage airflow and pressure while singing. It enables sustained, steady, and controlled vocal tone without strain.
- Bright:
Acoustic descriptor for voices with enhanced high-frequency harmonic energy, conveying clarity and brilliance.
- Chesty:
A chest-dominant phonation with strong TA engagement, high subglottal pressure, limited vibrato, and elevated larynx—characteristic of traditional musical theatre belt.
- Forward placement:
Forward placement is the sensation of resonance focused in the front vocal tract and facial bones, helping the voice project clearly and powerfully without strain.
- Head voice:
Head voice is a vocal register typically used for higher pitches, where the sound resonates more in the head or sinus area. It involves lighter vocal fold closure

than chest voice and is often used in classical and contemporary singing.

- High belt:

Extending belt technique into high register (e.g., D5–F5); requires resonance adjustments and partial head mix to avoid strain while retaining power.

- Laryngeal position:

The vertical height of the voice box, which naturally rises and lowers with pitch.

- Legit:

Legit singing refers to a style rooted in classical singing, characterized by a pure, clear sound with a focus on legato phrasing and vibrato. For high voices, this often entails a head-dominant, lofty tone, while for lower voices this means more robust sounds with rounded vowels.

- Loudness:

In acoustics, loudness is the subjective perception of sound pressure. More formally, it is defined as the "attribute of auditory sensation in terms of which sounds can be ordered on a scale extending from quiet to loud.

- Metallic timbre:

An acoustic voice quality with elevated F2–F4 formants, produced via increased pharyngeal and velopharyngeal resonance, yielding a bright, intense sound.

- Mix:

A balanced blend of chest (TA) and head (CT) mechanisms, used to achieve smooth transitions, consistent tone, and reduced vocal strain in the mid-to-upper range.

- Ring:

The 'ring' is the bright, penetrating vocal quality produced by a prominent

spectral peak (the singer's formant) in the region of approximately 2 to 3 kHz.

- Sound pressure level:

Sound pressure level is a physical measurement of sound intensity. It tells us how loud a sound is, in decibels (dB).

- Speech-like:

These terms refer to maintaining the natural, unforced quality of speech while singing — common in contemporary commercial music (CCM).

- Subglottal pressure:

The air pressure beneath the vocal folds generated by the respiratory system; key driver of vocal intensity and loudness.

- Thyroarytenoid muscle:

Intrinsic laryngeal muscle forming the body layer of the vocal folds; shortens and stiffens them, regulating medial compression and pitch, especially in chest phonation.

- Timbre:

In singing, timbre refers to the unique tonal quality or "colour" of a singer's voice, distinguishing it from other voices, even when singing the same note.

- Twangy belt:

Twangy belt combines the brightness and resonance of twang with the strength and power of belting. Twang is created by narrowing the aryepiglottic space; produces a bright, focused resonance.

- Vibrato:

A regular oscillation of pitch (~5–7 Hz) and amplitude during sustained phonation; used to add expression to vocal and instrumental music.

- Vocal fold edges:
The visible margin of each vocal fold; should be smooth, straight and exhibit a mucosal wave for healthy phonation.
- Vocal intensity:
Vocal intensity is defined as the amount of acoustic energy produced by the vocal cords, typically measured in decibels (dB).
- Vocal placement:
Vocal placement refers to the singer's perception and control of where the voice's resonance is felt within the vocal tract—commonly in areas such as the mouth, nasal cavity, and sinuses.
- Vocal projection:
Vocal projection refers to the ability to produce a clear, strong, and resonant voice that the audience can hear without straining.
- Vocal register:
A vocal register refers to a specific range of pitches produced by a distinct vibratory pattern of the vocal folds. Common registers include modal (chest) voice, head voice, falsetto, vocal fry, and whistle register.
- Vocal resonance:
Vocal resonance may be defined as the process by which the basic product of phonation is enhanced in timbre and/or intensity by the air-filled cavities through which it passes on its way to the outside air.

9. APPENDIX TWO (OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRES CODED)

PARTICIPANT 1 – COACHING 1:

1. WHAT PHYSICAL SENSATIONS DID YOU NOTICE IN YOUR BODY AS YOU PERFORMED THE BELTING EXERCISES?

I EXPECTED TO FEEL TENSE

, BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT I'D FEEL WHEN I THOUGHT ABOUT BELTING. BUT INSTEAD OF FEELING TENSE, IT FELT LIKE A RELEASE. BUT A POWERFUL RELEASE. IN PARTICULAR, THE EXERCISES WHERE I HAD TO MAKE SOUNDS AND NOISES IN A 'SORT OF SPEAKING VOICE' FELT LIKE A RELEASE.

[BELTING, INITIALLY ASSOCIATED WITH STRAIN/PAIN, WAS REEXPERIENCED AS A FORM OF RELEASE THROUGH EXPERIENCE, VOCAL COACH GUIDANCE, PRACTICAL EXERCISES, AND VISUALISATION TECHNIQUES].

[USE OF SPEECH QUALITY HELPS INITIATE AND PRODUCE BELT WITHOUT STRAIN].

2. DID YOU FEEL ANY PARTICULAR ENGAGEMENT OF ANY MUSCLES IN YOUR BODY?

OF COURSE I FELT THE MUSCLES I USE FOR SUPPORT (ABDOMINALS AND BACK MUSCLES). BUT BECAUSE WE WERE MAKING SOME SOUNDS THAT WERE SUPPOSED TO SOUND A BIT 'WEIRD' OR NASAL, I USED SOME MUSCLES IN MY FACE, LIKE MY CHEEKS.

[NASAL EXERCISES WITH CHILDLIKE SOUNDS LIKE 'NYAE' HELP BECAUSE THEY ARE FAMILIAR AND EASY TO VISUALISE, MAKING IT EASIER TO PLACE THE SOUND FORWARD AND FEEL THE VIBRATION] [BREATH SUPPORT ENGAGEMENT THROUGH ABDOMINAL AND BACK MUSCLE ACTIVATION SUPPORTS STABLE BELTING PRODUCTION].

3. HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY DIFFICULTIES BELTING TODAY?

SOMETHING I FOUND CHALLENGING WAS MANAGING THE AIRFLOW. I THINK IT'S BECAUSE I IMAGINE IN MY HEAD THAT I NEED A LOT OF AIR TO BELT. I THINK I'M OVERTHINKING IT, BECAUSE AFTERWARDS, PRODUCING THE BELTING SOUND ITSELF FELT LIKE A RELEASE AND SHOWED ME THAT I NEED A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF RELAXATION TO MAKE SURE I CAN BELT TO THE END OF THE SENTENCE.

[OVERTHINKING AIRFLOW HINDERS BELTING; RELAXATION ENABLES NATURAL BREATH FLOW].

4. CAN YOU DESCRIBE ANYTHING THAT HELPED YOU FEEL MORE CONFIDENT WHILE BELTING TODAY?

THE EXERCISES WE DID BEFORE SINGING THE SONG AT THE END REALLY HELPED ME. I THINK BECAUSE SOME OF THEM WERE IN A 'KIND OF SPEAKING VOICE' THAT I'M CONFIDENT IN USING. AND ALSO BECAUSE THEY ARE KIND OF FUNNY SOUNDS, BUT THEY ARE POWERFUL SOUNDS. IT HELPED ME TO EXPLORE THESE SOUNDS FIRST AND EXPERIENCE THAT THEY ARE DOABLE AND GAVE ME A VISION THAT I COULD USE THE SEEMINGLY NORMAL SOUNDS FOR SINGING.

[USE OF SPEECH QUALITY HELPS INITIATE AND PRODUCE BELT WITHOUT STRAIN]
[PREPARATORY BELTING EXERCISES SERVE AS FOUNDATIONAL STEPS TOWARDS DEVELOPING COMFORT AND CONTROL IN BELTING TECHNIQUE].

5. HOW DO YOU FEEL THAT BELTING PLAYS A ROLE IN EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION OF SINGING, IF AT ALL?

I THINK IT IS A GOOD TOOL BECAUSE YOU CAN EXPRESS POWER WITH IT. LIKE YOU'RE SENDING SOMETHING AWAY, YOU'RE REACHING FOR SOMETHING. YOU WANT TO MAKE A STATEMENT. THE EMOTIONS I THINK

OF WHEN I BELT ARE STRONG ONES. EMOTIONS YOU CAN BUILD SOMETHING UP AND I CAN SEE IT GIVING A GREAT DYNAMIC TO SONGS IF YOU START SMALL AND BUILD UP TO BELTING TO BUILD UP TO A CLIMAX.

[BELTING PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN CONVEYING EMOTIONAL CLIMAXES AND ADDS TO THE DYNAMIC EXPRESSIVENESS OF A PERFORMANCE.] [SHOUT-LIKE AND SPEECH-BASED EXERCISES CONNECT BELTING IN FAMILIARITY, MAKING IT FEEL MORE EFFORTLESS, ACCESSIBLE AND POWERFUL PRODUCTION]

PARTICIPANT 1 – COACHING 2:

1. WHAT PHYSICAL SENSATIONS DID YOU NOTICE IN YOUR BODY AS YOU PERFORMED THE BELTING EXERCISES?

IT WAS GOOD TO START WITH THE 'HIHIHI' EXERCISE BECAUSE IT IS INSTANTLY ACTIVATING MY MUSCLES IN THE CHEST. I WOULD DESCRIBE IT AS FEELING HOW MY MUSCLES ARE 'WAKING UP' THERE AND EVEN KIND OF PROTESTING, BECAUSE THEY FEEL THEY NEED TO GET READY TO SUPPORT LIKE IN A WORK OUT.

[WARM-UP EXERCISES ACTIVATE SUPPORT MUSCLES AND ENCOURAGE VOCAL PREPAREDNESS]

[BREATH SUPPORT ENGAGEMENT THROUGH ABDOMINAL AND BACK MUSCLE ACTIVATION SUPPORTS STABLE BELTING PRODUCTION]

[PREPARATORY BELTING EXERCISES SERVE AS FOUNDATIONAL STEPS TOWARDS DEVELOPING COMFORT AND CONTROL IN BELTING TECHNIQUE].

WHEN I WAS DOING EXERCISES WITH THE HEAD-VOICE IT FELT LIKE I HAD TO PUSH THE AIR AND MY VOICE UPWARDS. I EVEN VISUALIZED IT HOW I PUSHED IT UP TO THE PART WHERE MY NOSE AND EYES ARE

[REGISTER AWARENESS EXERCISES: FEELING VOCAL VIBRATIONS HELPS IDENTIFY REGISTERS AND SUPPORTS BELTING WITHIN THE CHOSEN REGISTER]
[HOW VISUALISATION AND MENTAL IMAGERY FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF POWERFUL, FREE, AND CONTROLLED BELTING] [TRAINING THE HEAD VOICE SEPARATELY SUPPORTS REGISTER BALANCE AND VOCAL RANGE EXPANSION FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE BELT MIX].

