A CLASS OF ITS OWN

TOWARDS A PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR SINGERS OF CONTEMPORARY COMMERCIAL MUSIC (CCM)

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ABSTRACT

The twentieth century gave rise to an immense landscape of contemporary commercial music (CCM) styles, facilitated by the unprecedented acceleration of music technology and cross-cultural globalisation. Still now, the CCM industry dominates music markets, and audience demand remains high. This has led to a significant increase in the number of singing students seeking training in CCM across its diversity of styles. Despite the considerable demand for CCM vocal instruction, a pedagogical approach that specifically caters for this ever-evolving group of styles has yet to be developed.

CCM, as a topic of pedagogical discourse, emerged in 2000 when the acronym was coined by Jeanette LoVetri. It was around this time that LoVetri and other authors drew attention to the lack of a pedagogical model designed specifically for singers training in CCM styles. Faced with a growth in demand for such training, singing teachers were being challenged to consider the relevance of traditional classical technique and associated voice training methods to the desired vocal production of singers of CCM styles. This remains largely the case today; in many higher education institutions, for example, a one-size-fits-all approach to teaching singing continues to be implemented. In this way, CCM styles have yet to be legitimised from a pedagogical standpoint, and the training of CCM singers continues to be generally overlooked in research studies.

Many CCM voice teachers are faced with students who want to be vocally fluent and artistically expressive in a particular CCM style or across a broad range of styles. For CCM teaching to be style-relevant to sustainable vocal production, teachers working with singers of CCM repertoire must recognise the elements, characteristics, vocal effects and nuances of each style, and understand how these can be executed safely. Due to the current absence of a pedagogical framework that is specifically tailored for the CCM singing voice and addresses the myriad of style-related effects and embellishments inherent in the CCM genre, voice teachers often struggle to equip students with a firm understanding of how to successfully and safely produce these
sounds and, more broadly, how to develop as competent and confident CCM artists in their own right.

Situated within this context, this research explores the teaching beliefs and approaches of nine pedagogues who have extensive experience and/or prominence in the field of teaching the CCM singing voice. The aim of the research is to identify pedagogical beliefs and approaches that may inform the future development of a tailored pedagogical framework for CCM singers. Using semi-structured interviews, this study thematically explores these pedagogues’ teaching approaches and perceptions of CCM in relation to alignment, breath management, breath flow and support, resonance, articulation, repertoire, style authenticity, performance and artistry, and vocal health. This research offers a preliminary pedagogical framework and informed recommendations for teachers, students, and researchers about progressing the field of CCM singing-voice pedagogy. It also suggests how this framework could best serve the voice teaching community to improve student learning outcomes. I advocate for the development of a common shared vocabulary of terminologies that can be used to describe, define, and evaluate various elements relating to singing-voice training, and to the physiology and aesthetics associated with voice production. Based on the findings of this research, I also encourage education institutions to review and, if needed, revise their voice training programs to align with trends in an ever-changing music market and the increasing demand for CCM instruction.
STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

(Signed) ________________

Marisa Elizabeth Naismith

8 March 2019
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Any positive development of CCM vocal pedagogy is more likely to be focused on the experienced phenomena where commentators have an “insider” view, that is, where they have an emic understanding of the specific issues and challenges faced by performers within that group.

(Bartlett, 2011, p. 9)

During my extensive career as an award-winning professional singer, industry colleagues referred to me as the “pop and rock chick”. I was extremely successful and had never considered the need for academic accreditation. Forty-five years later, I find myself still involved in this most seductive music industry as I transition into a variety of pedagogical and academic roles. My journey to the point of writing this thesis has been an unusual one, so I begin this thesis by sharing my experiences of the many roads that have led to my profound desire to research the field of contemporary commercial music (CCM) singing-voice pedagogy.

1.1 RESEARCHER PERSPECTIVE

My love of pop and rock music began in the early 1960s when I listened to my older brother’s vinyl records of the latest hits. I would lock all the doors and windows in the living room of our family home and visualise myself performing to a crowd of thousands, singing at the top of my voice, totally immersed in the music. In this way, my singing and performance abilities developed through listening, observation, experimentation, and hours of practice.

The vocal style elements I employed to create an authentic contemporary commercial music (CCM) sound were developed by emulating numerous recording artists, usually my pop and rock music idols who were charting at the time. At the age of 14, my singing and performance abilities received some fine tuning with the help of a local singing teacher, Viola Ritchie. She was the nearest teacher to my home, and I realise now that Viola was a pioneer in the 1970s because she was prepared to teach a non-classical technical approach to her students. She trained many singers who achieved great success and international acclaim as the leading national touring and recording artists of their time.
At the age of 15, I became commercially active in the field of CCM as a professional singer, performing an average of five nights per week. I sang in a variety of live venues, toured the east coast of Australia in bands, and appeared on television and radio. My performance career spanned 35 years; during that time I experienced a range of challenges that confront a singer working in the CCM industry. These experiences allowed me to develop not only great empathy with CCM singers, but also an understanding of the expectations of the industry, music managers, and audiences within this field of entertainment. With no plans to become a singing teacher, in 1988 I was asked to begin teaching CCM styles at a local performing arts school. I was hired on the basis of my professional profile and reputation as an award-winning vocalist. My early pedagogical practice was found on intuition, and on the practical vocal knowledge I had developed from a broad range of experiences in performing CCM repertoire over 15 years, rather than from the minimal voice training I had received.

My formal education commenced in 2008 when I was accepted as a student into a university-based graduate certificate program with a specialisation in vocal pedagogy. It was not entirely a comfortable experience because most of the cohort were classically trained singers, and there appeared to be a definite music bias in terms of ‘high art, low art’ in course content and group discussions. In facing up to the challenges, I began to research the available literature on CCM pedagogy. In the publications I read, I noticed a lack of any cohesive pedagogical structures specific to CCM style and its associated characteristics (for example, belt for musical theatre or pop/rock). Unable to find much research which discussed effective technical training relevant to the specific style and vocal health needs of CCM singers, I became aware of a gap in the literature and a need for informed, empirical research of CCM singing-voice pedagogy.

While reading the available literature of voice science and voice pedagogy, I realised that most research (especially on belt voice production) was being conducted by classical voice practitioners, using small samples of classically trained singers. Furthermore, I discovered that many CCM advocates and primary contributors to the existing literature on CCM pedagogy were classically trained and/or had never performed as professional singers in the CCM industry. Many were commentators from outside the field of CCM who spoke from a pre-supposition that classical training was suitable for all singers, regardless of style. Not only was there a lack of any
consistent pedagogical modelling for CCM singers, but there was also a lack of
acknowledgement for what was occurring in the CCM industry globally. My research,
along with my industry experience, inspired me to develop a foundational pedagogical
framework specific to the training of CCM singers.

At present, I teach aspiring singers within an undergraduate university program that
offers a degree in popular music. The students studying within this program are aiming
to create and record music with commercial intentions. I also train singers within the
education system at a private school with an outstanding music program, and work
with musical theatre singers from a variety of performing arts schools and community
theatre youth programs. My small private studio has an eclectic student base, attracting
students who are mostly making the transition from the studio into the professional
world of CCM. Therefore, each teaching day involves dealing with students who wish
to be trained specifically across a broad range of CCM styles, such as pop, rock,
rhythm and blues (R&B), metal, Indi, rap, funk, and musical theatre. Regardless of the
student’s musical preference, the pedagogical approaches that I employ are designed
to produce authentic CCM vocal style elements that differ greatly from what is
described in the literature as a traditional Western classical approach.

Reflecting on the establishment of my own pedagogical approaches to CCM, I realised
that it was very mosaic, comprising bits of experiences and influences that have been
carefully put together to create a teaching tool-box that I believe constitutes best
practice for CCM vocal pedagogy. The reflective process of my own journey as a
pedagogue in the field of CCM, along with a review of the literature, inspired the
fundamental question which supports this research:

How can the beliefs and teaching approaches of eminent CCM vocal
pedagogues inform the development of a pedagogical framework
specifically for CCM singers?

This thesis presents the results of my investigation based on data collected from semi-
structured interviews with eminent pedagogues in the field of CCM. I have attempted
to make my language and writing as accessible as possible in the hope that this research
becomes a purposeful and applicable document to assist CCM teachers who work
diligently in music and dance studios, performing arts schools, private studios, higher
education institutions, and in other contexts.
In this chapter, I introduce the acronym for contemporary commercial music (CCM) and describe the landscape of styles encompassed by this descriptor. I track the rise in popularity of CCM and how the shift in global music markets has resulted in an increased demand for CCM singing tuition. I address the past and existing states of CCM training, and the pedagogical problems facing the voice teaching community. Although acknowledging the history and value of Western classical vocal pedagogy, this chapter is focused on the main aim of this investigation: to identify a foundational pedagogical framework for the training of CCM singers.

1.2 DEFINING CONTEMPORARY COMMERCIAL MUSIC (CCM)

The referencing of an ever-evolving group of CCM styles under one umbrella term has been challenging because these styles are aesthetically different (Keskinen, 2013). The descriptor contemporary commercial music (CCM) emerged in the literature as a pedagogical discourse when the term was coined in 2000 by Jeanette LoVetri, a noted pedagogue and voice researcher. The acronym CCM was introduced specifically to replace and eliminate less explicit terms like non-classical or “music outside of Classical” (Hall, 2006; Robinson-Martin, 2010; Woodruff, 2011) because LoVetri believed this music should take its rightful place, without apology, alongside the great classical music of the world (Woodruff, 2011). The descriptor non-classical was used widely in voice research, as well as in early vocal pedagogy publications essentially describing what the music is not. Non-classical acknowledges a particular set of values which reflect a classically orientated point of view. This terminology was used to describe any vocal performance that did not meet the accepted ideals of tone and vocal production expected in traditional Western classical singing style. According to Keskinen (2013), “In the singing world, ‘classical’ referred to trained singers as opposed to those without training” (p. 11).

Although CCM is the most commonly used descriptor in the field of vocal pedagogy, it remains a contested term by some authors and pedagogues who believe that it is not the most suitable descriptor for the range of styles which fall under the CCM umbrella. Other terms such as popular have been used in the field of research to reference this group (Chandler, 2014; Keskinen, 2013). The word popular originates from Latin populāris, which derives from the word populous, meaning people (Popular, 2018a). This terminology has many historical and cultural associations. In describing popular in a cultural context, the Meriam Webster Dictionary defines it as “designed to appeal
to or intended for the general masses of the people, sometimes in contrast to upper classes or the educated” (Popular, 2018b).

Keskinen (2013) states:

Referring to the word ‘people’ it is a concept first used in the English law and politics in the 15th century. Later it has been connected with political movements and revolutionary thinking. During its first few centuries the term had a negative nuance and was mostly used by the elite class for ‘low’ or ‘vulgar.’ The rise of commodity culture in the late 18th century, thought, led to more positive implications as ‘popular’ came to mean well-liked by many people. (p. 10)

Bowman (2004) describes popular music as “the music of the herd”, and comments that it is “created for passive consumption and is bereft of intellectual effort and reward” (pp. 33). In contrast to popular music, classical music is described as an art form which, historically, was deeply associated with and exclusive to the educated and privileged upper class (Johnson, 2002). According to musicologists, the term classical refers to the music of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there was an increase in popular music production generated by Tin Pan Alley, and a new mass audience emerged for this music (Keskinen, 2013). The American Academy of Teachers of Singing (AATS, 2008) describes the introduction of this music: “In New York, Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe brought klezmer to the new world. That, blended with the sounds of the British Music Hall and New Orleans jazz and blues, helped to create America’s Tin Pan Alley” (p. 8).

