

The identification of personality and adult attachment in a longitudinal observation of one-to-one Western singing lessons

Sofia Serra, Universidade Católica Portuguesa

Aims

The aims of this presentation are to identify behaviour adaptation in a longitudinal relationship of singing teacher and student through the analysis of the effects of personality and adult attachment on singing teacher and student relationship outcomes. The identification of successful from unsuccessful combinations of singing teachers and student characteristics may affect the singing performance on a longitudinal perspective. Also, this study will identify the main differences between the structures of singing lessons between teachers.

Context

Instrumental and singing teaching has previously been studied with particular interest on pedagogical, cognitive, technical, developmental aspects. However, the relationship and interactions that take place between teachers and students in that setting seem to be lacking extensive exploration.

Kemp (1996) describes the singing teacher and student relationship as a complex setting of personality interaction and “the nature of singers’ dependence upon their teachers” (p. 174). This study approaches the singing teacher-student relationship with a particular focus on the observation of personality traits and the levels of attachment identified between teacher and student in a longitudinal perspective.

Methodology

A longitudinal video recording observation was made during one academic year with the purpose of evaluating aspects that are developed, intensified, excluded and maintained in the relationship between the teacher and the student. The collected videos were evaluated in a qualitative (relationship development) and quantitative (quantification and comparison between teachers) perspective.

Simultaneously, reports of the same students’ and teachers’ personality and attachment were being collected based on the personality test NEO FFI- R by Costa and McCrae (1985) and Adult Attachment Scale by Collins & Read (1990).

This paper will focus particularly differences and similarities found between teachers and students and the possible effects of those characteristics in the singing lessons.

Results

Ongoing analysis illustrating the interaction between teacher and student include a wide list of variances: personality combination, the individual background, kind of attachment felt towards each other and many other aspects suggesting that the relationship with the student could have major impact on other aspects of singing. Particularly, through the development of the relationship several aspects are identifiable: increasing physical proximity, direct feedback, interpersonal awareness, non-verbal communication development, teaching techniques adaptability and other. The analysis of videos also enabled categorization of teachers in a unique profile type that might be beneficial to the development of teacher-student matching.

Conclusions

This study observed the psychological involvements of that relationship and the effects of those in the behaviour in each lesson and in a longitudinal perspective. The personality combination between teacher and student and the kind of attachment that is implicit in this relationship may be a predisposition for successful or unsuccessful relationships.

References

- Collins, N. L. & Read, J. S. (1990). Adult Attachment, working models, and relationship quality in dating couples. *Journal of personality and Social Psychology*, 58, 664-663.
- Costa, P. T. Jr. & MacCrae, R. R. (1985). *The NEO Personality Inventory Manual*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.
- Kemp, A. E. (1996). *The Musical Temperament: Psychology & Personality of Musicians*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.