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Thank you for visiting the FL-ACDA Research Corner publication for October 2022!

This post contains summaries of the original publications listed above as well as implications from the research for (and by) practicing choral music educator-conductors. If you would like to submit an article summary for publication consideration in Research Corner, please visit [this link](#) for submission guidelines.

Mind, body, and soul: The effects of bodily movement on listeners' perceptions of choral performances

By David W. Langley

Originally published in *International Journal of Music Education* (2022)

<https://doi.org/10.1177/02557614221096153>

Summary and implications by Patrick Chiu, Florida State University

Topic

The author of this study explored how performer's physical movement may have an effect on listeners' perceptions of a choral performance. The author asked 103 college students from music appreciation courses and choral ensembles to rate the expressivity and style of eight audio/video recorded excerpts of Pereira's *Garota de Ipanema* and Stanford's *Justorum animae* by a 34-voice auditioned college choir with or without movement.

Findings

The results of this study showed that physical movement impacts the listeners' perceptions of musical qualities associated with expression and style. The findings suggested that the effect only became significant when movement combined with sound—movement alone was not a significant contributor. Furthermore, the participants' responses related to the actual movement and visual stimuli of the choir more than the sound produced by the choir when they did the physical movement. The author interpreted that it was due to the influence of the online visual presentations on the late-1990s-born participants, who usually consumed music that combined audio with video. They had an expectation of a similar format of presentation even for choral performances.

Implications

- Include physical warm-ups as a preparation to incorporating physical movement and singing later in the rehearsal. These warm-up exercises can go beyond stretching, for example, left hand/right hand coordination, balance and stability during standing/walking, etc.
- Introduce physical gestures along with new musical materials. The visualization of the musical phrases can help singers learn faster and build up a good foundation in combining movement and sound in the performance.

- Keep singers active in the rehearsal room by asking them to stand and sit frequently. Singers can even walk around the room when singing or transition to different parts of the space for different sections of the song.
- Stop conducting occasionally and encourage the singers to look each other in the eyes when singing. They might feel awkward in the beginning. Eventually they will develop a stronger sense of bonding.
- Invite the singers to conduct themselves when they sing and strengthen their creativity in combining movement and sound.

Additional Resources

For more information about movement and singing, check out:

Kilpatrick, C. E. (2020). Movement, gesture, and singing: A review of literature. *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, 38(3), 29–37.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/8755123320908612>

Therees Tkach Hibbard wrote about the concept of “Bodysinging” and suggested a 11-step sequence to build up the singers’ body-voices:

Hibbard, T. T. (2013). Building body-voices: Developing moving musicians in choral rehearsals.

The Choral Journal, 53(7), 43–53. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23561417>

Intersections in music education: Implications of Universal Design for Learning, Culturally Responsive Education, and Trauma-Informed Education for P–12 Praxis

By Karen Salvador and Mara E. Culp

Originally published in *Music Educators Journal* (volume 108, issue 3, 2022)

[https://doi.org/ 10.1177/00274321221087737](https://doi.org/10.1177/00274321221087737)

Summary and implications by Victor McDowell, Horn Lake High School

Topic

The authors of this study gave suggestions to music educators in response to intersectionality of students' identities. Teachers are responsible for educating the whole child. They must recognize that the humans they work with are searching for identity and developing self-worth based on their experiences. The authors provided ways educators can approach learning to make sure that the *whole child* is being heard, seen, and valued when it comes to education through music.

Summary

The concept of intersectionality can benefit music educators by helping to identify the issues students face pertaining to their own identity. Through recognition of each student's personal experience, we can honor each student and their lived experiences. The authors provided three frameworks that teachers could implement within their classroom to promote equity among all students.

I. Universal Design for Learning

All children are considered to have some type of barrier to learning. This pedagogical approach promotes methodical and strategic planning to anticipate and remove those barriers to assist in all student's learning.

II. Culturally Responsive Education

CRE allows teachers to foster relationships among the community and learn about the culture of those students they serve and their families. It enforces the practice of cultural humility and provides a more equitable experience, through curriculum, to apply learned cultural knowledge for the student, family, community, and school cultures.

III. Trauma-Informed Education

TIE assists teachers in creating safe environments before or after a traumatic event occurs. Our experiences of life, past and present, shape identity. How our classroom is constructed can directly support or hinder our connection to our students. We must take an introspective look at our positionality and personal identities.

Implications

- Examine positionality with those in the school community. Establish boundaries to share and practice empathy when learning from personal stories.
 - Become more acquainted with *whole child* instruction.
 - Create a space for students to individually be included. Acknowledge and value their identity and apply knowledge of student identities to learning/performing.
 - Be willing to foster relationships and be involved with the families and communities of the students outside the classroom.
 - Restructure curriculum to serve learners based on knowledge about the students, families, communities, and self.
 - Reflect on language and images used inside the classroom. In respect of the diversity of students, be mindful to not reinforce negative stereotypes and ensure images around the room reflect the variety of identities represented in the room.
 - Create student informed decision through buddy systems for selection of repertoire for upcoming concerts.
 - Define what “success” truly means to you as an educator. (e.g., Students personal growth vs. accolades)
 - Practice cultural humility. Limit evaluating one’s culture as good or bad, but give every aspect of one’s community, music, and social practices equity in the music classroom.
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The effects of gesture and movement training on the intonation of children's singing in vocal warm-up sessions.