Due to technological advancements over the past century, music production has created a greater divide in consumption rates between the music described as popular and that described as classical. Holt (2007) comments that popular music “is a powerful cultural and economical force in modern capitalist societies” (p. 1). When defining the popularity of a particular music, a review of the consumption rate, the delivery mode, and the music’s alignment with a selective group of people should be considered (Rodriguez, 2004). In the twentieth century, classical music was no longer consumed by the mass audience and, according to this definition, would begin to mean unpopular. Johnson (2002) explains:
The term [classical] implies a claim to universality, suggesting that such music transcends the judgements of any particular time or place. But the same claim underlies classical music’s lack of connection with the immediacy of everyday life, an aspect that ensures that it seems to be of little relevance for many people. (p. 6)

Despite the surge in production, the shift in music consumption rate and its cultural perceptions, the term popular remains a questionable descriptor for this music due to its negative historical, political, and cultural connotations (Keskinen, 2013). Holt (2007) explains, “Some forms of popular music accompany racism, sexism, and political disengagement, while others have had unparalleled power in struggles against these social problems and succeeded in overthrowing cultural hierarchies” (p. 1).

Much of the American music in the United States has its roots in non-classical traditions and Afro-American music; and it has been associated with the establishment of some CCM genres such as gospel, R&B, and rock (Bartlett, 2010; Keskinen, 2013). According to Zangger Borch (2005), this descriptor is used to refer to CCM styles in many Scandinavian countries. From a historical perspective, the African roots of these music styles have been associated with the cotton, sugarcane, and tobacco plantations of North America. During the seventeenth century, foreigners arrived in North America, where the West African slave trade was introduced and grew to endemic proportions over many years. The slaves preserved their musical traditions in North America through a ring ritual of drumming, singing, and dancing during slave gatherings, camp meetings, and jubilees (Mark & Gary, 1992; Peress, 2004). During the religious revival in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the African-Americans formed choirs at camp meetings to perform their own versions of hymns and worship music (Peress, 2004).

Spiritual music was a means of expressing the Black experience in America, and was the most widely recognised Afro-American music genre at that time (Keskinen, 2013). There are clear connections in the traditions and practices associated with spiritual music and those surrounding Black sacred and gospel music. Robinson-Martin (2014) states that gospel music celebrates the “contemporary Black religious experience, a musical expression of Black liberation of Black theology and a musical experience that is deeply rooted in Black life and culture” (p. 336). Performances of this music
incorporate characteristics of work songs, Negro spirituals, blues, jazz, rhythm and blues and hip hop (Robinson-Martin (2010).

Although some of the common features in popular music culture are rooted in Afro-American traditions (for example, vocal improvisation which provides singers the opportunity to create spontaneous melody), the term African-American, or Afro-American, strongly refers to the “black experience” and has strong cultural implications (Keskinen, 2013). George (1987) states that African-American music “should be approached and studied within its own terms, within its own context as the music of any culture should be” (p. 75). Although African-American music is associated with the introduction of some CCM styles, based on its limitations in terms of inclusiveness, it is not an adequate descriptor for all the music styles that fall under the CCM umbrella.

In 2010, Dianne Hughes introduced another acronym to characterise the various musical styles within this group. The term popular culture music (PCM) was established purposefully to remove the commercial context within the term CCM. Hughes felt that not all the music within this broad group of diverse music styles had marketable characteristics, nor was some of the music intended for profitability as the term commercial would suggest. Hughes (2014) comments:

It is also timely to recognize that not all artists within PCM are commercially motivated and that, within any contemporary music genre, there exist sub groupings of musical styles bound by distinct modes of expression (Style 2012) or stylistic nuances. (p. 289)

Contemporary music is yet another term that has been used widely to describe this group of music styles (Chandler, 2014). However, in the US, the descriptor contemporary most often refers to contemporary classical music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Furthermore, in Europe, the term contemporary is non-specific and can refer to music that is either classical or not (Woodruff, 2011). Therefore, the use of contemporary in a music context can be problematic because it can refer to music of a specific time period—the present time or modern times—rather than encompassing the particular style characteristics of the music (Winnie, 2014; Woodruff, 2011).
A review of the most current research into vocal pedagogy confirms that the acronym CCM is the most commonly used descriptor (DeSilva, 2016; Freeman, Green, & Sargeant, 2015; Hoch, 2018; Winnie, 2014; Woodruff, 2011). It was conceived from a need to acknowledge all the various styles of Western popular music that had arisen during the twentieth century, such as pop, rock, jazz, musical theatre, soul, cabaret, country, folk, gospel, rhythm and blues, rap, and all the associated sub-styles of this group (Woodruff, 2011). Therefore, for the sake of consistency, the acronym CCM will be used throughout this thesis.

1.3 The Vast CCM Landscape

When LoVetri coined the term CCM in 2000, it was used to describe an extensive group of music styles which included pop, hip hop, gospel, jazz, rock, country, punk, musical theatre and heavy metal (DeSilva, 2016; Hanlon, 2012; Woodruff, 2011). However, due to technological advancements over the past twenty years, such as the introduction of the internet and its globally connected network system, the territory of music styles has expanded markedly, and many new styles and sub-styles have emerged. Silver, Lee, and Childress (2016) explain:

Music scenes are no longer restricted to a specific physical locality. A band’s social media profile can be viewed anywhere in the world, making it possible for musicians working anywhere to know about, influence, and remix each other’s work, regardless of genre or sub-genre. Online music stores are essentially unlimited in size and their products can be categorized in infinite ways. (p. 4)

The fusion of music styles is a result of the infiltration of Western popular music into Europe and Asia, and reciprocal cultural exchanges. For example, in 2017 the K-Pop boy band, BTS, became the first South Korean boy band to enter the Top 40 charts with the single “MIC Drop” (Nielsen, 2018). The song also entered the all-genre Digital Songs chart at number 4 in its debut week, selling 45,000 copies and receiving air play on pop radio. In 2018, songs by multiple K-Pop acts achieved success on the Billboard Hot 100. The Korean girl group BLACKPINK scored their first two Billboard Hot 100 entries with “Ddu-Du-Ddu-Du” in June and the Dua Lipa collaboration “Kiss and Make Up” in November. Also, in November, the all-male K-Pop outfit EXO became the third Korean band to score a Top 40 album on the
Billboard 200 with “Don’t Mess Up My Tempo”, debuting at number 23 with sales of 23,000 equivalent units (Nielsen, 2018). Figure 1 demonstrates the resultant music hybridity: how some music communities overlap more than others (for example, pop/rock and homegrown American versus punk rock and rave), and how other styles such as rock and hip hop bind other styles together to form sub-styles.

Figure 1: Discovering Musical Genre Communities. From Silver, Lee & Childress, 2016, Figure 2.
(https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0155471)
In the public domain.

The evolving musical landscape representative of CCM style produces musics that are aesthetically diverse. In meeting this diversity CCM singers are called on to use their vocal instrument in a unique manner, incorporating all the requisite style elements, and to be proficient across an extensive range of styles (LoVetri, 2006b). To understand the components that contribute to an authentic CCM vocal performance,
voice teachers need to be proficient at recognising the basic aesthetic characteristics and specific elements associated with each style. Failure by a voice teacher to recognise and manage these differences will inhibit their ability to adequately serve the needs of their CCM singing students. This study lays the foundations for a pedagogical framework that could best encompass the broad spectrum of CCM styles.

1.4 THE SHIFT IN GLOBAL MUSIC MARKETS TO CCM

As a result of cultural exchanges, Western popular music has rapidly expanded to become the most dominant form of music, not just in the US and the UK, from which it predominantly originated, but across continents (Fu, 2015). Fundamentally, the evolution, accessibility, and diversification of CCM music styles over the last century have been a consequence of rapid changes in technology, a major shift in music consumption, and the globalisation of popular music culture. In an online article, Covington (2014) elaborates on the impact of this phenomenon in Japan: “It’s an order as tall as Tokyo’s skyscrapers, but when it’s filled, the results are fascinating and worth understanding, seeing as Japan is the world’s second largest music market and idol pop is its industry’s crown jewel” (para. 2). Singapore is another example of a country where local music markets have been strongly influenced by technological advancements. According to Fu (2015):

To some extent, people are easily influenced by the media and may regard Western music as authentic—this is technology determinism, which can actually control or drive the development of society’s values and context. In conclusion, the multicultural society of Singapore has created a great platform on which musicians from all around the world can perform. The process of globalization and Americanization has affected the development of local musicians, not only by capturing the local market, but also by changing people’s perspectives about Singaporean music. Singaporean people assess their localized music differently from how they assess Western music. (p. 4)

A major aspect of this globalisation rests with technological advancements of the last century, including the introduction of devices such as portable computers, iPods and smartphones. In addition, the internet has created a shift in the way consumers access music. Early in the twentieth century, shellac 78s replaced wax cylinders and pianola
rolls, and in the 1950s, jukeboxes loaded with 7-inch singles were substituted by LPs and cassettes (Hughes, Evans, Morrow, & Keith, 2016). By 1995, music consumers were purchasing CDs, and this new music format achieved annual sales in excess of $25 billion globally (Hughes et al., 2016). Due to the advent of music streaming services such as Apple Music and Spotify, in the past two decades music streaming has rapidly become the most popular method of accessing music. Music track downloading and music sharing through social media platforms not only dominate the way in which music is being accessed, but also the way new music is being discovered. According to Hughes et al. (2016):

For most of the last century radio and television exposure were typically the key drivers of hit songs and while traditional media remains important, that discovery process is now vastly more fragmented. In some instances, stars can emerge from just one online channel (namely, Shawn Mendes via Vine or Troye Sivan through YouTube), with Facebook and other forms of social media typically playing pivotal roles in exposing all new music. (p. iv)

The Nielsen Company (2019) is the music industry’s leading data information provider. It seeks to understand the attitudes and behaviours of music fans, and provides an insight into how consumers engage with their favourite music artists. It publishes a Year-End Report summarising music consumption trends in the U.S.A, and a report on music trends, with a genre breakdown. Its ongoing reports state that new technologies and the latest devices such as smartphones, laptops and tablets, allow listeners to engage with music anywhere and at any time. Statistics in the 2017 Year-End Report (Nielsen, 2018) show that music streaming continued to grow significantly, with over 618 billion songs streamed through audio and video platforms. The report also shows that CCM genres represented 99 per cent of total music consumption in the U.S.A. For the first time since the introduction of the music report over 90 years ago (Nielsen, 2019), R&B/hip hop replaced rock as the most consumed music genre, with a 24.5 per cent share of total audio consumption for the year. The influence on music markets created by social and digital media indicates the universal public appeal of CCM, relegating the traditional forms of classical music to a comparatively small listening audience—just one per cent of music consumption (see Table 1).
Table 1: 2017 music consumption by genre. (Based on figures from Nielsen, 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>% of total consumption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;B/hip-hop</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance/electro</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian/gospel</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazz</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This shift now appears to be the driving force behind ticket sales in a boom market, influencing global demand for live events and the way live music is experienced. According to the Nielsen Music Year-End Report (Nielsen, 2018), 50 per cent of people in the U.S.A. attend at least one type of live music event each year to see their favourite artists. The year 2017 saw record-breaking crowds and ticket sales. Contemporary music continues to dominate the live performance market in Australia, as well as the United States.