2. DID YOU FEEL ANY PARTICULAR ENGAGEMENT OF ANY MUSCLES IN YOUR BODY?

IN THE 'HIHIHI' EXERCISE I FELT THE MUSCLES IN MY CHEST AND ABS.

IN THE 'WE' EXERCISE, I FELT LIKE I WAS USING MUSCLES BACK IN MY THROAT.

[WARM-UP EXERCISES ACTIVATE SUPPORT MUSCLES AND ENCOURAGE VOCAL PREPAREDNESS]

[CERTAIN HEAD VOICE EXERCISES MADE IT EASIER TO SENSE WHERE THE SOUND WAS PLACED AND HOW THE PARTICIPANT WAS USING THE VOICE.]

[REGISTER AWARENESS EXERCISES: FEELING VOCAL VIBRATIONS HELPS IDENTIFY REGISTERS AND SUPPORTS BELTING WITHIN THE CHOSEN REGISTER]

3. HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY DIFFICULTIES BELTING TODAY?

YES, WHILE SINGING THE SONG I FELT IT DIFFICULT TO SWITCH THE CHEST-, MIXED, OR HEAD VOICE. IT FEELS LIKE THE SWITCHES ISN'T VERY NATURAL YET, AND IT IS THEREFORE MORE DIFFICULT TO PUSH THE TUNE RIGHT FROM THE START.

[PARTICIPANTS DESCRIBE CONFUSION OVER REGISTER COORDINATION BUT GAIN CLARITY WITH VOCAL COACH PROMPTS]

IN THE 'HEY MUM' EXERCISE I HAD THE DIFFICULTY IN, WHEN I WENT HIGHER, TO MAKE THE 'H' FROM HEY STRONG FROM THE START ON. I REALLY HAD TO FOCUS ON MAKING IT STRONG EVERY TIME.

AND IT WAS THE SAME WITH, 'THAT'S MINE'. I HAVE TO BE READY TO PUSH OUT THE STRONG TUNE FROM THE START.

4. CAN YOU DESCRIBE ANYTHING THAT HELPED YOU FEEL MORE CONFIDENT WHILE BELTING TODAY?

DOING THE EXERCISES FIRST REALLY HELPS. IT REALLY HELPS ME TO GET TO KNOW HOW IT SHOULD FEEL IN MY THROAT. BY DOING THEM OVER AND OVER AGAIN, I GET CONFIDENCE THAT I CAN PRODUCE THESE SOUNDS LATER ON IN THE SONG. *[CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE] [PREPARATORY BELTING EXERCISES SERVE AS FOUNDATIONAL STEPS TOWARDS DEVELOPING COMFORT AND CONTROL IN BELTING TECHNIQUE].*

I JUST HAVE TO CONNECT ALL THE EXERCISES AND SOUNDS. AND IT REALLY HELPED ME TO HEAR HOW GLORIA MAKES THE SOUNDS AND THEN TRY TO GET THE SAME SOUND. AND WHEN I GOT IT, SHE TOLD ME RIGHT AWAY AND THAT HELPS TO GET CONFIDENT TOO.

[PREPARATORY BELTING EXERCISES SERVE AS FOUNDATIONAL STEPS TOWARDS DEVELOPING COMFORT AND CONTROL IN BELTING TECHNIQUE].

[AUDITORY MODELLING SUPPORTS VOCAL LEARNING THROUGH IMITATION AND REFINEMENT].

5. HOW DO YOU FEEL THAT BELTING PLAYS A ROLE IN EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION OF SINGING, IF AT ALL?

LIKE I WROTE THE FIRST TIME. I REALIZE EVEN MORE HOW BELTING IS AN INSTRUMENT TO PLAY OUT A STORY IN A SONG, USING BELTING TO SUPPORT CLIMAXES, OR EMPHASIZE SOMETHING BECAUSE IT IS A CLEAR SOUND. REALLY LIKE YOU ARE SPEAKING UP IN PUBLIC AND WANT TO

TELL SOMETHING THAT PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW. SO I THINK YOU CAN REALLY USE IT TO SET FOCUS ON A CERTAIN TEXT.

[BELTING PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN CONVEYING EMOTIONAL CLIMAXES AND ADDS TO THE DYNAMIC EXPRESSIVENESS OF A PERFORMANCE].

PARTICIPANT 2 – COACHING 1:

1. WHAT PHYSICAL SENSATIONS DID YOU NOTICE IN YOUR BODY AS YOU PERFORMED THE BELTING EXERCISES?

AFTER THE LIP ROLLS MY LIPS FELT MOVEABLE AND A LITTLE BIT NUMB. MY VOCAL CHORDS OR THROAT FELT WARM AND SMOOTH; I FELT MY BELLY MUSCLES A LITTLE BIT.

[WARM-UP EXERCISES ACTIVATE SUPPORT MUSCLES AND ENCOURAGE VOCAL PREPAREDNESS]

WITH THE 'UII'-EXERCISE I FELT THE SOUND ABOVE MY THROAT IN THE BACK OF MY HEAD AND SMILING HELPED TO REACH THE HIGHER NOTES. *[REGISTER AWARENESS EXERCISES: FEELING VOCAL VIBRATIONS HELPS IDENTIFY REGISTERS AND SUPPORTS BELTING WITHIN THE CHOSEN REGISTER]*

IN THE THROAT I FELT A LITTLE BIT OF TENSION.

[AWARENESS OF TENSION HELPS INFORM TECHNICAL ADJUSTMENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE BELTING]

THE EXERCISE WITH 'NANANA' AND 'HEY' WAS VERY GOOD EXPLAINED SO I FELT REALLY GOOD DURING THE EXERCISE I FELT HOW EVERYTHING CAME FROM THE FRONT OF MY MOUTH AND FACE AND SO KNEW WHAT DIFFERENCE IT'S MAKING IN COMPARISON TO NON-BELTING. *[HOW VISUALISATION AND MENTAL IMAGERY FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF POWERFUL, FREE, AND CONTROLLED BELTING]*

IN THE VOCAL CHORDS/THROAT I FELT A BIT OF TENSION.

[AWARENESS OF TENSION HELPS INFORM TECHNICAL ADJUSTMENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE BELTING]

THE LIPS WERE MOVED A LOT.

THEN WAS THE NJA-EXERCISE WHICH MADE ME MOVE A LOT MY MOUTH, LIPS AND ENGAGED THE WHOLE FACE.

[ARTICULATORY ENGAGEMENT (E.G., LIPS AND MOUTH) PLAYS A ROLE IN VOCAL RESONANCE AND BELTING PLACEMENT]

2. DID YOU FEEL ANY PARTICULAR ENGAGEMENT OF ANY MUSCLES IN YOUR BODY?

YES, MY THROAT, VOCAL CHORDS AND A BIT OF THE BELLY.

[WARM-UP EXERCISES ACTIVATE SUPPORT MUSCLES AND ENCOURAGE VOCAL PREPAREDNESS]

3. HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY DIFFICULTIES BELTING TODAY?

SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE I REACHED THE HIGHEST NOTE I CAN SING AND I FELT WITH THE EXERCISES THAT STILL MORE IS POSSIBLE.

[CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE] [PREPARATORY BELTING EXERCISES SERVE AS FOUNDATIONAL STEPS TOWARDS DEVELOPING COMFORT AND CONTROL IN BELTING TECHNIQUE]

MY VOCAL CHORDS/THROAT SOMETIMES HAVE SOME TENSION, BUT NOT MUCH. I JUST HAVE TO PAY ATTENTION THAT IT'S NOT TOO MUCH. *[AWARENESS OF TENSION HELPS INFORM TECHNICAL ADJUSTMENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE BELTING].*

4. CAN YOU DESCRIBE ANYTHING THAT HELPED YOU FEEL MORE CONFIDENT WHILE BELTING TODAY?

THE NANA EXERCISE AND NJA-EXERCISE AND THE WORKING OF THE MOUTH AND THE FRAMING OF THE SOUND IN FRONT HELPED ME A LOT. LIKE THIS MY VOICE WAS NOT THAT HEAVY BUT I COULD STILL SING HIGH. *[SHOUT-LIKE AND SPEECH-BASED EXERCISES CONNECT BELTING IN FAMILIARITY, MAKING IT FEEL MORE EFFORTLESS, ACCESSIBLE AND POWERFUL]*

PRODUCTION] [HOW VISUALISATION AND MENTAL IMAGERY FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF POWERFUL, FREE, AND CONTROLLED BELTING].

5. HOW DO YOU FEEL THAT BELTING PLAYS A ROLE IN EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION OF SINGING, IF AT ALL?
IT CAN TRANSPORT FEELINGS REALLY WELL, LIKE ENERGY / HURT / JOY / EMOTIONAL DISTRESS AND HELPS SO STILL SOUND STRONG.
[BELTING PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN CONVEYING EMOTIONAL CLIMAXES AND ADDS TO THE DYNAMIC EXPRESSIVENESS OF A PERFORMANCE].

PARTICIPANT 2 – COACHING 2:

OPEN-ENDED COACHING QUESTIONS

1. WHAT PHYSICAL SENSATIONS DID YOU NOTICE IN YOUR BODY AS YOU PERFORMED THE BELTING EXERCISES?

IN THE “HEHE”-EXERCISE IT WAS DIFFICULT TO COORDINATE THE MOUTH WITH THE DIAPHRAGM MUSCLES SO THAT THE MUSCLES WOULD ACT EXACTLY AS MUCH AS THE MOUTH OR THE VOICE CHORDS FORMING THE SOUND.

THE “NYAE,NYAE”-EXERCISE WAS ENGAGING ALL THE FACE MUSCLES AND THE SOUND COULD REALLY BE FELT. *[NASAL EXERCISES WITH CHILDLIKE SOUNDS LIKE ‘NYAE’ HELP BECAUSE THEY ARE FAMILIAR AND EASY TO VISUALISE, MAKING IT EASIER TO PLACE THE SOUND FORWARD AND FEEL THE VIBRATION]*

2. DID YOU FEEL ANY PARTICULAR ENGAGEMENT OF ANY MUSCLES IN YOUR BODY?

IN THE “HEHE”-EXERCISE I REALLY FELT MY DIAPHRAGM MUSCLES.

3. HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY DIFFICULTIES BELTING TODAY?

IN THE SONG IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO REALLY LET IT OUT BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WAS TOO HIGH.

[ESTABLISHING MENTAL RELEASE AND TRUST AS A PRECONDITION FOR BELTING PRODUCTION] [EXPECTATIONS ABOUT RANGE DIFFICULTY AFFECT VOCAL EXECUTION.]

4. CAN YOU DESCRIBE ANYTHING THAT HELPED YOU FEEL MORE CONFIDENT WHILE BELTING TODAY?

THE EXERCISES IN THE BEGINNING HELPED ME A LOT TO GO ON THE JOURNEY OF LETTING THE SOUND OUT AND TO NOT HOLD BACK WITH MY VOICE ALSO IT MIGHT BE LOUD IN THE BEGINNING.

[ESTABLISHING MENTAL RELEASE AND TRUST AS A PRECONDITION FOR BELTING PRODUCTION]

[CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE.]

[PREPARATORY BELTING EXERCISES SERVE AS FOUNDATIONAL STEPS TOWARDS DEVELOPING COMFORT AND CONTROL IN BELTING TECHNIQUE]

I FELT MORE AND MORE CONFIDENT IN BELTING AND SINGING IT OUT, WHICH I ENJOYED MUCH. I COULD HEAR HOW MY VOICE EVOLVED OVER THE EXERCISES.

[CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT

TECHNIQUE.] [PREPARATORY BELTING EXERCISES SERVE AS FOUNDATIONAL STEPS TOWARDS DEVELOPING COMFORT AND CONTROL IN BELTING TECHNIQUE]

WE STARTED WITH THE “HEHE”-EXERCISE, WHERE I HAD TO REALLY USE MY DIAPHRAGM MUSCLES AND BREATHING. *[WARM-UP EXERCISES*

[ACTIVATE SUPPORT MUSCLES AND ENCOURAGE VOCAL PREPAREDNESS]

AFTER THIS WE WENT TO THE “WEWEWEWE”-EXERCISE WHICH WAS ABOUT FINDING MY HEAD VOICE AND TO NOT SOUND AIRY. IT HELPED A LOT THAT GLORIA TOOK HER TIME EXPLAINING TO ME WHERE THE SOUND HAS TO SIT AND BE.

[PARTICIPANT DESCRIBES HOW TEACHER EXPLANATION SUPPORTED THEIR UNDERSTANDING AND DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNIQUE DURING TRAINING].

THEN WE DID THE EXERCISE “HEY MUM”, WHERE YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE HESITANT OR PUSH IT, BUT JUST FREELY LET THE SOUND OUT.

[SHOUT-LIKE AND SPEECH-BASED EXERCISES CONNECT BELTING IN FAMILIARITY, MAKING IT FEEL MORE EFFORTLESS, ACCESSIBLE AND POWERFUL PRODUCTION]

GLORIA EXPLAINED TO ME HERE AS WELL IN AN ILLUSTRATIVE WAY HOW TO PERFORM THIS EXERCISE (LIKE “DO NOT PUSH, BE FREE, USE YOUR VOICE IN A TALKATIVE STYLE”).

[PARTICIPANT DESCRIBES HOW TEACHER EXPLANATION SUPPORTED THEIR UNDERSTANDING AND DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNIQUE DURING TRAINING].

[VOCAL COACH’S CUES (E.G., “MAKE IT CLEAR,” “NOT AIRY”) FACILITATED EFFECTIVE ADJUSTMENTS FOR IMPROVED BELTING TECHNIQUE]

THE NEXT EXERCISE PREPARED THE SOUND IN THE FRONT WITH SINGING “NYAE..”. *[NASAL EXERCISES WITH CHILDLIKE SOUNDS LIKE ‘NYAE’ HELP BECAUSE THEY ARE FAMILIAR AND EASY TO VISUALISE, MAKING IT EASIER TO PLACE THE SOUND FORWARD AND FEEL THE VIBRATION].*

GLORIA ENCOURAGED ME AND TOLD TO USE MY WHOLE FACE TO FORM THAT SOUND AND THIS HELPED ME TO DO THE EXERCISE REALLY WELL.

[PARTICIPANT DESCRIBES HOW TEACHER EXPLANATION SUPPORTED THEIR UNDERSTANDING AND DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNIQUE DURING TRAINING].

THE LAST EXERCISES WERE SAYING “HEY MUM” AND “THAT’S MINE”. THESE EXERCISES HELPED ME IN PARTICULAR AND PUSHED ME TO GO OVER THE LIMITS I THINK I HAVE.

[SHOUT-LIKE AND SPEECH-BASED EXERCISES CONNECT BELTING IN FAMILIARITY, MAKING IT FEEL MORE EFFORTLESS, ACCESSIBLE AND POWERFUL PRODUCTION]

GLORIA ENCOURAGED ME TO LET IT ALL OUT, VERY EASY WITH NO, TO NOT BE AFRAID AND TO MOVE AS WELL.

[ENCOURAGEMENT DESCRIBED AS ESSENTIAL TO PROGRESS]

[ESTABLISHING MENTAL RELEASE AND TRUST AS A PRECONDITION FOR BELTING PRODUCTION]

SO I MOVED MY HEAD DURING THE EXERCISE AND IT HELPED ME A LOT TO MAKE THE SOUND.

WITH THE ENCOURAGING FROM GLORIA AND THE ILLUSTRATIVE WAY OF EXPLAINING WHERE THE SOUND SHOULD BE (IN FRONT PART OF THE MOUTH OR MORE THROUGH THE NOSE, ETC.) I COULD DO THE EXERCISE WELL AND FELT ENCOURAGED TO SING. *[ENCOURAGEMENT DESCRIBED AS ESSENTIAL TO PROGRESS]*

5. HOW DO YOU FEEL THAT BELTING PLAYS A ROLE IN EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION OF SINGING, IF AT ALL?

BELTING IS FULL OF EMOTIONS. I SANG FOR TRAINING ADELE'S ROLLING IN THE DEEP. BELTING IS JUST SHOWING THE EMOTIONS OF THE SONG / LYRIC AND EXPRESSES THE SADNESS OF THE TEXT OR THE EMOTIONS IN A BEAUTIFUL AND EXPRESSIVE WAY.

[BELTING PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN CONVEYING EMOTIONAL CLIMAXES AND ADDS TO THE DYNAMIC EXPRESSIVENESS OF A PERFORMANCE] [HOW VISUALISATION AND MENTAL IMAGERY FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF POWERFUL, FREE, AND CONTROLLED BELTING].

10. APPENDIX THREE (SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS CODED)

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. REFLECTING ON OUR WORK TOGETHER, IS THERE A PARTICULAR EXERCISE THAT YOU FOUND TO BE MOST HELPFUL FOR YOUR BELTING TECHNIQUE?
2. ARE THERE ANY OTHER ADJUSTMENTS THAT WE MADE THAT YOU FOUND HELPFUL?
3. HAVE YOU NOTICED ANY CHANGES IN COMFORT LEVELS WHILE BELTING?
4. HOW HAVE THE CHANGES IMPACTED YOUR OVERALL EXPERIENCE OF VOCAL PERFORMANCE?

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT PARTICIPANT 1

RESEARCHER: LET'S DO IT, AMAZING. FIRST QUESTION IS: REFLECTING ON OUR WORK TOGETHER – IS THERE A PARTICULAR EXERCISE YOU FOUND TO BE MOST HELPFUL FOR YOUR BELTING TECHNIQUE? SO, ONE SPECIFIC EXERCISE OR DIFFERENT EXERCISES THAT WERE HELPFUL FOR YOUR BELTING TECHNIQUE?

PARTICIPANT 1: YEAH, SO THERE WAS THE ONE WITH "HEY, MAMA" OR "HEY, TAXI". IT REALLY HELPS BECAUSE IT'S A SENTENCE THAT YOU KNOW, AND IT'S LIKE RECALLING SOMETHING, SO IT HELPS YOU TO GET IN THAT PLACE TO LET OUT THE TONE, THE TUNE, THAT YOU NEED FOR BELTING – THAT I MAY NOT BE SO FAMILIAR WITH. *[SHOUT-LIKE AND SPEECH-BASED EXERCISES CONNECT BELTING IN FAMILIARITY, MAKING IT FEEL MORE EFFORTLESS, ACCESSIBLE AND POWERFUL PRODUCTION]* SO, IT REALLY HELPED ME TO JUST LET GO... AND YEAH, JUST TRUST MYSELF THAT I CAN GET TO THAT TONE. *[SHOUT-LIKE AND SPEECH-BASED*

EXERCISES CONNECT BELTING IN FAMILIARITY, MAKING IT FEEL MORE EFFORTLESS, ACCESSIBLE AND POWERFUL PRODUCTION] AND IT REALLY HELPED THAT YOU DO IT ON THE LADDER, SO YOU START LOW AND THEN GO UP, UP, UP. [LADDER EXERCISES ENABLE SAFE PITCH EXPLORATION FOR BELTING AVOIDING PUSHING THE VOICE UP HIGH TOO QUICKLY]

RESEARCHER: THAT IS TRUE.

PARTICIPANT 1: AND YOU HAVE SEVERAL TIMES TO JUST LIKE, NOT EVEN PUSH UP, BUT LET OUT THE TONE. [LADDER EXERCISES ENABLE SAFE PITCH EXPLORATION FOR BELTING AVOIDING PUSHING THE VOICE UP HIGH TOO QUICKLY]

RESEARCHER: YES.

PARTICIPANT 1: AND I NEED TO HAVE A LOOK...

RESEARCHER: SO YOU SAID ALSO, LIKE, BECAUSE IT'S A SENTENCE THAT YOU USE USUALLY OR WORDS THAT YOU USE IN YOUR DAILY LIFE – YEAH – IT HELPS YOU CONNECT TO THE SPEAKING VOICE AS WELL?

PARTICIPANT 1: YEAH. YEAH. AND I HAVE TO SEE... LAST TIME... YEAH, SO THE EXERCISE 'THAT'S MINE'. IT WAS A REALLY GOOD ONE. BECAUSE IT HELPS ME, FROM THE START, TO HAVE A STRONG SPEAKING VOICE.