By Mei-Ying Liao and Jane W. Davidson

Originally published in *International Journal of Music Education* (volume 34, issue 1, 2015)

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0255761415614798>

Summary and implications by Kashaun Wortham, Horn Lake High School

Topic

The authors of this article set out to determine the effects of gesture and movement training on the overall sound of children's choir members. They measured the intonation in the singing of warmups by fifty-three fifth graders. There were three groups used to collect data: group 1 received no gesture or movement training, group 2 received gesture training, and group 3 received gesture and movement training.

Findings

Participants who received gesture and movement training achieved considerable improvement in intonation compared to those who received no gesture or movement training. Visual, aural, and kinesthetic experiences have an apparent effect on facilitating wanted behaviors with children's vocal techniques. Previous studies indicated that this form of learning can aid in relaxation more than concepts related to pitch specifically. However, this study displayed a distinct impact on the ability to sing with greater accuracy while utilizing gesture and movement. There were no major differences in intonation for vocal patterns 1 and 2 for those who received both gesture and movement training and those who only received gesture training. This finding remained consistent when comparing the intonation of those who received only gesture training and those who received no gesture or movement training. The authors proposed that internalizing the kinesthetic experience allowed groups 2 and 3 to draw on the motor sensations in their singing. The students made greater improvements on their post-test measures as the vocal patterns became increasingly more difficult. This may have been because students need to focus more of their attention at all levels of the learning process. Gestures are more effective as the task increases in difficulty because a student may sing carelessly if the vocal pattern is too simple. This may prove that gesture has a positive impact on enhancing intonation, but it may also imply that gesture is not always effective. Gesture could be a powerful technique for teacher-conductors when presented effectively. The three gestures used in this study (gathering, pushing, and opening-closing) seemed to have a positive impact on the facilitation of children's intonation. Applying simple gestures may provide effective mental images and aid in building up their tuning sense in melodic motions. One can conclude that gesture positively effects children's singing accuracy of difficult patterns.

Implications

- A combination of gesture and movement training can be powerful in working with young choral singers.
- Nonverbal techniques can potentially provide a direct means for working with voice production. Teachers need to possess the knowledge and experience of singing and movement, but also need good conducting skills.
- Effective presentation will make gestures meaningful and have a positive effect on improving vocal skills.
- Teachers should encourage students to be aware of the physical experience and provide gesture and movement activities in the music curriculum.

Research-to-resource: Applying a self-care framework to music education

By John Rine A. Zabanal

Originally published in *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* (volume 40, issue 3, 2021)

<https://doi.org/10.1177/87551233211056995>

Summary and implications by Erin Scully Kolodinsky, Windermere High School

Topic

The author of this article explored the self-care framework created for social workers and adapted it for music educators. He defined self-care as “a series of preventative measures that will promote the well-being of an individual” (p. 5). Music educators must actively take care of themselves in order to effectively teach their students.

Findings

The self-care framework is categorized into two dimensions—personal and professional. *Personal self-care* promotes health and well-being to oneself in physical care, psychological and emotional, social engagement, spiritual engagement, and leisurely activities. *Physical care* promotes a safe and healthy body while psychological and emotional care allows educators to maintain a positive and compassionate view of ourselves. *Social and spiritual engagement* allows us to build and maintain positive, meaningful relationships and spend time in reflection and thought. *Leisurely activities* encourage fun and restfulness. *Professional self-care* promotes purposeful engagement such as workload and time management, attention to the professional role, attention to reactions at work, professional support and self-advocacy, professional development, and the revitalization and generation of energy. *Workload and time management* focuses on the amount of time actively spent on accomplishing work tasks. *Attention to reactions at work* requires educators to see and manage their reactions with students while personal social support and self-advocacy involves encouragement, constructive feedback, guidance, and education inside the classroom. Professional development and *attention to the professional role* encourages educators to reflect on their role in music education and encourages development of new knowledge and skills. The *revitalization and the generation of energy* establishes and restores preparedness of active engagement and commitment to our profession. When educators improve their overall well-being, they are more capable of taking care of themselves, their families, and their students.

Implications

- Personal physical care strategies include daily exercise, getting a decent amount of sleep each night, and making choices that promote a healthy diet and immune system.
- Professional physical care strategies include wearing hearing protection when needed, starting each day with vocal warm-ups, and stretching and taking breaks during rehearsals.
- Psychological and emotional care strategies include recognizing and accepting our strengths and weaknesses, using stress management techniques, practicing meditation, and problem solving.
- Social engagement strategies include participating in community events, maintaining communication with important people in our lives, and attending social events.
- Spiritual engagement strategies include making a gratitude list, praying, attending a religious service, spending time reflecting, and identifying personal values.
- Participate in any leisure activity that supports rest and relaxation and is also fun.
- Workload and time management strategies include making lists, scheduling tasks, prioritizing tasks, and delegating tasks.
- Consider your strengths and weaknesses in the classroom to better address the needs of students.
- Attention to reactions at work strategies include meditation, journaling, avoiding certain discussions, avoiding work stressors, and therapy.
- Seek meaningful relationships with people outside of your professional workplace and content matter.
- Professional development strategies include pursuing additional certifications, attending graduate school, reading books, and attending conferences.
- Revitalization and the generation of energy strategies include creating a pleasant workspace, revisiting praise and gratitude notes and emails, and participating in work-related social activities.

Additional Resources

To learn how to create a self-care plan, check out “Health and Wellness for In-Service and Future Music Teachers” by Christa Kuebel.

For a study on personal and professional self-care practice in K-12 music educators, check out “The Reported Self-Care Practices of Music Educators” by Jamey Kelley, Kelsey Nussbaum, Michael O. Crawford, Jared B. Critchfield II, Sam H. Flippin, Alyssa N. Grey, and Candace R. Mahaffey.