Live Performance Australia (LPA, 2017) is the principal source of reliable industry statistics for the live performance industry in Australia. According to LPA’s Ticket Attendance and Revenue Survey for 2017, the sector revenue was $1.88 billion, an increase of 31.7 per cent on 2016 ($1.43 billion). Contemporary music continues to dominate the live performance market in Australia, which is consistent with previous years primarily due to the impact of major tours, and particularly of international tours. The total revenue represented in Table 2 reflects the total industry share for live performance in Australia by genre.
Table 2: Live Performance Australia Revenue Survey 2017 Genre Comparison. (LPA, 2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Audience Attendance</th>
<th>Revenue Comparison to 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary Music</td>
<td>$826,050,000</td>
<td>8.46 million</td>
<td>87.7% increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Theatre</td>
<td>$416,800,000</td>
<td>4.00 million</td>
<td>19.9% increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical Music</td>
<td>$77,900,000</td>
<td>1.32 million</td>
<td>1.5% increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera</td>
<td>$36,300,000</td>
<td>0.37 million</td>
<td>21.4% decrease</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in the 2017 Nielsen Music Year-End Report (Nielsen, 2018) and from Live Performance Australia (2017) confirm the increase in production, popularity and consumption of CCM styles. Additionally, researchers have reported that most singers, nationally and internationally, are employed in the CCM music industry (Bartlett, 2014; Meyer & Edwards, 2014). Hughes et al. (2016) expanded the discussion to include the status and activities of the music sector in recent times:

The democratisation of music technologies and the digitisation of music practices have resulted in the development and fragmentation of related industries. No longer a label-centric industry, these new music industries facilitate increased opportunities for twenty-first century musicians to collaborate, to communicate and to interact with others interested in their music. (p. 1)

The increase in consumption of CCM styles and how audiences interact with this music has created a growing demand for vocal instruction across a broad range of CCM styles in both private studio and university programs (AATS, 2008; Bartlett, 2014; Hanlon, 2012; Winnie, 2014). While the overwhelming growth in CCM production over the past hundred years has in many ways legitimised CCM, the pedagogy has not evolved sufficiently for singers to address their needs in this ever-challenging music market. Meyer and Edwards (2014) say, “We can best serve our students when we are aware of employment trends in voice and when we can evaluate our own current practices. If we fail to consider the marketplace, our students may
leave our studios no better prepared than when they first entered” (p. 439). This current investigation is intended to acknowledge and respond to the growing demand for CCM instruction that has been created by a shift in music markets over the last century.

1.5 The Status of CCM Training

Despite the significant growth in CCM production over the past 100 years, a pedagogical framework has yet to be developed that caters for the diversity and scope of CCM styles and associated vocal characteristics (AATS, 2008; DeSilva 2016; Hanlon, 2012; Meyer & Edwards, 2014; Winnie, 2014). During the process of this investigation, I reviewed the literature on voice science and discovered a gap in academic texts that supports the traditions of a classical pedagogical approach and has yet to acknowledge the influence of current music trends on voice instruction. Although well intended, this information is not wholly relevant for singers needing to train for CCM style performances. Bartlett (2010) observed:

Anecdotally, I can report that many singers of non-classical styles have rejected voice training that might make them sound, “trained” (i.e., to sing with developed vibrato, legato line and consistent tone). Typically, they perceive traditional classical techniques as lacking relevance to their contemporary commercial performance styles as they strive for a necessary individuality in tone and voice quality. (p. 10)

There is little in the singing literature that offers specific reporting of pedagogical approaches and methodologies of highly qualified voice teachers who specialise in CCM styles (Edwin, 2012; LoVetri, 2006a). While noting that CCM vocal pedagogy is still in its infancy, students continue to be trained within a learning environment rooted deep within the classical tradition. Despite the specific technical, training, and performance demands of CCM styles, this is especially true in many university-based institutions where the one-size-fits-all classical model is commonly offered as the basis of training for singers regardless of style (Durham-Lozaw, 2014). According to Meyer and Edwards (2014) voice teachers must be aware of current employment trends and should continue to evaluate their teaching practices accordingly:

Operatic performance has declined and music theatre has moved away from its classical roots, favouring pop/rock styles over traditional music
theatre singing. Collegiate voice pedagogy may be ill-equipping our singers and teachers of singing if we fail to recognize these changes in today’s marketplace. (p. 441)

Recent surveys reveal there has been an increase in pedagogical training programs offered in CCM voice programs at a postgraduate level (MM or DMA). However, this increase is small in comparison to the demand for CCM instruction and has forced singers to seek instruction in private studios or through independent study (DeSilva, 2016; Meyer & Edwards, 2014). In a recent study investigating the state of CCM vocal instruction at a graduate level, DeSilva (2016) reported:

> While this study did show an increase in pedagogical training in CCM at the graduate university level (26%) as well as an increase in the number of CCM teachers with both graduate-level training and performance experience, this increase was small, and the majority of those who reported having received training did so through private instruction or independent study. (pp. 4−5)

A 2014 report reveals that voice teachers with a specialisation in CCM teaching approaches and CCM performance experience are in high demand because of the lack of training programs in Universities: “There are 511 DMA voice students in the United States at approximately fifty universities. Fewer than ten graduate programs offer doctoral degrees in voice pedagogy and only two offer master’s degrees in CCM voice pedagogy, MM at Shenandoah University, MFA at Penn State” (Meyer & Edwards, 2014, p. 442). A study by DeSilva (2016) reports that Shenandoah Conservatory is the only university that offers students the opportunity to specialise exclusively in CCM pedagogy, offering a Master of Music in CCM Vocal Pedagogy. Pennsylvania State University’s Master of Fine Arts in Musical Theater Vocal Pedagogy program is focussed specifically towards the teaching of musical theatre techniques. Boston Conservatory offers a Master of Music in Vocal Pedagogy that tends towards a scientific approach to the singing voice, rather than specialising in CCM exclusively. Similarly, New York University offers an Advanced Certificate in Vocal Pedagogy, which is a post-Master’s Degree Certificate in vocal pedagogy that does not distinguish between musical theatre or classical streams (DeSilva, 2016).
These figures highlight the lack of training programs for CCM singers in the US, prompting DeSilva (2016) to comment:

The insufficiency of only four training programs for aspiring CCM pedagogues is staggering. At the very least it would seem as though some exposure to CCM techniques and styles should be a required part of every advanced-level pedagogy program, if not in a specialized manner. (p. 46)

This lack of formal training for CCM singers is problematic for singers of all styles, especially if classically-based music markets continue to decline. It is my intention to investigate how we can best serve the growing needs of the CCM community, and to develop a foundational pedagogical framework to meet the demands of the current marketplace.

1.6 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Pedagogy can be best described as the art and science of teaching. The problem that this research seeks to address is the lack of a specific CCM pedagogical framework that enhances teaching and performance outcomes for this group of singers and industry professionals. This problem has implications for those singers, teachers, and other industry personnel who are seeking CCM instruction because they are unable to access the correct training. Teaching, irrespective of the specific field, is complex and demanding; it requires highly specialised skills and knowledge in order to have a significant impact on student learning. Improving the learning outcomes of all students should be the key objective for education. Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (as cited in Department of Education and Training, 2005, p. 6) describe the skills and knowledge required by an effective teacher:

Expert teachers have a firm understanding of their respective disciplines, knowledge of the conceptual barriers that students face in learning about the discipline, and knowledge of effective strategies for working with students. Teachers’ knowledge of their disciplines provides a cognitive roadmap to guide their assignments to students, to gauge student progress, and to support the questions students ask. The teachers focus on understanding rather than memorisation and routine procedures to follow,
and they engage students in activities that help students reflect on their own learning and understanding.

As professional educators, voice teachers need to continuously update their skills and knowledge in response to a changing world, and to recognise, respect and acknowledge the individual needs and special interests of their students (Bransford Brown, & Cocking, 2000).

Pioneering vocal pedagogue Clifton Ware (1998) writes that teaching is the act of imparting a body of knowledge and skills in a systematic, methodical, yet creative and flexible manner (as cited in Keskinen, 2013). Potter (1998) claims that one of the most notable advantages classical singing has over CCM singing is the systemised field of vocal pedagogy. Similarly, Wilson (2003) suggests that the teaching-learning situations in CCM have traditionally been perceived as less intentional, less goal-oriented, and generally less formal than in classical music. The following comment from the AATS (2008) supports Wilson’s view:

Unfortunately, techniques for singing genres such as folk, gospel, blues, jazz, pop, and rock, which fall under a new heading called “Contemporary Commercial Music” (CCM), have been neither clearly defined nor seriously addressed in traditional voice pedagogy texts. While it is true that all singers must breathe, phonate, resonate, and articulate, they do not necessarily approach these technical elements in the same manner. (p. 7)

The problem facing the voice teaching community is that the teaching of CCM is a hybrid, fractured collection of anecdotal and non-specific methodologies. The Department of Education and Training (DET, 2005) in Victoria recommends seven principles for effective professional learning, one of which states that learning should be “evidence based and data driven (not anecdotal) to guide improvement and to measure impact” (p. 15). Figure 2 is a representation of all the prescribed activities for effective professional learning (DET, 2005, p. 18).

In considering this model, and in the absence of a basic pedagogical model for CCM, teachers who are engaged in the teaching of CCM singers are left to interpret a maze of often conflicting information. As the number of CCM students seeking training through private studios and educational institutions continues to increase, voice
teachers, including classical voice specialists, are teaching this group of students without the necessary knowledge to implement a training approach which specifically reflects the standards and practices of the current music industry.

Figure 2: Effective Professional Learning Activity (Department of Education and Training, 2005, p. 18, Appendix C).

1.7 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Despite the popularity and complexity of CCM styles, CCM singers continue to be overlooked in research studies. Where CCM singers have been included, there appear to be unsupported attributions of inevitable vocal health issues for CCM singers unless they receive traditional classical training (Edwin, 2012). Student singers need a firm understanding of how to be vocally proficient and artistically expressive across a diversity of CCM styles. It is unfortunate then that, because of the lack of focussed programs of study in the area of CCM vocal pedagogy, students wishing to train in CCM styles may be confronted with voice teachers who have little or no understanding of CCM repertoire, nor of the technical training required to develop a stylistically correct performance. This revelation, viewed in the context of my own experiences and challenges as a commercially active performer, voice teacher, and academic in the field of CCM, has inspired this investigation.