YEAH, AND BECAUSE IT'S LIKE A FAMILIAR SENTENCE, YOU'RE SINGING RIGHT AWAY. IT'S JUST LIKE FOCUSING ON THE TONE. [USE OF SPEECH QUALITY HELPS INITIATE AND PRODUCE BELT WITHOUT STRAIN] [SHOUT-LIKE AND SPEECH-BASED EXERCISES CONNECT BELTING IN FAMILIARITY, MAKING IT FEEL MORE EFFORTLESS, ACCESSIBLE AND POWERFUL PRODUCTION]

RESEARCHER: YEAH, SO GOOD. YES. IT'S AMAZING.

PARTICIPANT 1: MM-HMM. YEAH, AND I THINK, LIKE THE ONE THAT WE DID TODAY, "NYAE", BECAUSE IT REALLY HELPS TO ALSO ACTIVATE MUSCLES THAT I NORMALLY DO NOT USE.

RESEARCHER: FEEL IT IN YOUR CHEEKS... SO LIKE THE FORWARD PLACEMENT?

PARTICIPANT 1: YEAH. AND IT'S DIFFICULT TO DESCRIBE IT. I TRIED TO DESCRIBE IT IN ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE THAT YOU SENT ME LAST TIME. WHEN WE DID LIKE THE "NYAE, NYAE", IT REALLY HELPED ME TO VISUALISE LIKE THIS PART OF THE HEAD – EVERYTHING UP FROM THE NOSE – AND IT REALLY HELPED ME TO DO THE HIGHER TONES AND TUNES.

YEAH, AND BECAUSE IT'S LIKE THIS FAMILIAR THING, LIKE (REPRODUCING CHILDLIKE SOUND), IT'S REALLY HELPING TO GET THERE. *[NASAL EXERCISES WITH CHILDLIKE SOUNDS LIKE 'NYAE' HELP BECAUSE THEY ARE FAMILIAR AND EASY TO VISUALISE, MAKING IT EASIER TO PLACE THE SOUND FORWARD AND FEEL THE VIBRATION].*

RESEARCHER: AMAZING GIRL, I LOVE IT. BEAUTIFUL. "HEY MUM" AND "TAXI", "THAT'S MINE" NOW. IT'S REALLY GOODY. I THINK WE GOT IT.

AND THE SECOND QUESTION IS: ARE THERE ANY OTHER ADJUSTMENTS THAT WE MADE THAT YOU FOUND WERE HELPFUL? SO, IN GENERAL, WHILE WE WERE DOING THE EXERCISES OR WHILE WE WERE SINGING – SO THESE WERE THE EXERCISES THAT HELPED YOU, BUT WERE THERE ANY ADJUSTMENTS OR ANY PICTURE OR ANYTHING THAT I SAID OR ADJUSTMENTS THAT WE MADE AS YOU WERE SINGING THAT HELPED YOU AS WELL?

PARTICIPANT 1: A LOT...

FOR ME, IT REALLY HELPED WHEN YOU TAUGHT ME TO MAKE IT CLEAR, BECAUSE SOMETIMES WHEN I'M SINGING, I'M JUST LIKE NOT THERE FROM

THE START, OR IT'S TOO AIRY OR ANYTHING. [VOCAL COACH'S CUES (E.G., "MAKE IT CLEAR," "NOT AIRY") FACILITATED EFFECTIVE ADJUSTMENTS FOR IMPROVED BELTING TECHNIQUE] [CLARITY EXERCISES SUPPORT BELTING BY PROMOTING STRONG VOCAL FOLD CLOSURE AND REDUCING AIRINESS] AND IF YOU TOLD ME TO LIKE, MAKE IT CLEAR – OR EVEN WHAT YOU TOLD ME – TO START TO LIKE, USE THE SPEAKING VOICE AND NOT RIGHT AWAY SING THINGS – REALLY HELPED ME TO GET A CLEARER TONE OUT OF MY MOUTH. [USE OF SPEECH QUALITY HELPS INITIATE AND PRODUCE BELT WITHOUT STRAIN] [VOCAL COACH'S CUES (E.G., "MAKE IT CLEAR," "NOT AIRY") FACILITATED EFFECTIVE ADJUSTMENTS FOR IMPROVED BELTING TECHNIQUE]

RESEARCHER: YES.

PARTICIPANT 1: SO THAT REALLY HELPED ME. AND EVERYTHING YOU HELPED ME WITH, LIKE WITH THE MUSCLES, BECAUSE IT REALLY HELPED ME TO GET THIS FORWARD PLACE.

YEAH, THE HEAD VOICE – BECAUSE AT THE START IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT. I DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE THAT MUCH WHEN I WAS SWITCHING BETWEEN THE CHEST AND THE HEAD, AND YOU HELPED ME TO FEEL THE DIFFERENCE. BECAUSE YOU COULD TELL ME RIGHT AWAY WHAT IT WAS – WHEN YOU HEARD IT, BUT I WAS ALSO LIKE, I COULD DO IT MORE CONSCIOUSLY SINCE THEN, THE WAY YOU TAUGHT ME. YEAH. [PARTICIPANTS DESCRIBE CONFUSION OVER REGISTER COORDINATION BUT GAIN CLARITY WITH VOCAL COACH PROMPTS]

RESEARCHER: SO LIKE FEELING THE CHEST AND FEELING THE HEAD – WHERE THEY ARE PLACED, THE FEELINGS OF VIBRATIONS, WHERE THEY COME FROM – THAT PERCEIVING HELPED YOU TO RECOGNISE, "OKAY, THAT'S THE CHEST, THAT'S THE HEAD VOICE."

PARTICIPANT 1: YEAH. SO WHEN YOU TELL ME, "NOW YOU CAN SWITCH," AND THEN I TRIED – AND THEN WHEN I DIDN'T SWITCH RIGHT AWAY, THEN YOU TOLD ME, "NO, THAT'S THE HEAD VOICE," OR LIKE, "NO, AGAIN," THEN I FELT, "OH, YEAH, IT'S NOT THERE."

AND THEN WHEN I DID IT WELL THE SECOND TIME, IT WAS LIKE, “AHA, NOW I FEEL IT.” *[PARTICIPANTS DESCRIBE CONFUSION OVER REGISTER COORDINATION BUT GAIN CLARITY WITH VOCAL COACH PROMPTS]*

RESEARCHER: NOW YOU KNOW WHAT’S THE HEAD. NOW YOU KNOW WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE. SO GOOD.

PARTICIPANT 1: YEAH. AND ESPECIALLY IN BELTING, IT’S LIKE BECAUSE YOU’RE THINKING ABOUT LETTING GO AND NOT PUSHING, BUT LETTING OUT WITH POWER – IT’S SOMETIMES DIFFICULT FOR ME TO FEEL IT TOO, LIKE, “OKAY, AM I DOING HEAD NOW OR CHEST OR ANYTHING?” *[REGISTER AWARENESS EXERCISES: FEELING VOCAL VIBRATIONS HELPS IDENTIFY REGISTERS AND SUPPORTS BELTING WITHIN THE CHOSEN REGISTER]* AND I HAVE THE FEELING THAT AFTER THESE EXERCISES, RIGHT NOW, I KNOW BETTER. *[REGISTER AWARENESS EXERCISES: FEELING VOCAL VIBRATIONS HELPS IDENTIFY REGISTERS AND SUPPORTS BELTING WITHIN THE CHOSEN REGISTER]*

RESEARCHER: YEAH, BECAUSE WE TRAINED THE HEAD AND WE TRAINED THE CHEST ALSO SEPARATELY – SO YOU COULD KIND OF GET THE FEELING OF IT. AND THEN IT HELPED YOU REALISE, “OH, NOW I KNOW WHAT BELTING IS AND HOW IT FEELS LIKE,” RIGHT?

PARTICIPANT 1: YEAH. AND WHAT REALLY HELPED ME IS LIKE – BEFORE I STARTED WITH THESE EXERCISES YOU TAUGHT ME ABOUT BELTING – I ALWAYS THOUGHT, “OH, I THINK THAT SHOULD HURT.” AND IT NEVER HURT. *[OVERCOMING THE EXPECTATION OF PAIN THROUGH GUIDED TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE]*

RESEARCHER: OH, SO GLAD.

PARTICIPANT 1: BECAUSE YOU COULD TELL ME WHEN I WAS LIKE, “NO, NO, NO, MAKE IT CLEAR, BRIGHT.” AND TODAY YOU EVEN – WHAT DID YOU SAY? DON’T PUSH, NO... *[BELTING, INITIALLY ASSOCIATED WITH STRAIN/PAIN, WAS REXPERIENCED AS A FORM OF RELEASE THROUGH EXPERIENCE, VOCAL COACH GUIDANCE, PRACTICAL EXERCISES, AND VISUALISATION TECHNIQUES].*

RESEARCHER: “MAKE IT LIGHTER,” SOMETIMES I SAY THAT.

PARTICIPANT 1: OR YEAH, “MAKE IT LIGHTER,” OR “DON’T PUSH, JUST LET IT GO.”

YEAH. AND I THINK THAT REALLY HELPS BECAUSE BEFORE I REALLY FELT BELTING IS PUSHING, AND NOW I KNOW THAT BELTING IS LETTING GO. [BELTING, INITIALLY ASSOCIATED WITH STRAIN/PAIN, WAS REXPERIENCED AS A FORM OF RELEASE THROUGH EXPERIENCE, VOCAL COACH GUIDANCE, PRACTICAL EXERCISES, AND VISUALISATION TECHNIQUES].

AND JUST LIKE – IT HAS TO DO WITH BOUNDARIES, BECAUSE THE VOICE WANTS TO COME OUT – THE TUNE WANTS TO GET OUT. [BELTING, INITIALLY ASSOCIATED WITH STRAIN/PAIN, WAS REXPERIENCED AS A FORM OF RELEASE THROUGH EXPERIENCE, VOCAL COACH GUIDANCE, PRACTICAL EXERCISES, AND VISUALISATION TECHNIQUES]. AND YOU DON’T NECESSARILY HAVE TO PUSH – DON’T HELP. [BELTING, INITIALLY ASSOCIATED WITH STRAIN/PAIN, WAS REXPERIENCED AS A FORM OF RELEASE THROUGH EXPERIENCE, VOCAL COACH GUIDANCE, PRACTICAL EXERCISES, AND VISUALISATION TECHNIQUES].

RESEARCHER: MORE ALLOW.

PARTICIPANT 1: YEAH.

RESEARCHER: SO GOOD. AMAZING. LOVE IT.

AND THE THIRD QUESTION IS: HAVE YOU NOTICED ANY CHANGES IN COMFORT LEVELS WITH BELTING?

