

## **Abstract PEVOC - conference 2017**

by Bodil Kvernenes Nørsett,

Associate Professor and Authorized Complete Vocal Teacher, Ansgar University College

### **ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK IN VOCAL POPULAR MUSIC PERFORMANCE EXAMS IN HIGHER MUSIC EDUCATION.**

#### **Introduction**

Assessments in musical performance is a common part of music education practice in both lower and higher education. Higher music education does assessment and feedback play a nurturing role in advanced musical performance (Papageorgi and Welch, 2014). As a song teacher at a university college in southern Norway, I am concerned about this issue: to make my vocal students more aware of how they can use the grade and the feedback from the exam performance at the end of the year as a motivation and a tool for learning.

#### **Project and research question**

Assessing music performance is an important process in a music study as assessment is in all pedagogics. Several assessment studies has been done in music education throughout the years, and much literature is written on instrumental assessments. Most studies are done on classical traditions, but little or nothing is done on rythmic/popular vocal performance.

The ground for research on assessments in rythmic and popular music is fertile ground (Jørgensen 2009). Teachers and assessment is discussed (Rui 2010), and the assessors reliability and consistence, uniform and similar judgements are also considered, but I would like to take the students voice within the context.

How does the student think around the assessment? Which criterias do they assume to be assessed after? I have also asked how the assessment motivates the students.

*My research question is: What assessment criterias are regarded salient by vocal students in an examination of a vocal performance in popular music?*

#### **Method and material**

As a smaller precursor for a larger project on assessment of vocal performance in popular music in higher education, I have conducted a small study over three years (2015-17), using vocal students from the the higher music educations in Kristiansand, Norway: Music dpt at Ansgar College University, and the Rythmic music dpt at the University of Agder.

Vocal students has, during three years, been given a questionnaire at spring time, ahead of their exam performance.

*My aim in this questionnaire is to reveal the participant students awareness of what actually they assume, or know, is assessed in a vocal performance, and how much it correlates with the teachers and sensors who assess the students. I have also asked the students if they do believe that assessment is important. The answer to this question may give a guideline to see how motivated the students are for their vocal study.*

## Theoretical framework

We seek feedback and assessment for confirming and improving our performances. Relevant feedback and assessment theories has been provided by John Hattie and Helen Timperley. They argue that feedback is one of the most powerful influences on learning and achievement, but the impact can either be positive or negative. They also argue that the type of feedback and the way it can be given can be differentially effective (Hattie and Timperley 2007), something which some of the student answers in my study confirm. The vocal students propose that the type of feedback (a grade versus oral or written feedback) given is essential to how they can use the assessment for further development.

An analysis and a conclusive summary of the study will hopefully be presented on the PEVOC conference 2017 in Gent august/september.

## Literature

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