A key focus for this study is to improve learning outcomes for CCM singers by offering a systematic, evidence-based approach that targets what students need to learn
to become proficient across CCM singing styles. The modern music industry requires singers to perform in a variety of styles. If a tailored CCM pedagogical framework is identified, teachers can engage in effective pedagogical practices and make the teaching of CCM more efficient. Shuell (1986) comments, “If students are to learn desired outcomes in a reasonably effective manner, then the teacher’s fundamental task is to get students to engage in learning activities that are likely to result in their achieving those outcomes” (p. 429). By offering a research-based pedagogical framework, the quality and efficiency of learning will be improved. Teachers can become more competent in their selection and use of approaches, and provide better training that will enhance the artistic and performance outcomes of future generations of CCM singers. By facilitating learning that is effective and accessible, the learning outcomes will also have a positive effect on performance, artistry and artistic outcomes in terms of employability.

In developing a pedagogical framework for CCM, I decided to interview pedagogues exclusively. I acknowledge the lack of voice given to the very people—the students—who are going to be the direct beneficiaries of the pedagogical outcomes of this research. It is the ethical responsibility of good pedagogues to understand the temporal scope of CCM, and to pay attention to the voices of students who want to learn CCM styles. However, due to my own experiences as a pedagogue, and my interest in pedagogical approaches to CCM, I decided to restrict the scope of this research to teacher perceptions. I acknowledge that by interviewing others, such as CCM students and performers, valuable perspectives could be blended into this investigation. Trustworthiness of the data is strengthened by the selection criteria of the participants (see Chapter 3). I believe the eminent CCM teachers who have been selected for this study are most likely to best inform the research question and enhance understanding of the topic.

It is not my intention to thoroughly discuss and compare the existing classical pedagogical model in relation to the mostly anecdotal commentary around CCM training methodologies. That is beyond the scope of this thesis. Through dialogue with noted international pedagogues, it is intended that this thesis might bring insight to achieving appropriate student outcomes for CCM singers while maintaining quality assurance in the field of CCM vocal pedagogy into the future.
1.8 POSITIONING OF THE STUDY: AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF CLASSICAL TRADITIONS

As I have discussed throughout this chapter thus far, the writing in the field of vocal pedagogy largely assumes a classical model in the teaching of all singers, irrespective of style. The knowledge, opinions, and beliefs shared in these texts often come from exemplary classically trained pedagogues who provide valuable commentary in the field of CCM, and who contribute to our understanding of how we can foster effective vocal training and vocal technique in our students. It is not my intention to dismiss the classical pedagogical model completely. In fact, I wish to acknowledge the value and historical development of Western classical vocal pedagogy and its contribution to the development of existing CCM pedagogical practices.

This research is intended to offer an alternative to the one-size-fits-all classical model available to teachers and students of CCM singing styles. Some of these pedagogical practices may be retained if deemed to be useful in the teaching of CCM singers, while others may be dismissed. The approaches to teaching CCM need to be more closely related and relevant to style, particularly in recognising the necessary, style-driven differences in voice production between classical and CCM singers, such as breath-flow demands and the acoustic configuration of the vocal tract. Hanlon (2012) recognised and described these differences:

The basic principles of vocal production seem to be universal regardless of style or genre. However, the vocal demands vary greatly between bel canto and CCM singing. While a solid understanding of basic technique applies to all styles of music, it is clear there are many differences in the tone production, diction, vibrato and phrasing when comparing commercial styles and traditional styles of singing. Extreme vocal styles including screaming and belting are not typically addressed in traditional teaching guides. A vocalist’s ability to perform with stylistically appropriate tone, ornamentation and enunciation are the necessary elements of an authentic performance. (p. 2)

I aspire for this research to make a substantial and authoritative contribution to the current state of affairs in the teaching of CCM singers. My positioning is not one of
dismissal of the classical traditions in this study, but is arguably more reflective of the status quo of current music markets and student demands for CCM voice training.

1.9 OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS

The principle research question for this thesis is:

*How can the beliefs and teaching approaches of eminent CCM vocal pedagogues inform the development of a pedagogical framework specifically for CCM singers?*

The information contained in this thesis is organised into eight chapters, including this introductory chapter (Chapter 1), which has provided the context, rationale, and aims of the research.

In *Chapter 2: Literature Review* I present and examine literature on the historical development of vocal pedagogy and traditional singing practices. I investigate reports in the literature about the fundamental differences between CCM and classical voice training, the impact of globalisation of popular music markets, and the characteristics which define the styles of music that fall under the umbrella of CCM.

In *Chapter 3: Methodology* I describe the method of data collection, and the method of analysis used to interpret the collected data. I also discuss why these methods are most suitable for achieving the stated objectives of this investigation.

In *Chapter 4: Participants’ Backgrounds* I present the first part of the pedagogues’ detailed responses to interview questions about their personal training and artistic backgrounds, and how they developed their teaching and philosophical approaches to CCM.

*Chapter 5: Pedagogues’ Teaching Approaches: The Fundamentals of Foundational Technique* is the second part of the pedagogues’ detailed responses to interview questions. It addresses their teaching approaches to core components of technical development. These components are: alignment, breath management, breath flow and support, resonance, and articulation. The data have been presented on a theme-by-theme basis so that responses can be compared and contrasted to reveal the similarities and differences in the participants’ individual approaches to managing the technical development of CCM singers.
Chapter 6: Pedagogues’ Teaching Approaches: Repertoire, Performance and Artistry is the third part of the pedagogues’ detailed responses to the interview questions. It addresses the more subjective areas of vocal development, including the teaching of repertoire, style, artistry and performance. The data are presented using the same thematic analysis described in Chapter 5.

Chapter 7: Pedagogues’ Perceptions and Philosophical Considerations reports on the fourth part of the interview questions, which addressed the pedagogues’ philosophical considerations and perceptions regarding CCM styles: CCM repertoire, vocal health concerns, and teaching preferences. These themes are discussed separately to demonstrate how the pedagogues’ personal beliefs and philosophies have shaped and/or influenced their teaching of CCM.

Chapter 8: Conclusion provides a full summary of the research. I report how the study addressed the central research question, and how the results from the study have informed the development of a preliminary foundational CCM pedagogical framework. I also offer recommendations for future studies into the field of CCM singing-voice pedagogy.
A lot of voice pedagogy still wallows in pre-science beliefs, practices, and terminology. ... Pedagogy is improving, but it still has a long way to go to reach twenty-first-century standards.

(Edwin, 2018, p. 95)

From 1517 to 1992, approximately 1240 treatises and teaching manuals were written on topics concerning vocal pedagogy and voice science (Harrison & O’Bryan, 2014). Hundreds of texts that focus on how to produce the ideal classical voice and the management of classical singers have been published (Bartlett, 2010). Over a number of centuries, the information contained within the literature has supported the development of a traditional Western classical pedagogical model (Chandler, 2014). In comparison, CCM voice training is still in its infancy and to date no teaching model specifically for CCM singers exists (Bartlett, 2010; Chandler, 2014; DeSilva, 2016; Edwin, 2006; Kempfer, 2014).

Although CCM mainstream styles have been prevalent since the birth of rock and roll in the 1950s, the literature has yet to address a growing demand to understand and describe developments in and the application of specific CCM teaching approaches. Instead there are still varying and conflicting opinions regarding a cohesive teaching model which would support the vocal longevity of CCM singers (Hoch, 2018). Where studies do exist, they describe CCM style characteristics (for example, belt as both style and technique) with a particular focus on the training of musical theatre singers (Hall, 2006; Jennings, 2014; Knauer Roll, 2014). The technical training necessary to promote the vocal health and performance longevity of CCM singers is largely ignored. Authors in the literature stress the need for a CCM pedagogy; however, to date there is no available information that describes how such a pedagogy could be developed (AATS, 2008; Bartlett, 2010; DeSilva, 2016; Kempfer, 2014; Robinson-Martin, 2010).

In this literature review I provide an overview of the historical perspectives on vocal pedagogy, of advancements in voice science, and of the few evidence-based reports of CCM vocal pedagogy developments. Along with the evolution of CCM styles, I summarise the fundamental differences between CCM and classical singing (in terms
of vocal production), and current CCM voice practices. This literature review reveals the gap in earlier research around CCM pedagogy.

2.1 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON VOCAL PEDAGOGY

The term pedagogy refers to the art and science of teaching. The role of the voice teacher is that of a facilitator who links the requisite technical fundamentals of good singing with the individual singer (Patenaude-Yarnell, 2003). Robinson-Martin (2010) explains further: “Vocal pedagogy aims to determine the most efficient and effective vocal technique for the performance of a given style of music” (p. 43).

Until recently, philosophies and approaches in the field of vocal pedagogy were entrenched in the aesthetic perspectives of Western European classical art music. In past centuries, methods for teaching singing were passed down primarily by word of mouth and in some writings of the time (Coffin, 1989). As a result, voice training models became fixed in centuries-old traditions; the Italian school of bel canto is still considered by many pedagogues as the predominant pedagogical model for all singers (Blades-Zeller, 1993; Miller, 1996; Robinson-Martin, 2010). Authors and researchers suggest that this is especially true in Western higher education settings where the one-size-fits-all model continues to be endorsed for all singers irrespective of style (DeSilva, 2016; Durham-Lozaw, 2014; Hall, 2006; Harrison & O’Bryan, 2014; Jennings, 2014; Kempfer, 2014; Meyer & Edwards, 2014). Oxford Music Online defines bel canto as, “Beautiful singing, beautiful song—A term covering the qualities of the great 18th century and early 19th century Italian singers. Beauty of tone and legato phrasing, with faultless technique, were the principle ingredients” (Bel canto, 1996). Therefore, the ideologies of bel canto, as used by the great classical and operatic singers, were developed out of an artistic desire for a specific vocal style and sound.

The literature reports that early singing teachers who were prominent in the training of bel canto style were composers and castrati. Castrati were male singers who were emasculated in order to retain the beauty of their soprano voice; bel canto technique was developed for the castrati, who trained vigorously as musicians and composers (Coffin, 1989). In the late nineteenth century, laws were passed against the brutality the castrati had to endure. The castrati became the teachers of the time and were known to pass on the legacy of “the agility and beauty of their art” Coffin (1989, p. xv). According to Coffin (1989), “Singing and the terminology of singing come to us from
the techniques and writings of the teachers of the castrati” (p. 19). One of the earliest books in the literature of vocal pedagogy was written in 1723 by the eminent teacher and male soprano Per Francesco Tosi (Harrison & O’Bryan, 2014). Translated into English by John Gilliard in 1743, this book focussed predominantly on the teachings and the significant aesthetic ideologies of the castrati. It contains examples of some of the recommended teaching practices derived from the castrati teaching model that continue to be utilised by singers and pedagogues today, such as the use of a mirror in the teaching studio.

Another early publications in the field of vocal pedagogy is Practical Reflections on the Figurative Art of Singing (Mancini, 1912), authored in 1774 by the castrato Giambattista Mancini, who was the first to speak extensively about vocal registers. Manuel Garcia I was another early writer and famous pedagogue whose teaching principles “are found in most of the historical lines of the great teachers of singing” (Coffin, 1989, p. 19). Garcia I was the first author in the literature of vocal pedagogy to discuss approaches to teaching of the male voice specifically. In his book Exercises and Method for Singing he examines the placement of the voice and offers rules and an extensive list of exercises (Coffin, 1989). These were adopted by many famous singers and pedagogues of the time, such as Manuel Garcia II, Mathilde Marchesi, and Julius Stockhausen. In the nineteenth century, these pedagogues continued to endorse the classical tradition and published their own texts on the method and art of singing. In the twentieth century, noted teachers such as William Vennard (1967) and Richard Miller (1996, 2004, 2017) published books that continued to reinforce the ideologies of the bel canto methodology for performers and singing instructors. In order for the singing voice to be used in the classical sense, a definite and specific set of technical principles was introduced by the singing teacher and developed with each student. Although the aesthetics and vocal production requirements of the classical tradition differ from those of styles outside that tradition, there has been little change in the singing literature since the early treatises.