PARTICIPANT 1: MMM-HMM. YEAH, OF COURSE. IT’S LIKE – WE ALL KNOW – OR NOW I KNOW – BUT IT’S SOMETHING YOU HAVE TO FIRST GET COMFORTABLE WITH: TO JUST LET GO. IT DOESN’T HAVE TO DO WITH YOUR VOICE OR YOUR MUSCLES OR ANYTHING – BUT FIRST, JUST FEEL

CONFIDENT TO LET GO. [ESTABLISHING MENTAL RELEASE AND TRUST AS A PRECONDITION FOR BELTING PRODUCTION]

RESEARCHER: YEAH. AND DID THAT HAPPEN? LIKE, DID YOU NOTICE ANY CHANGE IN THAT COMFORT LEVEL?

PARTICIPANT 1: YES.

RESEARCHER: WITH BELTING, YOU KNOW? THE COMFORT FEELING THAT YOU HAVE WHEN YOU BELT – DID IT CHANGE?

PARTICIPANT 1: YEAH, YEAH, YEAH. IT REALLY DID. I THINK THAT I WAS WRITING IT DOWN IN MY NOTES – THAT IT REALLY HELPS TO DO THE EXERCISES BEFORE. BECAUSE YOU PRODUCE TONES AND TUNES IN THESE ISOLATED EXERCISES THAT ARE SOMETIMES A LITTLE WEIRD, AND THEN YOU KNOW THAT I'M GOING TO USE THESE TUNES THAT I CAN DO IN THESE EXERCISES LATER FOR SINGING – EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE NOT SOUNDING LIKE IT WHEN I SAY, "HEY, MOM."

YEAH. SO THAT REALLY HELPED ME TO GET COMFORTABLE WITH WHERE MY VOICE AND MY MUSCLES AND MY SUPPORT HAVE TO BE DURING THE SINGING. [PREPARATORY BELTING EXERCISES SERVE AS FOUNDATIONAL STEPS TOWARDS DEVELOPING COMFORT AND CONTROL IN BELTING TECHNIQUE].

IT'S JUST LIKE CONNECTING ALL THE EXERCISES IN MY HEAD AND THE LITTLE TECHNIQUES THAT I FELT IN MY BODY AND IN MY MOUTH AND IN MY CHEST – AND MAKE IT A SONG [PREPARATORY BELTING EXERCISES SERVE AS FOUNDATIONAL STEPS TOWARDS DEVELOPING COMFORT AND CONTROL IN BELTING TECHNIQUE].

RESEARCHER: YEAH. YEAH, THAT MAKES SENSE. SO TRAINING – LIKE THE EXERCISES – HELPED YOU PRACTICE ON BELTING, TRAIN ON BELTING, AND THEN YOU COULD CONNECT IT INTO THE SONG. AND THE FACT THAT YOU ALREADY TRAINED – THAT WAS THE REASON THAT MADE YOU MORE COMFORTABLE IN BELTING LATER.

WOW, SO GOOD. I LOVED IT. GREAT POINTS.

YES, SO WE HAVE THE LAST QUESTION.

AND IT IS: HOW HAVE THE CHANGES – SO THE CHANGES IN COMFORT LEVEL WITH BELTING – IMPACTED YOUR OVERALL EXPERIENCE OF VOCAL PERFORMANCE?

SO, SOME CHANGES HAPPENED, AND YOU GOT MORE CONFIDENT IN BELTING – AND HOW DO THOSE CHANGES IMPACT YOUR OVERALL SINGING PERFORMANCE?

WHEN YOU SING A SONG, WHAT DO THESE CHANGES BRING?

PARTICIPANT 1: YEAH. ALSO THE FIRST THING IS WHAT I TOLD YOU BEFORE – THAT I REALLY THOUGHT THAT BELTING MEANT THAT IT WOULD HURT. [OVERCOMING THE EXPECTATION OF PAIN THROUGH GUIDED TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE] AND JUST KNOWING AND LEARNING THAT IT'S NOT A PUSHING THING – IT'S A LETTING GO THING [BELTING, INITIALLY ASSOCIATED WITH STRAIN/PAIN, WAS REXPERIENCED AS A FORM OF RELEASE THROUGH EXPERIENCE, VOCAL COACH GUIDANCE, PRACTICAL EXERCISES, AND VISUALISATION TECHNIQUES]. – AND THERE ARE EXERCISES THAT HELP YOU TO GET IN THIS PLACE OF LETTING GO [BELTING, INITIALLY ASSOCIATED WITH STRAIN/PAIN, WAS REXPERIENCED AS A FORM OF RELEASE THROUGH EXPERIENCE, VOCAL COACH GUIDANCE, PRACTICAL EXERCISES, AND VISUALISATION TECHNIQUES]. AND PRODUCING CLEAR SOUNDS WITH GOOD SUPPORT AND WITH VISUALISING STUFF – THAT REALLY HELPED ME AT HOME, WHEN I SANG A SONG – LIKE THESE LAST TWO WEEKS THAT WE DID THESE EXERCISES – REALLY GAVE ME CONFIDENCE.

[CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE.] LIKE, “OKAY, THESE TUNES – I CAN GET THEM OUT OF ME.” IT'S NOT THAT I HAVE TO SWITCH OR ANYTHING – I JUST HAVE TO LET GO IN CERTAIN THINGS AND TRUST MY VOICE AS WELL.

[CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE.]

IF YOU KNOW, “OKAY, I DID IT. I PRODUCED THESE TONES, I PRODUCED

THESE TUNES" – I GREW MORE CONFIDENT IN MY SINGING OVERALL.

[CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE.]

BECAUSE IN MY HEAD IT'S LIKE BELTING IS OVER THERE – IT'S HIGH UP – IT'S WHAT ALL THE PROFESSIONALS DO – IT'S THE WHOLE CLIMAX SONGS THAT I MAYBE DON'T ALWAYS SING.

AND THEN TRYING TO DO THAT – FINDING TECHNIQUES THAT GET YOU TO THAT PLACE – REALLY BOOSTED MY CONFIDENCE IN WHAT I CAN SING.

[CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE.]

AND KNOWING THAT IT TOOK TWO WEEKS TO FIND PROGRESS.

[CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE.]

RESEARCHER: JUST A FEW SESSIONS.

OH, I LOVE IT. YEAH. SO GOOD. THANK YOU SO, SO MUCH.

I REALLY THINK I HAVE SO MANY GOOD NUGGETS FROM THIS EXPERIENCE, REALLY.

AND IT REALLY MATTERS WHAT YOU SAID, AND IT HELPS, AND IT'S SO, SO GOOD.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR BEING A PART OF THIS JOURNEY.

PARTICIPANT 1: OF COURSE.

THE INTERVIEW WAS STOPPED AND STARTED AGAIN TO ADD THE LAST CONSIDERATIONS.

PARTICIPANT 1: YEAH, IT REALLY HELPS, BECAUSE YOU HAVE TO GET PAST THE POINT WHERE YOU CAN GET THE TUNE.

AND IT REALLY HELPS WHEN SOMEONE IS ENCOURAGING –

[ENCOURAGEMENT DESCRIBED AS ESSENTIAL TO PROGRESS] LIKE NOT ALWAYS PUSHING TO GET THE TONE OUT IN THE RIGHT WAY – JUST MAKING SOME MISTAKES OR SLIDES OR ANYTHING AND GETTING ENCOURAGED AT THAT POINT, BECAUSE IT REALLY HELPS YOU TO LET GO OF THESE BOUNDARIES AND THEN GET LATER TO THE RIGHT TONE AND TUNE.

[ENCOURAGEMENT DESCRIBED AS ESSENTIAL TO PROGRESS]

RESEARCHER: SO PRACTICE ON IT AT THE BEGINNING – IT'S NORMAL TO KIND OF NOT BE THERE YET IN BELTING – BUT THIS IS PART OF THE EXPERIENCE.

PARTICIPANT 1: YEAH, YEAH, YEAH. AND MAKE IT PART OF THE EXPERIENCE. THAT'S NOT BAD.

YEAH. **JUST MAKE IT PART OF THE EXPERIENCE, BECAUSE IT REALLY HELPS TO GET TO THAT PLACE WHEN IT'S OKAY THAT YOU HAVE TO GO OVER THE BUMPS.** *[BELTING IS A PROCESS: TRUST THE PROCESS AND YOUR VOICE]* *[CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE.]*

RESEARCHER: TRUST THE PROCESS.

PARTICIPANT 1: **YOU KIND OF TRUST YOURSELF TO HIT A BUMP. IT'S NOT THE WORST THING THAT HAPPENS – BECAUSE YOU KNOW, YOU'LL GO THERE.** *[BELTING IS A PROCESS: TRUST THE PROCESS AND YOUR VOICE]*

RESEARCHER: YES, YOU'LL GET THERE. I LOVE THIS.

YEAH. SO GOOD. THANK YOU.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT – PARTICIPANT 2

RESEARCHER: AMAZING. OKAY, FIRST QUESTION. REFLECTING ON OUR WORK TOGETHER, IS THERE A PARTICULAR EXERCISE THAT YOU FOUND TO BE MOST HELPFUL FOR YOUR BELTING TECHNIQUE?

PARTICIPANT: I FOUND THE EXERCISE WITH THE "GE GE GE" ONE OF THE MOST HELPFUL, AND ALSO THE ONE WITH SHOUTING, LIKE "HEY MOM, "THAT'S MINE!" OR "HEY TAXI!"

RESEARCHER: SO GOOD. AND DO YOU HAVE A REASON — ESPECIALLY WHY THE "GE," AND WHY THE "HEY MOM" AND THE "HEY TAXI"?

PARTICIPANT: THE "GE" REALLY HELPED ME TO CLOSE MY VOCAL CORDS BETTER THAN THE "HE," SO THAT IT WAS NOT AIRY — YEAH, THAT IT WASN'T AIRY. [EXERCISES LIKE "GE GE GE" HELP CLOSE VOCAL FOLDS AND REDUCE AIRINESS] AND THE "HEY TAXI" ALWAYS HELPED ME TO BE LOUD, TO LET IT OUT, TO BE LIKE, "OKAY, THERE IS SOMEONE IN THE DISTANCE." JUST TO TELL, LIKE A PICTURE — THAT REALLY HELPED ME. I THINK YOU HAVE A PICTURE WHERE THE SOUND HAS TO GO — HOW LOUD, HOW OPEN, HOW FREE. I CAN TELL, AND YEAH. [USE OF SPEECH QUALITY HELPS INITIATE AND PRODUCE BELT WITHOUT STRAIN] [SHOUT-LIKE AND SPEECH-BASED EXERCISES CONNECT BELTING IN FAMILIARITY, MAKING IT FEEL MORE EFFORTLESS, ACCESSIBLE AND POWERFUL PRODUCTION] [HOW VISUALISATION AND MENTAL IMAGERY FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF POWERFUL, FREE, AND CONTROLLED BELTING]

RESEARCHER: AMAZING. BEAUTIFUL, YES. AND THE SECOND QUESTION IS — ARE THERE ANY ADJUSTMENTS... SO WE TALKED ABOUT THE EXERCISES. NOW WE'RE GOING TO THE ADJUSTMENTS. LIKE, ANYTHING THAT I SAID TO YOU, THAT WE ADJUSTED — ANY PICTURE, ANYTHING — THAT YOU FOUND HELPFUL? LIKE, WHILE WE WERE DOING THE EXERCISES, WHILE WE WERE SINGING, DID SOME ADJUSTMENT HELP?