The master-apprentice vocal training model is another teaching model that emerged in the late middle ages (Keskinen, 2013). This model developed from the formation of the European Guilds in the late middle ages and was dominant in Europe until the late nineteenth century (Harrison & O’Bryan, 2014). It was common practice for a young singer to be apprenticed to a master singing teacher for up to twelve years (Harrison
The foundation for this model was derived from the philosophical belief that the master teacher held all the musical knowledge, and the student must acquire their vocal skills by modelling and taking direction from the master teacher (Kastner, 2012). During those years, it was the teacher’s responsibility to ensure the moral and physical development of the student, as well as their vocal and musical education. Harrison and O’Bryan (2014) explain the complexities of this relationship:

The master was the conduit through which all music knowledge, experience and know-how passed to the student. This musical knowledge included the development of skills in music theory, musicianship and history, stagecraft and performance practice. The master may have also been responsible for the teaching of languages, literacy and numeracy in the young apprentice.

(p. 2)

In today’s teaching environment, the master-apprentice approach to singing training is considered by many to not allow the student to have control over their own learning (Westerlund, 2006). According to Kastner (2012), “the music selected for study and performance should not only consider the goals of the teacher but should ideally strike a practical balance between teacher goals and the students’ culture” (p. 4). This viewpoint suggests that teachers must remain current, gearing students’ training to meet the demands of music industry trends. Green (2006) argues that a more informal teaching approach would benefit a students’ musical development. She goes on to suggest that, when students are provided the opportunity to engage with and create music autonomously on their own terms, the positive outcomes can include the development of essential and delineated meanings towards the music.

Despite developments in music training and the emergence of a variety of learning and teaching methodologies, bel canto and one-to-one master-apprentice teaching models continue to be the most dominant for training singers, especially in institutions such as conservatoires and university environments; that is, where singers are taught in the European canonic tradition (Harrison & O’Bryan, 2014). From a pedagogical standpoint, such models do not take into consideration the changes in music culture and the proliferation of music styles that have emerged in the twentieth century. According to Robinson-Martin (2010):
Contemporary concepts in vocal pedagogy suggest that while these standard vocal techniques do provide singers with a technical foundation that allows them to navigate through most, if not all, genres within the Western European classical art tradition, this technique is not always sufficient for the vocal sound required by genres that lie outside of classical art tradition. (p. 44)

To date, CCM singing-voice pedagogy has struggled to be defined in the academic literature, leaving many pedagogues and their students without the appropriate resources or knowledge regarding the study of and training regimes for CCM singers (DeSilva, 2016; Harrison & O’Bryan, 2014; Robinson-Martin, 2010). Given that students’ learning outcomes are largely influenced by the knowledge, philosophies and methodologies of their teachers, it is incumbent on singing teachers to be flexible in adapting to the needs of their students by applying appropriate pedagogical approaches that meet specific standards of musical style. Elements involving physiological, mechanical and psychological mechanisms can influence vocal health, and teachers must have the ability to create and introduce technical tools in a systemised way to protect these mechanisms in each student.

2.2 The Impact of Advancements in Voice Science and Evidence Based CCM Vocal Pedagogy

Rapid advancements in technology over the last century have allowed researchers to examine the vocal mechanism and its supporting systems in great detail (Harrison & O’Bryan, 2014). Previously, voice pedagogues were able only to rely on imagery and the master-apprentice teaching relationship when addressing issues surrounding the training of the singing voice (LeBorgne, 2001; Potter, 1998; Potter & Sorrell, 2012). Manuel Garcia II is considered by many to be a pioneer in modern voice science. In 1841 he introduced the first volume of his Complete Treatise on the Art of Singing. This treatise offered information regarding his preferred teaching approaches, as well as his physical observations of the vocal mechanism. In 1854 he invented a primitive version of the modern laryngoscope. This facilitated a more rigorous investigation into the mechanisms of the voice (Reid, 2005). Prior to this, the process of phonation had not been well described but, during the nineteenth century, a new form of singing emerged as a result of this early scientific research. Velarde (2013) explains:
Previously, the technology needed to accurately measure physiologic change within the larynx and breath-support musculature during the process of singing simply did not exist. Any prior application of scientific study to the voice was based primarily upon auditory evaluation, rather than objective data accumulation and assessment. (p. 3)

The modern notion of *classical* appeared and was aesthetically different from previous forms of singing, such as bel canto (Keskinen, 2013). Potter (1998) discusses the influence of this early research on the teaching of voice:

The new singing was underpinned both technically and ideologically by a pedagogy increasingly based on scientific principles. Parallel with this was the tendency to mythologise singing in the past, and it is during this period that we first encounter references to bel canto, as a mythical vocal technique from a previous era. The science, the myth and the ideologies that framed them both, are still very much a part of many aspects of singing in the present day. (p. 47)

It was not until further advancements in voice science at end of the twentieth century that considerable changes occurred in approaches to singing-voice pedagogy. Since that time, voice scientists have been able to observe the vocal folds during phonation, measure respiration, record muscular activity, and mathematically solve issues related to acoustical physics (Blades-Zeller, 1993; Cleveland, 1998; LeBorgne, 2001). This exploration has significantly increased our knowledge of anatomy and physiology of the human voice, and has improved our understanding of vocal characteristics such as registration, tone, and resonance.

As a result of these advancements, over the past five decades numerous academic texts based on scientific research have been published by practitioner investigators. A major contributor and eminent voice scientist, Johan Sundberg, explored various aspects of singing voice including resonance, vocal fold function, breathing, perception and expression, and choral singing. Sundberg published a great number of papers in international journals, in addition to his book chapters and books (Stone, Cleveland, Sundberg, & Prokop, 2003; Sundberg & Thalen, 2010). In 1987 Sundberg published *The Science of the Singing Voice*. This book provided the singing voice community a detailed description of the structure and functions of the vocal mechanism in singing
activity, including the aerodynamics of respiration through to the dynamics of articulation. Ingo Titze, another noted voice scientist and distinguished professor, wrote several academic texts and guided our understanding of the human voice. His 1994 *Principles of Voice Production* discusses the cross-disciplinary exploration of the physics and physiology of voice production, mechanism, and applied uses and concerns of the voice. Key areas discussed in the book include an investigation of the relationship between the physical processes of voice production to other physical processes (both inside or outside the human body), examination of the new field of vocology, and clarification of the acoustic and biomechanical laws governing phonation.

Other influential contributors to the literature of voice science include Vennard (1967), Reid (1975), Miller (1996, 2004), McCoy (2004), Sataloff (2005), Foresman (2008), Wolfe, Garnier and Smith (2009), and Edgerton (2014). While this published research has provided a platform for voice science and for the development of a pedagogical approach that is exclusive to classical vocal technique (LeBorgne 2001), the knowledge acquired through research into voice science has provided voice pedagogues a fact-based understanding of voice function. With this knowledge, pedagogues can develop teaching approaches that promote a healthy and aesthetically pleasing voice production for Western classical singers (Hoch 2018). Unfortunately, these vocal production characteristics are not transferable to the authentic style elements required to create expressive CCM sounds (Robinson-Martin, 2010).

There remains an expectation that the standard of voice teaching will greatly improve through developments in science-based, empirical research applied to vocal pedagogy (LeBorgne, 2001). Despite the many advances in voice science over the last two decades, most studies still focus on the classical singing voice and continue to overlook the training of CCM singers. Questions therefore linger about how to teach CCM styles with a focus on vocal health (Kempfer, 2014). To date, in comparison to classical voice training, there has been little scientific research which considers pedagogical approaches to the training of singers of CCM styles. Where there has been research, it has focussed on voice production, voice source characteristics, style characteristics (such as belt), and respiratory function for CCM singing. According to Bartlett (2010):

29
A large body of literature concerning the singing voice relates to vocal production and vocal health issues. This literature is particularly useful where there are common, foundational aspects of voice production that are not genre-specific, such as the reports on breath flow, breath-management, alignment and balanced registration. However, this literature has definite focus on the management of classical singers. … With the exception of music theatre voice, the research fields of singing voice and vocal pedagogy have contributed little evidence that identifies or examines CCM styles in terms of vocal production, sustainability and vocal health. (p. 1)

Examples of existing research into the training of CCM singers include investigations that specifically explore the employment of belt, style, and technique by singers of musical theatre (see, for example, Björkner, 2006; Durham-Lozaw, 2014; Estill, 1988; Hall, 2006; Jennings, 2014; Kempfer, 2014; Knauer Roll, 2014; Wendy LeBorgne, 2008; McCoy, 2007; Popeil, 1999; Schutte & Miller, 1993; Stone, Cleveland, Sundberg, & Prokop, 2003). Other studies into specific CCM styles include research into jazz voice training (Walker, 2005) and the teaching of gospel singing (Robinson-Martin, 2010). A number of studies have explored CCM teaching approaches in a choral context (Dehn, 2016; Lyons, 2009; Winnie, 2014). Investigations have also been conducted into the health risks regarding the sustained use of CCM vocal effects (Caffier et al., 2018) as well as into belt (LeBorgne, 2001; Popeil, 1999). In more recent years, research studies have reported on the current state of CCM training at graduate level in the United States (DeSilva, 2016; Meyer & Edwards, 2014).

Over the past two decades researchers have begun to define and scientifically quantify vocal characteristics being used in music outside the traditional European classical model. Some studies have compared classical voice production to CCM voice production (Schutte & Miller, 1993; LeBorgne, 2001). Early discourse regarding the differences in voice production was reviewed by classical voice teacher and vocal pedagogue Oren Brown, who advocated for a science-based voice pedagogy. Although he endorsed the bel canto method, he was not dismissive of styles beyond classical singing (Dehn, 2016). When questioned about the differences between classical and non-classical singing, Brown commented, “Finding the true natural voice is the key to healthy singing; the rest is a question of style” (as cited in Dehn, 2016, pp. 30–31).

While investigating voice science at the Washington University School of Medicine
from 1952 to 1968, Brown developed his own approach to vocal technique based on ‘primal sound’ (Dehn, 2016). In 1996, Brown published his book, *Discover Your Voice*, in which he discussed primal sound in singing as a way of releasing or letting the sound go as an emotional response. When explaining Brown’s idea of primal sound engagement, Velarde (2013) comments that, with the release of the sound, “autonomic systems are able to fully function in support of the vocal sound. He [Brown] admonishes singers to think about the sound before it comes out, in order to have a better autonomic response” (p. 40). This teaching approach has been adopted by many teachers in the field of CCM who find it enables “the singer to work to their full range of expressivity and capability” (Bartlett, 2018, p. 118).

Edwin (2018) emphasises the differences in vocal production between a classically trained singer and a singer of CCM styles:

> The emerging field of voice science proved that physiological things were happening when singers sang stylistically correct CCM repertoire. The pharynx narrowed, the larynx raised, the mouth spread in lateral position, the soft palate lowered and the *chiaro* dominated the *oscu ro*. (p. 125)

Bartlett (2010) describes significant differences in the vocal production of classical and CCM singers, commenting that a traditional classical pedagogical approach does not support the technical elements and style requirements of CCM performance:

> Voice science research clearly states that the speech-based, forward, bright voice quality that typifies CCM singing is very different from the vocal production of classical singers in terms of coordination of the laryngeal musculature, acoustic set up, breath management and most importantly registration, especially for female singers, where CCM keys are set typically in the lower octave over a range of F3–C5 and up to Eb5. (pp. 227–243)

Similarly, the AATS (2008) concurred with reports that technological advancements had increased our understanding of the physiological differences of classical and CCM singing-voice production:

> In this, the twenty-first century, we not only have the continuing emergence of new styles, but we also have a better understanding of how
the human vocal mechanism functions in the production of all styles of singing. Through the use of modern technology, we now can identify significant acoustic differences when comparing vocal performances in different genres. (p. 8)

The great advancements in the science of the singing voice over the past few decades have helped to legitimise the need for a specific CCM vocal pedagogy. The small body of research into CCM singing suggests that it is time to rethink the prevailing stance that a one-size-fits-all classical training will successfully develop and maintain singers of all styles (Edwin, 2018; Hoch, 2018). The AATS (2008) states that “recent acoustic physiologic and pedagogic research challenges the widely-held belief that classically-based voice techniques alone can serve the world’s diversity of singing styles” (p. 9).

Most recently, Hoch (2018) supported this view:

While some confusion and contradictions still abound within the CCM community—particularly on disagreements over pedagogical philosophy, preferences in regard to breath management strategy, and opinions over the nuances of technique—there is no question that our greater understanding of voice function, as well as vocal health, acoustics, resonance, anatomy and physiology, has contributed greatly to increasing consensus among CCM pedagogues over technical matters and the legitimization of CCM singing among the classical voice teaching community. It is likely that this trend will continue in the coming decades. (p. 288)

Arguably, voice teachers need guidance in the co-ordination and application of scientific knowledge into pedagogical approaches while serving their students (Velarde, 2013; Ware, 1998). Reid (2005) questioned the practicalities of applying the scientific knowledge of spoken voice to the teaching of singing:

However, taking into consideration the numerous scientific articles devoted to the study of the human voice, it is imperative to question the extent to which the results of these investigations have been useful to the teaching of singing. When an evaluation is made concerning the impact of these studies, one discovers that some of the information is useful, but in
general contain little value when judged in terms of their practical application. (p. 6)

Some authors suggest that it is the responsibility of voice teachers and other practitioners to educate themselves, and to remain acquainted with current scientific research and pedagogic practices (Brunk, 2008; Sadolin, 2018). Patenaude-Yarnell (2003) stresses the need for the voice teacher to find the balance between scientific and technical knowledge, and to consider the musical, interpretive and stylistic demands of the music when teaching future generations of singers.

2.3 The Evolution of CCM: A Stylistic Perspective

Prior to the 1920s, divisions between opera, operetta, musical theatre and popular music were not as emphasised as they are now, and the acclaimed popular music artists of that era were the divas of Metropolitan Opera (Jennings, 2014). However, in the 1920s, the introduction of the microphone led to the development of a new, relaxed, speech–like vocal quality that was far more desirable for amplified singing. This emerging singing style was less arduous for the singer; it required a variation of vocal range and tessitura that needed to be lowered to adapt to the changes in vocal production (Jennings, 2014).

Popular music began to change dramatically from the 1930s as stars of the Metropolitan Opera began to cross over into musical theatre and Hollywood movies. American music audiences became interested in jazz, radio, and the latest dance music, and developed a fascination with musical theatre productions. The aesthetic changes in popular music culture allowed singers to personalise their singing approaches with the inclusion of their own musical and stylistic variations (Jennings, 2014). Singers such as Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra were amongst the great pioneers of popular singing who created their own styles and individual vocal characteristics. Classical singers of the time, such as Al Jolson, sang a variety of popular repertoire within the parameters of the classical tradition and according to the musical expectations of the composers. This group of traditional folk and classical artists began to sound old-fashioned, overwrought, and ridiculous as a new wave of popular singers gained universal audience appeal (Dyer, 2004).
During the 1950s, the establishment of the rock and roll era created an even greater divide between the aesthetic demands of classical and non-classical musical genres. Dyer (2004) reports:

What happened with rock music is that a new and more strenuous form of vocalism came along; a classical artist would rapidly strip the gears of his voice if he tried to sing rock music the way it was supposed to sound. … And rock singers couldn’t produce the kind of smooth, even sound across the entire range that classical singers are supposed to have, although with a different kind of training they might have been able to. … Too many opera singers have had the wrong tonal quality, the wrong, diction, the wrong rhythm—and the wrong arrangements. (n.p)

One of the most significant objectives of a singer’s musical development is to cultivate their vocal artistry by developing skills in music expression. Vocal artistry has been described as singing in a particular genre or musical style with individual expression and musicality, combining the technical and aesthetic aspects of singing (Hughes, 2014). As a result of the ever-evolving aesthetic and compositional changes to CCM, it has become difficult for classical singers to deliver an authentic crossover performance.

Style, in relation to the singing voice, is a method of vocal production that has defining acoustic, physiological, and perceptual features (Bartlett, 2010). Driven by audience demand, commercially active singers are expected to perform in a variety of CCM styles and sub-styles. This reality has a flow-on effect creating a need for the singing teacher to be a specialist across a multitude of CCM styles (Winnie, 2014). As CCM continues to flourish, new styles and sub-styles are constantly emerging and evolving, and CCM can no longer be defined simply as pop, rock, jazz, R&B, gospel, country, cabaret, musical theatre, and so on (Chandler, 2014). The territory of styles and sub-styles has exploded to include soul, dance, funk, reggae, indie, and metal, among others (Chandler, 2014). Stylistic features include specific rhythm patterns, rhythmic accents, chord progressions, instrumentation, and studio effects. Singers and teachers of CCM need to have a basic knowledge of the aesthetic differences and similarities between CCM styles (Winnie, 2014). Some of the basic musical characteristics and vocal nuances associated within each style are highlighted in Table 3.
When discussing specific training for CCM, some of the basic aesthetic characteristics associated with CCM styles need to be identified to gain better understanding of the components which contribute to an authentic vocal performance. Achieving style authenticity relies on variation in vocal delivery, which in turn leads to variation in
voice production. Vocal tone, phrasing, vocal effects, accent, and vocabulary of each style will impact on the singer’s vocal production as they interpret features within the music (Bartlett, 2010). Not only must CCM singers possess the ability to produce vocal sounds within the aesthetic parameters of a given style, they are often expected to switch between vocal qualities within a single performance (Chandler, 2014; Hanlon, 2012; Chandler 2014). Some of the essential voice qualities used for authentic CCM vocal production are outlined in Table 4.

Table 4: Requisite style qualities necessary for an authentic CCM vocal performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voice Quality</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Vocal Set Up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Speech        | Best described as the quality heard in everyday conversation. It works easiest in lower register, but for female voices has to be maintained to at least Bb(4) (pop/rock/country); to E(5) (musical theatre and R&B) | - larynx is in high position  
- vocal folds are thick (TA dominant)  
- velor port is closed (de-nasalised tone production) except for nasalised consonants  
- the body is relaxed |
| Twang         | Best described as nasal, bright and brassy                                  | - vocal folds are thin (CT dominant)  
- pharynx is narrowed  
- aryepiglottic sphincter to be constricted  
- velar port is closed expect for nasalised consonants  
- tongue is high and wide against the top back molars |
| Belt          | Best described as taking a heavy vocal fold setting above the main passaggio. Healthy authentic production of this quality requires application of specific technique | - larynx is in higher than usual neutral position  
- the vocal folds are TA dominant and the closed phase is longer in the cycle  
- the pharynx is narrowed  
- aryepiglottic sphincter to be constricted  
- velar port is closed (preferably)  
- tongue is high and wide against the top back molars  
- the physical effort in the body is high |

CCM can be identified by its speech-like or conversational style. However, to be expressive, there are a number of other requisite aesthetic characteristics associated with CCM singing that are used to communicate a particular emotion or mood, or are used as an identifiable sound for some highly acclaimed CCM singers (Chandler, 2014). Some of the other most common aesthetic characteristics used and adapted in CCM are highlighted in Table 5, as compiled by Chandler (2014).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Aesthetic characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bending</td>
<td>a slide from ½ note below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breathiness</td>
<td>created by inefficient vocal fold closure used to emulate emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cry</td>
<td>a grace note from above that sounds like a whine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darkening</td>
<td>a much warmer sound created by using a lowered larynx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distortion</td>
<td>extreme, high intensity singing which is driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall-Offs</td>
<td>one note sliding down to the next note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flips</td>
<td>a controlled register break used for stylistic purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fry</td>
<td>vocal register which is characterised by a very low pulse sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glissandi</td>
<td>sliding between a series of consecutive notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growls</td>
<td>low, guttural sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licks, Wails</td>
<td>brief improvisation—a distinctive few notes or short phrase in pop music or jazz often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or Riffs</td>
<td>improvised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melismatic</td>
<td>runs sliding between a series of consecutive notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mix</td>
<td>the continuation of a speech quality tone above the main passaggio with a more blended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sound incorporating twang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onsets</td>
<td>hard glottal, soft glottal click, breathy onset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percussive</td>
<td>consonant like phonation used in much the same way as percussion instruments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop</td>
<td>accented grace note from below (1/2 step), often quick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appoggiatura</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasps</td>
<td>not unlike vocal fry, described as a deeply wounded sound used to express emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screams</td>
<td>higher pitch sound with extreme intensity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow</td>
<td>follows final vowel or consonant sound, e.g. ‘you-uh’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vowel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slides</td>
<td>steady slide upward, end slide-ups, fry slide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sobs</td>
<td>is a low-larynx, darker, softer vocal tone which often arouses empathy from the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>communicating passion, yearning, and heartfelt emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swinging the</td>
<td>dotted eighth notes followed by sixteenth notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>note</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tails</td>
<td>3 and 5 note descending patterns with decrescendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yodel</td>
<td>is a form of singing which involves repeated and rapid changes of pitch between the lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>register and the higher register or falsetto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As reported in Chapter 1, developments in accessible technologies over the past 25 years have had a significant impact on modern music cultures. At present, it is estimated that 95.5 per cent of performing artists are employed in the CCM industry. Figures in the Nielsen Music Year-End Report (2018) showed that classical music represented only one per cent of total music consumption in the US in 2017. Other industry data regarding ticket sales to live events confirm that consumer spending on musical theatre and other CCM performances is overwhelmingly greater.
than for classical performances (Edwards, 2018). The classical music industry survives on funding from donors and grant organisations, and on investment returns, while a mere 27 per cent of their $1.1 billion income is derived from box office sales (Edwards, 2018).