PARTICIPANT: EVERY ADJUSTMENT — YEAH. I THINK I REALLY LIKED THE PICTURES. THAT REALLY, REALLY HELPED ME. TO BE MORE LIKE... THE SOUND HAS TO BE LIKE A HAMMER, FOR EXAMPLE — THAT YOU TOLD ME IN THE EXERCISE WITH THE "GE" — SO THAT THE "GE" IS NOT VERY WAVY, BUT IT'S VERY CLEAR. THESE THINGS REALLY, REALLY HELPED ME TO BE LIKE, "OKAY, NOW THIS SOUND HAS TO BE SHORT AND CLEAR AND DIRECT, AND THIS ONE HAS TO BE MORE FREE AND FLUID," OR SOMETHING.

[SHOUT-LIKE AND SPEECH-BASED EXERCISES CONNECT BELTING IN FAMILIARITY, MAKING IT FEEL MORE EFFORTLESS, ACCESSIBLE AND POWERFUL PRODUCTION] [HOW VISUALISATION AND MENTAL IMAGERY FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF POWERFUL, FREE, AND CONTROLLED BELTING]. THIS REALLY HELPED ME. AND ALSO WITH THE MOUTH — ALWAYS TO LIKE OPEN. BECAUSE SOMETIMES I DON'T THINK ABOUT THE JAW, AND THEN THIS REALLY HELPS ME TO BE LIKE, "OKAY, GET THE JAW STABLE AND OPEN," [OPTIMISING VOWEL PLACEMENT TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE BELTING TECHNIQUE.] OR "SHOUT IN THE DISTANCE," AND YOU JUST HAVE TO LET IT OUT. YEAH, THESE THINGS — THAT REALLY, REALLY HELPS ME. THEY'RE LIKE THESE PICTURES, SO I KNOW — OKAY, THIS HAS TO BE CLEAR, OKAY, I CAN DO IT LIKE THIS. [SHOUT-LIKE AND SPEECH-BASED EXERCISES CONNECT BELTING IN FAMILIARITY, MAKING IT FEEL MORE EFFORTLESS, ACCESSIBLE AND POWERFUL PRODUCTION] [HOW VISUALISATION AND MENTAL IMAGERY FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF POWERFUL, FREE, AND CONTROLLED BELTING].

RESEARCHER: YEAH, BEAUTIFUL. LOVED IT. YES, THAT'S GOOD — REALLY HELPED. AND HAVE YOU NOTICED ANY CHANGES IN COMFORT LEVELS WHILE BELTING?

PARTICIPANT: YES, YES. YES. I FEEL WAY MORE FREE TO LET IT OUT. OR I HAVE — I'M MORE CONFIDENT IN TELLING MYSELF, "IT'S OKAY IF IT'S LOUD," BECAUSE THE SOUND HAS TO GO OUT AND BE FREE.

[ESTABLISHING MENTAL RELEASE AND TRUST AS A PRECONDITION FOR BELTING PRODUCTION]

[BELTING CAN INVOLVE ELEVATED VOCAL INTENSITY, WHICH IS NOT INHERENTLY PROBLEMATIC]. AND YES, I FOUND MUCH MORE

CONFIDENCE, BECAUSE WHEN I THINK IN MY MIND, "OH, I CAN'T DO IT," AND I SQUEEZE IT, IT SOUNDS TERRIBLE. YEAH, BECAUSE I SQUEEZED IT. AND YES, I THINK THIS REALLY HELPED ME TO BE MORE CONFIDENT AND BE LIKE, "HEY, MAYBE IT'S A LITTLE BIT LOUD, BUT THEN THE SOUND WILL ALSO TURN AROUND VERY WELL." YES, COME ON — BEAUTIFUL.

[CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A

MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE][ESTABLISHING MENTAL RELEASE AND TRUST AS A PRECONDITION FOR BELTING PRODUCTION][BELTING CAN INVOLVE ELEVATED VOCAL INTENSITY, WHICH IS NOT INHERENTLY PROBLEMATIC].

RESEARCHER: SO YOU WOULD SAY YOU'RE MORE COMFORTABLE WITH BELTING NOW? WITH THIS TECHNIQUE?

PARTICIPANT: YES.

RESEARCHER: AMAZING. AND HOW HAVE THE CHANGES IMPACTED YOUR OVERALL EXPERIENCE OF VOCAL PERFORMANCE? SO WHAT I MEAN IS — WE TALKED ABOUT EXERCISES, WE TALKED ABOUT ADJUSTMENTS, WE TALKED ABOUT HOW IT CHANGED YOUR COMFORT LEVEL WITH BELTING. AND NOW THE QUESTION IS — NOW THAT YOU'RE MORE COMFORTABLE WITH BELTING, HOW DO YOU FEEL? OR, LIKE, WHAT IMPACT DOES YOUR COMFORT WITH BELTING HAVE ON YOUR OVERALL EXPERIENCE OF SINGING? WHEN YOU SING A SONG OR...?

PARTICIPANT: YES. MAYBE BEFORE, I HAVEN'T TRIED BELTING THAT MUCH BEFORE MYSELF, BECAUSE I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO DO IT. SO IT'S ALREADY A BIG LEARNING FOR ME TO BELT. BUT IT OVERALL BUILT UP MY CONFIDENCE TO BE LIKE, "HEY, IF I HAVE THE RIGHT EXERCISE AND THE RIGHT TEACHINGS, I CAN DO IT." AND THIS REALLY HELPED ME TO BE.. *[CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE.].*

RESEARCHER: I CAN SING THAT SONG, YES?

PARTICIPANT: YES, YES, RIGHT. AND IT'S NOT LIKE, "OH, MY VOICE IS BAD," BUT OVERALL I THINK IT HELPED ME — "OH, I CAN SING HIGH, ACTUALLY. I CAN, BUT I JUST HAVE TO..." IT NEEDS TRAINING, YES. I JUST HAVE TO HAVE TRAINING, YEAH. *[CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE].*

RESEARCHER: YEAH, COME ON.

PARTICIPANT: SO THIS WAS REALLY NICE, YEAH. AND TO BE MORE CONFIDENT AND TO LET THE SOUND OUT — IT JUST REALLY HELPED ME OVERALL. TO BE MORE LIKE, “OKAY, IF I ALSO FEEL LIKE, OH, MAYBE IT’S TOO DEEP OR IT’S TOO LOW,” YEAH, JUST TRY IT AND LET IT OUT. DON’T BE LIKE [HESITANT], AND THEN YOU SEE — MAYBE YOU HAVE TO ADJUST. [PREPARATORY BELTING EXERCISES SERVE AS FOUNDATIONAL STEPS TOWARDS DEVELOPING COMFORT AND CONTROL IN BELTING TECHNIQUE]. [CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE., BELTING IS A PROCESS: TRUST THE PROCESS AND YOUR VOICE]

RESEARCHER: OH YEAH. SO LIKE, IT MADE YOU MORE — ALSO, LIKE, NOT JUST ABOUT BELTING, BUT IN GENERAL — IT MADE YOU MORE CONFIDENT TO TRY THINGS OUT?

PARTICIPANT: YEAH.

RESEARCHER: TO THINK, “WHAT IF I CAN DO IT? IF I DO THE RIGHT THINGS, IT MAYBE SOUNDS GOOD.” [CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE.]

PARTICIPANT: YES, RIGHT. YEAH.

RESEARCHER: AND NOW YOU KNOW — IF YOU DO THE RIGHT THINGS, IT SOUNDS GOOD. SO IT PROBABLY GIVES YOU THE CONFIDENCE IN GENERAL, IN YOUR SINGING, TO TRY THINGS OUT — TO BE MORE FREE.

PARTICIPANT: TO BE MORE LIKE, “HEY, I CAN DO IT LIKE THIS. MAYBE I JUST HAVE TO ASK, ‘WHAT SOUND SHOULD I DO?’ OR ‘HOW SHOULD I TRAIN FOR IT?’ IS IT MORE LIKE IN THE BACK? IS IT IN FRONT? IS IT MORE...?” [CONFIDENCE IN BELTING GROWS THROUGH REPEATED SUCCESS, A MENTAL SHIFT TO RELEASING, TRUST IN THE VOICE AND PROCESS, AND USING THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE.]

RESEARCHER: LIGHT OR DARKER? YES, YES, EXACTLY.
YEAH, SO MORE CONFIDENCE IN GENERAL, RIGHT?

PARTICIPANT: YES, AND MORE KNOWLEDGE.

RESEARCHER: BEAUTIFUL. YES. HEY, I THINK THAT'S IT — IF YOU DON'T
HAVE ANYTHING ELSE TO ADD?

PARTICIPANT: NO.

RESEARCHER: THEN WE ANSWERED THAT QUESTION. THANK YOU SO, SO
MUCH.

PARTICIPANT: YOU'RE WELCOME. THANK YOU SO MUCH.

11. APPENDIX FOUR (COACHING SESSION EXERCISES)

Exercises in these sessions were informed by established belting pedagogy—including Roll (2016, 2019)—as well as my own experience as a vocal coach.

Each session included warm-ups, breath support training, head voice training, and exercises focused on forward placement and speech-/shout-like production. These were designed to build strength, coordination, and confidence in belt voice use.

A song was selected, and the technique of belting was applied and explored through practical singing.