With these statistics in mind, it is not unexpected that authors such as Kramer (1995) agree that singers who have been trained exclusively in classical singing are now disadvantaged in the marketplace:

For those who care about ‘classical’ music, the possibility of tapping new sources of cultural and intellectual energy may not come a moment too soon. It is no secret that, in the United States anyway, this music is in trouble. It barely registers in our schools, it has neither the prestige nor the popularity of literature or visual art, and it squanders its capacities for self-renewal by clinging to an exceptionally static core repertoire. Its audience is shrinking, graying and overly palefaced and the suspicion has been voiced abroad that its claim to occupy a sphere of autonomous artistic greatness is largely a means of veiling and thus perpetuating, a narrow set of social interests. (pp. 3–4)

Following the Baroque period classical singers were expected to perform a song, according to the composer’s printed instructions. In CCM, however, singers are given stylistic licence to perform a song with individuality, using a range of tonal colours and style effects (Hoad, 2018). True artistry in a CCM performance lies beyond vocal technique and the notations of a musical score (Green, 2003; Juslin & Persson, 2002; Reimer, 2003; Robinson-Martin, 2010). Each singer must develop their own distinctive style because uniqueness and individuality in CCM performance is appealing to the mass music markets (Edwin, 2018). According to Edwin (2018), “While CCM teachers should always advocate for efficient vocal production, they should be careful to never discourage the unique vocal qualities or stylistic idiosyncrasies that make the CCM artist who he or she is” (p. 128). It is essential for teachers to recognise and understand the complexities of the stylistic qualities that create an authentic CCM performance. However, it is more essential that their students are trained to execute these sounds with vocal freedom, and without sacrificing vocal health (Robinson-Martin, 2010). Bartlett (2018) asserts:
To progress, we have to move beyond belt-centric or mix-centric approaches, guiding singers to find their own pathway to healthy voice function based on their unique vocal sound, personal music style choice, and artistic preference. Teachers and students need to understand that “good singing is good singing,” and that style should be overlaid on a foundation of genre-appropriate technique, because “bad singing is bad singing” in any style! CCM pedagogues around the world need to come together and speak with one voice. (pp. 583–584)

2.4 FUNDAMENTAL DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN CCM AND CLASSICAL VOICE PRODUCTION

The singing voice is produced through internal mechanisms within the body, primarily through the interaction of three parts: the power source (breath), the vibrator (vocal folds), and the resonator (vocal tract) (Kempfer, 2014; Knauer Roll, 2014; Sundberg, 1987). Irrespective of style or genre, voice training programs need to build a solid technical foundation while addressing the style capabilities and genre-specific elements required of the singer. Kempfer (2014) suggests that it is the responsibility of singing teachers to train their students in the appropriate use of respiration, to teach them about the function of the laryngeal mechanism and vocal tract configuration, and to explain how these create an authentically pleasing sound for any given vocal style or genre. Robinson-Martin (2010) explains:

Vocal technique provides the singer with limitless possibilities of the many ways to musically articulate the emotional communication of musical expression. However, the instructor should both recognize and acknowledge that the parameters that constitute an impeccable vocal technique for one genre may not be the same for another. Therefore, the role of the instructor is to provide specific strategies that allow the singer to execute the aesthetic components of a given genre in a manner that is most efficient and compatible with the singer’s instrument. (p. 13)

Similarly, Edwin (2018) describes the differences between style and technique thus:

Technique serves style (genre). It is the foundation that enables the style (genre) to exist. Technique is how you do something. Style is “what” you
do with that technique. For example, if I want to play golf, I will explore and develop golf techniques from a golf coach. I will not go to a basketball coach to learn to play golf. If I want to dance ballet, I will seek out a ballet teacher, not a hip hop teacher, unless it’s a hip hop teacher who also knows ballet. (p. 94)

There are many fundamental differences apparent in classical and CCM voice production, suggesting that the application of a classical teaching model is not appropriate in the development of a CCM singer (DeSilva, 2016; Edwin, 2018; Hall, 2006). Edwin (2007) commented:

Classical technique that enables the singer to sing a self-amplified sound with tall, round vowels, a vibrato initiated at onset and continued to offset, and a CT [cricothyroid]-dominant vocal source, is of little use to a belter. Classical technique serves only classical and traditional Broadway legit singing. (p. 214)

Kempfer (2014) suggests a need for vocal exercises to be developed specifically in the area of developing CCM technique (p. 14). She proposes that, “all voices, but in particular adolescent voices, can be easily damaged if proper technique is not developed and used” (p. 14). This view is supported by Bartlett’s (2010) “insider” perspective:

The lyrics of CCM repertoire often are highly personal and related to everyday experiences. Therefore, the CCM singers are expected to deliver the intention of the text with a natural speech mode (lower register), using conversational phrasing, articulation of diphthongs, and speech-modified vowels as they manage breath, pitch and music line while singing articulated rhythm patterns. As with the functional elements of voice production, these style elements are very different from the vowel based legato line, even tone, upper register production that are expected and valued in classical singing. (p. 34)

Table 6, compiled by Chandler (2014), outlines the fundamental differences between Classical and CCM singing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Classical</th>
<th>CCM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Posture</td>
<td>Static/dramatic action</td>
<td>Dynamic movement to beat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Breathing</td>
<td>Long, legato phrases</td>
<td>Shorter phrases (conversational)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Larynx Position</td>
<td>Neutral/lowered</td>
<td>Neutral/raised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sung tone</td>
<td>Pure ‘trained’ tone (women) use of ‘head’ voice</td>
<td>‘Chest’ voice (for both genders) ‘Mix and belt’ quality Sometimes ‘twangy’ (or strident)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘sob’/”cry” quality ‘covered’ tone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Diction</td>
<td>Italianate vowels All consonants pronounced</td>
<td>Americanised vowels Initial consonants are emphasized, ending consonants are de-emphasized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sung accent</td>
<td>English (R.P. or various European accents)</td>
<td>Generic, Americanised slang or vernacular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Rhythm</td>
<td>Unsynchronized (‘straight’), rubato</td>
<td>Syncopated, specific to ‘groove’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Vibrato</td>
<td>Heavy</td>
<td>Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Pitch (scales used in vocal melodies)</td>
<td>Traditional diatonic scales used, Chromatic</td>
<td>Hexatonic scales such as the Blues, Pentatonic scales and Modes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Vocal harmony</td>
<td>Reading parts SATB voicings, specific harmonic rules</td>
<td>Intuitive parts i.e. ‘by ear’ Triadic, added note parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Range</td>
<td>Italian voice classifications</td>
<td>Generic male and female ranges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Agility</td>
<td>Diatonic/chromatic coloratura</td>
<td>Pentatonic/ hexatonic melismas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Musicianship</td>
<td>Classical theory</td>
<td>Popular music theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Improvisation</td>
<td>Cadenzas, avant –garde music</td>
<td>‘Adlibs’, ‘riffs’, ‘runs’ are improvised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Paralinguistic “vocal effects”</td>
<td>Only generally found in extended vocal techniques (avant –garde)</td>
<td>Vocal distortion, growls, grunts, moans, aspirate endings, etc. can be used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Visual</td>
<td>Formal attire, costumes (opera)</td>
<td>Informal, smart casual dress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Performance venue</td>
<td>Formal, early evening performances</td>
<td>Informal, late evening performances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Amplification</td>
<td>Technique designed for unamplified singing</td>
<td>Performances always amplified, Microphone technique important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Vocal Health Issues</td>
<td>Competing with live orchestral accompaniment. Loud acoustic singing practice in small practice rooms</td>
<td>Loud, amplified singing in competition with loud, amplified instruments, bad monitoring, hearing damage, lifestyle issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Until the introduction of amplification early in the last century, singers could only be heard above an orchestra acoustically. The Western classical model of vocal
development pre-dated electricity, and the technique focussed on training singers to achieve the required vocal volume. The use of amplification ensures that CCM singers, even when drawing on an expressive, conversational quality, can be heard over a loud musical accompaniment (Bartlett, 2010; LoVetri, 2008). In the poor acoustic environments where CCM singers often perform, amplification is essential. Therefore, the use of live-sound reinforcement is another factor that has implications for appropriate technical training and subsequent voice health for CCM singers (Chandler, 2014).

From a scientific standpoint, Titze (2015a) states that acoustic requirements dictate what we mistakenly call style. The acoustic requirements of unamplified singing are:

- A wide dynamic range over about two octaves (pp–mp–p–mf–f–ff)—at least a three-decibel difference per level;
- A harmonic spectrum that is not overshadowed by an orchestra (a chiaro-scuro balance);
- A frequency modulation of the harmonics (vibrato) that allows airway resonances to be excited; and
- An exaggeration of consonants, especially unvoiced.

Titze (2015a) lists the acoustic requirements of amplified singing as:

- Precise intonation;
- A wide pitch range, with less need for dynamic contrast on each pitch;
- Precision in rhythm and accent; and
- Control of the frequency spectrum in terms of variable sound quality, including twang, belt, breathiness, roughness, and other primal vocalisation.

Classical teaching methods were designed for singing classical repertoire, and the one-size-fits-all model cannot be applied to non-classical styles of singing. LoVetri (2006c) asserts that training needs to be specific to style; that is, to provide a solid foundation of technique, vocal strength and flexibility without sacrificing vocal style, pedagogy must be style-relevant, and teachers should recognise the differences. She goes on to suggest that efficient vocal instruction has to encompass function and style, and she questions the capacity of classical singing teachers to teach CCM styles:
How do all the strictly classical teachers presume to teach rock or jazz vocal development when they have never made those sounds, don’t understand how they are produced, and couldn’t correct them if they were wrong. … I always ask, if classical vocal training is good for every kind of vocal sound, why don’t opera singers get hired to sing in Rent, or Hairspray or Suessical, sounding like opera singers? Is everyone completely deaf? Don’t they know the difference between the sounds of a classical singer and a pop/rock singer? Have they no common sense? (LoVetri, 2006c, para. 4)

As early as 1996, classical pedagogue Oren Brown (1996) commented that “popular and classical singers live in different worlds … and they use different vocal techniques” (p. 136). This supports the need for a style-relevant pedagogical approach to enable the best outcomes for CCM singers.

2.5 CCM VOICE PRACTICE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

As stated earlier, audiences for classical music performances have been in sharp decline, while those for CCM performances continue to thrive. Due to the popularity of television shows such as The Voice and The X Factor, the social media phenomenon of YouTube, and the changing culture of musical theatre productions from light classical (Legit) to rock and jukebox musicals, there is growing demand for training in CCM styles. However, some authors have observed the dangers for primarily amateur singers. Jennings (2014) comments that there are major problems associated with television shows whose judges have had little or no formal voice training, and where overpraising feedback can create delusions of grandeur in the minds of many hopeful young singers. According to Jennings (2014), “Aspiring young singers are guided only by these TV shows, or by star judges, many of whom proclaim themselves vocal experts. A lack of sound vocal training can result in bad habits and vocal problems” (p. 3). Wilson (2003) supports this view and attributes the phenomenon to the fact that CCM singers are perceived to be a disposable commodity in the music industry. The attitudes of producers, Wilson suggests, can lead to a catastrophic outcome for some CCM singers, who should be afforded the same respect as their classical colleagues.
As discussed earlier in this chapter, there is little in the literature describing the necessary or appropriate technical training for CCM singers that supports their ongoing vocal health. Where there has been commentary, much of it has come from classical voice pedagogues speaking from “outside” the field (Bartlett, 2011). This lack of both understanding and knowledge in CCM is problematic for singers who are seeking appropriate CCM instruction (Hanlon, 2012). Singers are generally left feeling frustrated when they are offered traditional classical training techniques, but few pedagogues who can deliver specialised CCM training are known (Hanlon, 2012).