Coaching Session 1

- **Lip trills** (gentle warm-up to regulate breath and phonation)
- **“Wee” glides** scale: 1–2–3–4–5–4–3–2–1–5–1 (head voice warm-up)
- **“Na Na”** – scale: 1–2–3–4–5–4–3–2–1 (speech-like exercise for mix belt)
- **“Nya”** – scale: 1–2–3–4–5–4–3–2–1 (forward, clear and nasal)
- **“Hey!”** – scale: single pitch, energetic, speech-like (speech/shout-like exercise)
- **Song Application**

Coaching Session 2

- **“Hi hi hi”** – scale: 1–2–3 ascending and descending (breath control and abdominal engagement)
- **“Wee” glides** – scale: 1–2–3–4–5–4–3–2–1–5–1 (head voice warm-up)
- **“Ma ma ma”** – scale: 1–2–3–4–5–4–3–2–1, rhythmic and articulated (warm-up)
- **“Nya”** – scale: 1–2–3–4–5–4–3–2–1 (forward, clear and nasal)
- **“Hey Mum!”** – scale: descending 5–1, (speech-like exercise)
- **“That’s Mine”** – scale: 5–1 (speech-like exercise)
- **Song Application**

Coaching Session 3

- **“Gee”** – scale: 1–2–3–4–5 (head voice warm-up)

- **“Nya** – scale: 1–2–3–4–5–4–3–2–1 (forward, clear and nasal)
- **“Na Na Na”** – scale: 1–2–3–4–5–4–3–2–1 (speech-like exercise)
- **“He he he ey”** – scale: 5–5–5–1 (pitch accuracy, strength and power training)
- **“Hey Taxi!”** – scale: 1–5–1 (speech-like exercise)
- **“Hey that’s mine!”** – scale: 1–5–(4counts)–1 (speech-like exercise)
- **Song Application**

12. APPENDIX FIVE (CONSENT FORMS)

Participant Consent Form

A qualitative exploration of the experience of belting in adult female singers of contemporary music using Reflexive Thematic Analysis.

Consent to take part in research

- I, [REDACTED], 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...
 - Attending voice coaching sessions with my vocal coach
 - Completing an open-ended questionnaire at the end of the coaching sessions
 - Taking part in a single, recorded, semi-structured interview
- 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 confidential.
- 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 the people I speak about.
- I understand that anonymised excerpts from my interview may be used in the report, Master's dissertation and potentially in workshops related to belting.
- 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 securely stored in a password-protected folder accessible only to the researcher and will be retained until the completion of the Master's degree.
- I understand that a transcript of my interview, with all identifying information removed, will be retained for up to two years following the completion of the Master's degree.
- 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.

Researcher Name: Gloria Kull Taffaro

Role: Vocal Coach and MA Researcher

University: University of Wales Trinity Saint David / Voice study centre

Email: gloriataff@gmail.com

Supervisor: Louisa Morgan

Supervisor Email: louisa@voicestudycentre.com

Signature of research participant

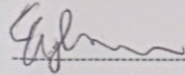


06.05.25

Signature of participant Date:

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study



06.05.25

Signature of researcher Date:

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Researcher Name: Gloria Kull Tafaro

Role: Vocal Coach and MA Researcher

University: University of Wales Trinity Saint David / Voice study centre

Email: gloriataff@gmail.com

Supervisor: Louisa Morgan

Supervisor Email: louisa@voicestudycentre.com

Signature of research participant

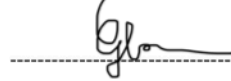
A black rectangular box redacting the signature of the research participant.

Signature of participant Date:

12.05.2025

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'gh', written over a dashed line.

12.05.25

Signature of researcher Date:

13. APPENDIX SIX (APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL)



PG2 / E1 FORM

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

RESEARCH STUDENTS

This form is to be completed by the student within **SIX** months for full-time students and **TWELVE** months for part time students, after the commencement of the research degree or following progression to Part Two of your course.

Once complete, submit this form via the **MyTSD Doctoral College Portal** at (<https://mytsd.uwtsd.ac.uk>).

This document is also available in Welsh.

RESEARCH 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.

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.

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.

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Gloria Tafaro Kull			
2	Tick all boxes that apply:	Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
	Undergraduate Student	☐	Taught Postgraduate Student	☒	Postgraduate Research Student
3	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	WAPPAR			
4	Campus:	Carmarthen			
5	E-mail address:	Gloriataff@gmail.com			
6	Contact Telephone Number:	+41 78 705 91 19			
For students:					

April 2022

1

PG2 Ethical Approval Form

Student Number: 2334943

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7	Student Number:	2334943
8	Programme of Study:	MA Professional Practice (Voice Pedagogy)
9	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): Approval in principle must be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval	Research Degrees Committee	☐		
		Institute Research Committee	☐		
		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, location-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. You may add rows to this table if needed.	
1	UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice ☒
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy ☒
3	https://www.rud.uzh.ch/dam/jcr%3Ac42f07d3-2e89-485c-8a8b-3a3c3f46a3f5/UZH%20Policy%20on%20the%20Ethical%20Review%20of%20Research%20Projects%20Involving%20Human%20Subjects%20%28UZH%20Ethics%20Policy%29.pdf ☒

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

If there are external collaborators then you should gain consent from the contact persons to share their personal data with the university. If there are no external collaborators then leave this section blank and continue to section E.

1	Institution	
2	Contact person name	
3	Contact person e-mail address	
4	Is your research externally funded?	YES ☐ NO ☐
5	Are you in receipt of a KESS scholarship?	YES ☐ NO ☐
6	Voluntary	YES ☐ NO ☐

7	Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?	Employed	YES	☐	NO	☐
8	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	☐
9	Has permission to undertake the research has been provided by the partner organisation?	(If YES attach copy) If NO the application cannot continue	YES	☐	NO	☐

Where research activity is carried out in collaboration with an external organisation

10	Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?	YES	☐	NO	☐
	If Yes, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation (this may be a copy of an email if appropriate).				

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	How Do Adult Female Singing Students Perceive the Experience of Belting?		
2	Proposed start date:	31st March	Proposed end date:	15 th September
	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words per section) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the 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 Existing Research 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>			
3	Purpose of Research Activity The aim of this research is to find out how adult female singing students feel about belting. Lisa Popeil defines belting as speech-like or yell-like in character and as a distinct vocal style. As a vocal coach, I want to understand the singer's experiences while learning this technique. By gathering their perceptions, this study seeks to compare their experiences with what is already known about teaching singing and Belting. The findings will help to create a better understanding of how students engage with this vocal style, which could inform future teaching approaches.			
4	Research Question How do adult female singing students perceive the experience of belting?			
5	Aims of Research Activity - To explore the experiences of adult female singing students when practicing belting. - To identify common perceptions, challenges, and thoughts associated with this vocal technique.			

	To compare students' insights with existing research in vocal pedagogy.
6	Objectives of Research Activity - Conduct practical singing sessions with my students to practice belting. - Use open-ended questionnaires to collect their perceptions and experiences after each session. - Conduct individual interviews at the end of the study to gain deeper insights into their reflections. - Analyse the data to identify themes related to emotional and physical experiences of belting. - Triangulate the findings with existing literature to ensure a well-rounded understanding of the student experience.
	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. You do not need to justify the methods here, but should instead describe how you intend to collect the data necessary for you to complete your project.
7	Literature Review A review of existing research on belting and vocal techniques will be conducted to gather secondary data. This will help provide context, identify gaps, and inform the development of the research questions. Open-Ended Questionnaire An open-ended questionnaire will be given to participants at end of each session. The questionnaire will allow participants to share their experiences and perceptions of belting in their own words, providing initial insights that will guide the interviews. Semi-Structured Interviews In-depth interviews will be conducted with adult female singers. These interviews will be guided by open-ended questions to explore their personal experiences with and perceptions of belting. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed for further analysis. Field Notes Throughout the data collection process, field notes will be made to capture non-verbal cues, immediate reflections, and the context of interviews, focus groups, and observations. These notes will complement the recorded data and provide further insights into participants' experiences. Thematic Analysis The data collected from interviews, focus groups, open-ended questionnaires, and observations will be analysed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns in the way adult female singers perceive and use belting.
	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
8	Switzerland: - My singing Studio (This is my personal studio where I will conduct singing-related research activities, including practice, singing sessions and recording). - Bandroom at ICF Center (This is a bandroom in Dübendorf. It might be used if it is better for the participants). This space is secure and private, ensuring a comfortable environment. Online: - Remote interviews or discussions (via video calls such as Zoom, Teams, Skype, Google Meet). - Online surveys or questionnaires (using tools like Google Forms). - Data collection through online databases, journals, and publications and UWTSO online library. Phone: - Phone interviews or qualitative data collection via calls.
	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. If you live in the country where you will do the research then please state this.
9	The research will take place in Switzerland, where I currently live. A review of local requirements has been conducted, determining that separate ethical approval from Switzerland is not required. This is due to the fact that the study does not fall under the remit of the Human Research Act (HRA) as it is not clinical or medical in nature. There are no additional ethical requirements in Switzerland beyond those in the UK. However, I will comply with local privacy laws and be mindful of cultural norms. Consent forms and other research materials will be translated if needed to ensure participants fully understand the study. Since I live in Switzerland, I am familiar with the local cultural context, which will help me conduct the research respectfully and ethically.

10	Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents NOT publicly available?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>NO</td> <td>☒</td> </tr> <tr> <td>YES</td> <td>☐</td> </tr> </table>	NO	☒	YES	☐
NO	☒					
YES	☐					
11	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 the current data protection law of the country in question and that of England and Wales. (this box should expand as you type)					

	Does your research relate to one or more of the seven aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015?	YES	NO
12	A prosperous Wales	☐	☒
13	A resilient Wales	☐	☒
14	A healthier Wales	☐	☒
15	A more equal Wales	☐	☒
16	A Wales of cohesive communities	☐	☒
17	A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	☐	☒
18	A globally responsible Wales	☐	☒
19	If YES to any of the above, please give details:		
	(this box should expand as you type)		

SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
1	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☒	☐
2	Use of interviews?	☒	☐

3	Use of focus groups?	☐	☒
4	Use of participant diaries?	☒	☐
5	Use of video or audio recording?	☒	☐
6	Use of computer-generated log files?	☐	☒
7	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☐	☒
8	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
9	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒
10	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒
11	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☒
12	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☒
13	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☒
14	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☒
15	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☒
16	Procedures that may have a negative impact on the environment?	☐	☒
17	Other primary data collection methods. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) below.		
	Details of any other primary data collection method:	☐	☒
	(this box should expand as you type)		

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

If there are no participants then do not complete this section, but go directly to section H.

	Who are the intended participants:	YES	NO
1	Students or staff at the University?	☐	☒
2	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☒	☐
3	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
4	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	☒
5	Prisoners?	☐	☒
6	Young offenders?	☐	☒
7	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
8	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒

9	Others. Please indicate the participants below, and specifically any group who may be unable to give consent.	☐	☒
	Details of any other participant groups: (this box should expand as you type)		

Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
10	How many participants are expected? The expected number of participants is 10, depending on availability and willingness.
11	Who will the participants be? The participants will be adult females, aged between 18 and 40, who have an interest in singing. Specifically, I will focus on individuals I know personally, including those who are passionate about music or singing. Many of these participants may be my students or acquaintances.
12	How will you identify the participants? I will identify the participants by selecting individuals from my network, such as my students and acquaintances who sing or have shown an interest in singing. These individuals will be approached directly through personal interactions, phone calls, messages, or other forms of direct communication. The sampling will be purposive, meaning I will specifically select participants who are known to me, are female, aged between 18 and 40, and have an interest in singing.

Information for participants:		YES	NO	N/A
13	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☒	☐	☐
14	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
15	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☒	☐	☐
16	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☒	☐	☐
17	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☒	☐	☐
18	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
19	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
20	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☒	☐	☐
21	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☒	☐	☐
22	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation (this box should expand as you type)			

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
24	Will participants be paid?	☐	☒	☐
25	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☒	☐	☐
26	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☒	☐
27	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☒	☐
28	If YES to any question, please provide full details			
By electrical equipment, I mean a laptop, phone, iPad, music speakers, microphone, and piano. (this box should expand as you type)				

SECTION H: Anticipated Risks

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.						
1	Full risk assessment completed and appended?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>☐</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>☒</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	☐	No	☒
Yes	☐					
No	☒					
2	Risks to participants For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information					
	Risk to participants: - Power Dynamics: Given the researcher's dual role as the participants' instructor, an inherent power imbalance is in place. Participants may feel pressured to participate or to provide positive feedback, fearing potential repercussions on their learning experience or assessments. - Bias and Social Desirability: Due to the existing teacher-student or acquaintance relationship, participants might adjust their responses to align with what they believe the researcher wants to hear, which could compromise the authenticity of their perceptions. - Emotional Distress: Participants might feel self-conscious or anxious when discussing personal experiences related to singing or vocal performance. - Physical Discomfort: If any practical singing demonstrations are involved, there is a minor risk of vocal strain or discomfort. - Confidentiality Concerns: Since participants are known to the researcher, they might worry about the confidentiality of their responses, potentially affecting their willingness to share honest experiences.	How you will mitigate the risk to participants: - Power Dynamics and Coercion: Participation will be strictly voluntary, with clear communication that non-participation or withdrawal will not impact their relationship with the researcher or their educational standing. - Bias and Social Desirability: Participants will be encouraged to speak freely without fear of judgement. Open-ended questions will be used to avoid leading responses. Additionally, the researcher will practise reflexivity, acknowledging and critically reflecting on their role and potential influence throughout the research process. - Emotional Distress: A supportive and non-judgmental environment will be maintained. Participants will be informed that they can skip questions or withdraw at any time without consequences. In the unlikely event that participants experience significant distress, they will be signposted to additional support services. - Physical Discomfort: If singing is involved, participants will be encouraged to sing within their comfortable vocal range and to prioritise their comfort at all time. They will be informed that they can stop any exercise whenever they feel any discomfort, without any pressure to continue. In the unlikely event that participants experience significant distress, they will be signposted to vocal health services. - Confidentiality Concerns: Responses will be anonymised, and data will be securely stored to ensure privacy. Pseudonyms will be used in all reports to protect participants' identities. Any				

		video or audio recordings will be deleted as soon as transcriptions and notes have been made.
3	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	
	Not applicable	
4	Risks to the investigator For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest	
	Risk to the investigator: - Conflict of Interest and Role Confusion: The dual role as both teacher and researcher may lead to conflicts of interest, affecting objectivity and creating ambiguity in the teacher-student relationship. - Emotional Distress and Ethical Dilemmas: Navigating the delicate boundary between supportive teacher and impartial researcher may cause emotional stress, especially if sensitive or unexpected information is disclosed. - Risk of Accusation of Impropriety or Bias: Due to the pre-existing relationship, there is a potential risk of misinterpretation of intentions or accusations of favouritism or bias.	How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator: - Conflict of Interest and Role Confusion: A clear distinction between the roles of teacher and researcher will be maintained by conducting interviews outside of class hours and emphasising the voluntary nature of participation. Reflexive journaling will be used to continuously reflect on and mitigate any biases. - Emotional Distress and Ethical Dilemmas: The researcher will engage in regular sessions with supervisors or peers to reflect on emotional responses and ethical challenges. Ethical guidelines and professional boundaries will be adhered to. - Risk of Accusation of Impropriety or Bias: All interactions will be documented with transparent communication about the research purpose and procedures.
5	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	Risk to the University: - Adverse Publicity: There is a minimal risk of adverse publicity if participants misunderstand the research purpose or if findings are misinterpreted. - Data Protection: As the research involves collecting personal perceptions, there is a risk of data breaches if sensitive information is not securely handled. - Conflict of Interest: Since participants are students or acquaintances, there is a risk of perceived bias, which could impact the university's reputation for ethical research practices.	How you will mitigate the risk to the University: - Adverse Publicity: Clear communication about the research objectives and ethical procedures will be provided to all participants. Anonymised reporting will be used to ensure that no individuals are identifiable in the findings. Participants will also be informed that this is an independent research project, not endorsed by the university, and that all ideas and opinions expressed are my own. Additionally, I will conduct myself professionally at all times as a student of the university. - Data Protection: All data will be securely stored in password-protected digital files compliant with GDPR regulations. Consent forms will include information on data storage, usage, and disposal. Any video or audio recordings will be deleted as soon as transcriptions and notes have been made.

		- Conflict of Interest: Reflexivity will be practised throughout the research process to maintain impartiality. A rigorous methodology will help me to avoid bias and my participants will be aware of their anonymity and my commitment to the integrity of the project in terms of my ethical responsibilities.
6	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	
	Risk to the environment: No significant environmental risks are anticipated, as the research involves interviews and vocal exercises conducted in controlled indoor settings. There will be no use of hazardous materials, pollutants, or activities that could impact local ecosystems.	How you will mitigate the risk to environment: To minimise any minor environmental impact, sessions will be conducted in well-ventilated rooms to ensure comfortable air quality. Any materials used, such as paper for consent forms, will be minimised. Additionally, digital communication and data collection will be prioritised, where possible, to reduce paper waste.

Disclosure and Barring Service				
	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
7	Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?	☐	☒	☐
8	If YES, please give the certificate number. If the certificate number is not available please write "Pending"; in this case any ethical approval will be subject to providing the appropriate certificate number.			

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 will provide my email address (or phone number) so participants can contact me for further details or results. Additionally, I will engage in member checking to ensure the accuracy and authenticity of Participants' input.
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.
	Before data collection begins, potential participants will be fully informed about the nature of the study and what their participation will involve. This will be done through a written explanation, ensuring they understand the study's objectives, procedures, and their rights. If using a paper questionnaire, participants will be required to sign a consent form before completing the survey. For an online questionnaire, participants will first encounter a consent form on the screen before the questions begin. Participants will be asked to indicate their consent by clicking the "Next" button. By doing so, they will confirm their agreement to participate in the study, and this action will serve as their informed consent. Additionally, participants will be required to sign separate consent forms for each method of data collection, including interviews and participant diaries if used. Each participant will be given the opportunity to learn about the project in detail before being asked to sign a consent form for each

	specific activity, ensuring they provide informed consent for every aspect of their participation.
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.
	I will ensure that the anonymity of participants is maintained throughout the study. I will not collect names unless absolutely necessary for the research. In any outputs, I will avoid naming participants without their explicit permission. All personal information will be kept confidential, and any identifying details will be removed or anonymised to protect participants' privacy. Any video or audio recordings will be deleted as soon as transcriptions and notes have been made.

SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

	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
1	"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. Any video or audio recordings of participants is considered to be personal data.	☒	☐
	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
2	The research will involve collecting personal data, including audio recordings, survey responses, or interview transcripts and contact information and consent forms, which may contain identifiable information such as voices, opinions, or experiences linked to specific individuals. This data is essential for gaining insights into participant experiences and conducting the research. To protect participants' privacy: - All personal data will be anonymised during the analysis process to remove identifying information. - Only authorised the principal researcher and supervisor will have access to the data. Any video or audio recordings will be deleted as soon as transcriptions and notes have been made.		
	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
3	"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),	☐	☒

	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:
4	 <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

	Will data from the research activity (collected data, drafts of the thesis, or materials for publication) be stored in any of the following ways?	YES	NO
5	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	☒	☐
6	University computers?	☐	☒
7	Private company computers?	☐	☒
8	Home or other personal computers?	☒	☐
9	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	☒	☐
10	"Cloud" storage or websites?	☒	☐
11	Other – specify:	☐	☒
12	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of backup procedures, password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation: All data will be securely stored in password-protected cloud storage and/or locally on my laptop, and will not be shared. Audio/visual recordings will be transcribed and then deleted, and participants will be given the chance to review the transcripts for accuracy. Any USB drives used for storing or transferring data will also be password-protected. To ensure confidentiality, each participant will receive a unique identifier, and the list linking identifiers to participant names will be securely stored in a password-protected folder.		

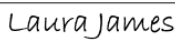
Data Protection			
	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
13	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☒	☐
14	Sharing of data with others at the University outside of the immediate research team?	☐	☒
15	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☒
16	Export of data outside the UK or importing of data from outside the UK?	☒	☐
17	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☒	☐
18	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	☒
19	Use of data management system?	☐	☒
20	Data archiving?	☐	☒
21	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018) (and any international equivalents, where appropriate): All data will be securely stored in password-protected cloud storage and/or locally on my laptop, 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 Master's 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. Any video or audio recordings will be deleted as soon as transcriptions and notes have been made.		
22	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity: Principal researcher and supervisor		
23	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity: Principal researcher		
24	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 securely stored in password-protected cloud storage and/or locally on my laptop, and 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 Master's and then deleted.		
25	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> Not applicable <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
26	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	YES	☒
27	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	☒

SECTION K: Declaration

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/	
1	Signature of applicant:  Date: 14.02.25

For STUDENT Submissions:

2	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Laura James	Date: 9.4.25
3	Signature:		

For STAFF Submissions:

4	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:		Date:
5	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 (where appropriate) ONLY TICK IF YOU HAVE ATTACHED A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT
☒	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.

RESEARCH STUDENTS ONLY

Once complete, submit this form via the **MyTSD Doctoral College Portal** at (<https://mytsd.uwtsd.ac.uk>).

RESEARCH 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.

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.