Anecdotal accounts by CCM singers reveal that they will not undertake singing training because CCM-style lessons are not available, and they fear that classical training will alter the vocal characteristics and authenticity required for performing CCM repertoire. The fear of sounding ‘trained’, and therefore of losing the integrity of their style and sound through classical training, has led many CCM singers to decide against any training at all. LoVetri (2015) explains:

The attitude that CCM singers should not study at all is, sadly, fostered by the idea that all singers should learn to sing classically because that is the “best” way to train the voice. They resist, and rightly so, the idea of being told they have to sound different in order to sound the way they want. Thinking that classical training is the only alternative keeps singers of many CCM styles away from any kind of singing training. That makes the possibility of vocal injury more likely. Either way, it is the singers who lose. Inappropriate training is seen as being worse than no training at all. That can be true, unfortunately. (para. 4)

Singers seeking training in CCM vocal technique have turned to a number of commercial methodologies developed over the last 40 years. According to Hoch (2018), “Where the CCM community seems to differ from the classical community is in the abundance of trademarked methodologies, each with its own lexicon of (often trademarked) terms” (pp. 288–289). Hoch (2018) describes a proliferation of methodologies that were established due to a lack of CCM training available at the time, and which were borne out of respect for CCM by their creators, “all of which were founded by a single pedagogue and (later) trademarked” (p. 14). While not comprehensive, Table 7 provides examples of some existing methodologies.
Table 7: Examples of CCM methodologies in 2018.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>CCM Methodologies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jo Estill</td>
<td>Estill Voice Craft™ (<a href="https://www.estillvoice.com">https://www.estillvoice.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seth Riggs</td>
<td>Speech Level Singing (SLS) (<a href="http://www.speechlevelsinging.com">http://www.speechlevelsinging.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeannette LoVetri</td>
<td>Somatic Voiceworks™ (<a href="http://somaticvoicework.com">http://somaticvoicework.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathrine Sadolin</td>
<td>Complete Vocal Technique™ (CVT) (<a href="https://cvtresearch.com">https://cvtresearch.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Howard</td>
<td>Vocal Power Method™ <a href="https://www.vocalpoweracademy.com">https://www.vocalpoweracademy.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The twenty-first century is the age of technology, and along with this technology has come a world-wide distribution of readily accessible resources. YouTube has become a popular platform where information about all styles of music can be obtained with just a few clicks. By simply entering a topic or question into the search engine, users are treated to a plethora of movies, animations, lectures, or other visual and aural presentations on the topic of their choice. YouTube has become a popular resource for many voice teachers who advocate its use in assisting students to develop an understanding of requisite style elements and how to create authenticity across the range of CCM styles (Howard, 2018; Sabella, 2018; Saunders-Barton, 2018). Likewise, aspiring singers can access resources on voice training, but much material on YouTube is self-promotion and of questionable pedagogical reliability. In an article discussing the age of YouTube, McCoy (2011) highlighted some of his concerns for developing singers:

They are easily influenced, but do not yet have a sufficiently deep foundation reliably to recognize excellence in vocalism, musicality, and language. In spite of what they have learned in the classroom, they often are ill equipped to reconcile conflicting information about singing technique and elements of voice science. Misinformation, stated with authority, often becomes believable. Let’s help our students separate the facts from fiction. (p. 550)
Due to the lack of a reliable study guide for CCM singing, many aspiring singers are seduced into investing in expensive teaching programs where the authors promote their exclusive teaching approaches. Emerging singers are led to believe that particular teaching programs have some kind of unique answers to technique and artistic training. Clever internet marketing campaigns promote popularity and credibility for such training methods. Many of these self-help methodologies have been founded on a teacher’s or a performer’s personal observations and experiences (Bartlett, 2010) rather than on any science-based or secure pedagogical grounding. CCM ‘stars’ such as Christina Aguilera have built a methodology based on their public appeal and celebrity status, while others declare that their knowledge has been derived from ground-breaking scientific research (Keskinen, 2013). Table 8 provides examples of some easily accessible, marketed methods.

Table 8: Examples of online (2018), marketed music methods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breck Alan</td>
<td>The Art of Body Singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Arceneaux</td>
<td>Approach Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger Burnley</td>
<td>Singing Made Simple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Bristow</td>
<td>The Bristow Voice Method (The Singing Zone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritva Eerola</td>
<td>Balance in Phonation-Method™ (BiP™)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Frey</td>
<td>Frey’s Vocal Release Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Goodrich</td>
<td>The Goodrich Method (Activation Voice Control—ACV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brett Manning</td>
<td>Singing Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yvonne DeBandi</td>
<td>Sing Smart, Not Hard, Sing Like A PRO™</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Wilson</td>
<td>Discover Your Big Voice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This overabundance of information has created a new set of concerns around the lack of an established cohesive pedagogy, and presents further challenges for singing teachers wishing to familiarise themselves with CCM pedagogy (Hanlon, 2012, Walz, 2013). The following statement from Popeil (1999) sums up the issue:

We need to keep exploring this fascinating field and develop techniques that enable singers to pursue employment in a variety of vocal arenas.
Singers today are saying ‘Show me the money!’ and they are looking to us [teachers] for answers. (p. 29)

2.6 CONCLUSION

Teaching strategies for training classical singers are well documented and widely acknowledged in the singing-voice literature. However, despite the increased demand for voice training across the vast range of CCM styles, the training of CCM singers continues to be under-researched, and the development of an efficient and appropriate teaching model for this group of singers has not yet been acknowledged (Bartlett, 2011). Questions linger about how to teach CCM in a healthy manner (Kempfer, 2014). LoVetri (2018) suggests:

We need research that examines the effects of electronic and technological aspects of CCM singing. We need research on how what we hear effects what we sing. We need to know more about professional singers with long-term careers rather than inexperienced college singers or college faculty. So far, these ideas have not caught the imaginations of the research communities I have encountered. I keep my fingers crossed. (p. 584)

Due to the lack of focussed research on CCM singers, the development of a structured pedagogical CCM framework which could support and sustain performance longevity for CCM singers has been impeded (Bartlett, 2010). Without a technically secure foundation, a singer’s artistry can be obstructed and their vocal health compromised (Hughes, 2014). Robinson-Martin (2010) contends that singers must be trained to understand the limitations and capabilities of their instrument in order for them to formulate strategies for responsible phonation and make the necessary adjustments to their technique in any given situation and for any given style.

The lack of scholarly resources may be attributed in part to the continuing belief that singing in CCM styles can be detrimental to the developing voice (Edwin, 2004; LeBorgne, 2001; Walker, 2005). In 1966, the AATS published their stance on CCM:

The advent of Rock, together with an admixture of such vocal antecedents as blues, gospel, soul, and country western music, in combination with electronic instruments—which amplify sound to extremely high, overpowering levels—has developed in several generations of young
people life styles, vocal preferences, mannerisms and habits which are highly detrimental to normal vocal development and longevity. (p. 41)

This declaration was published over 50 years ago; yet since then, little has been offered in terms of CCM pedagogical training within a structured formal model (Woodruff, 2011). Kempfer (2014) uncovered many more misconceptions and noted the continuing need for more education in the area of CCM pedagogy for current and future teachers.

Many undergraduate vocal education programs are not addressing the pedagogical differences in approaches for CCM technique as compared to classical. This is causing educators, such as myself, to have no information about how to properly teach these techniques within the ever growing non-traditional ensembles that are becoming more and more a part of choral programs around the country. (p. ii)

According to Hoch (2018), “there is no question that the dynamics of the industry are changing in a way that will only increase the demand for competent CCM pedagogues to train singers for the commercial music industry” (p. 12). The following statement from LoVetri (2016a) sums up the problem:

Wouldn’t it be great if there was a way to spread practical, vocation training for singers who want to do pop/rock music, and couple it with vocal health, voice science/function and general musical knowledge? Why does that seem unrealistic? I hate to think that I will die and things will still be the same. (para. 4)

In this chapter I have presented contextual information about the state of the field and about prior research into CCM vocal pedagogy. In the next chapter I describe my methodological approach for this research.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

What kind of knowledge does the methodology aim to produce? ... What kinds of assumptions does the methodology make about the world? ... How does the methodology conceptualise the role of the researcher in the research process?

(Willig, 2008, p. 12)

This chapter outlines the methodology I adopted in conducting this investigation, which poses the fundamental research question:

How can the beliefs and teaching approaches of eminent CCM vocal pedagogues inform the development of a pedagogical framework specifically for CCM singers?

I describe the research design, data collection process, participant recruitment, and data analysis procedures, as well as ethical implications such as researcher positioning and the scope of the study.

3.1 Qualitative Research

Contemporary or popular is temporal by definition and needs to be relative to the time period. The aim of this research is to progress vocal pedagogy from the traditions of the centuries-old Western classical pedagogical model, and to construct a specific CCM framework that is responsive to the diversity and complexity of the music market in the twenty-first century. The collected data describes and articulates the teaching practices, philosophies, and influences of those who are teaching in the field of CCM. Much of the literature on methodologies for research in music education advocates a qualitative approach (Colwell, 2006). According to O’Farrell and Meban (2003), “The strength of the methodology is its capacity to convey personal interaction, mood and aesthetic effect in a direct and vivid way” (p. 9). Since the objective of this study is to understand the what, why, and how, as they are related to CCM singing-voice pedagogy, this investigation uses a qualitative research design and data collection method. O’Farrell and Meban (2003) explain the benefits of qualitative research in arts practice:

While quantitative research aims to measure the impact of the arts on student learning by testing the claims of its advocates through controlled,
experimental methods, qualitative research methods may be applied in an effort to describe the impact of the arts in education within the heuristic world of arts education practice, a world in which random factors tend to impede the effectiveness of experimental design. Beginning with assumptions derived from the theoretical literature, researchers look directly into the arts classroom or community setting using methods that have been described by a variety of terms. They are especially interested in the development of theory through interpretive, inductive analysis of data. (p. 8)

A qualitative research approach is considered most suitable for this study as it places focus on the process rather than the quantitative “how much”, “how many” and “what” (Phelps, Sadoff, Ferrara, & Warburton, 2005). Colwell (2006) comments, “Researchers interested in the uniqueness of a particular teaching or learning find value in qualitative studies because the design allows or demands extra attention to physical, temporal, historical, social, political, economic and aesthetic contexts” (p. 273). Furthermore, qualitative research is a method of enquiry which allows the researcher to be flexible, effectively capturing important data that might be disregarded in a controlled experimental study. O’Farrell and Meban (2003) explain:

Originally developed by anthropologists to objectify the way they looked at cultural events and relationships, qualitative research has been adopted by arts education researchers who want to be able to reflect in their studies the complex, spontaneous and often non-verbal actions of teachers and students in various instructional models. (p. 8)

The flexibility in the qualitative research approach allows the researcher to move back and forth, continually evaluating and reconsidering the various components of the design and the interconnections of those components; for example, objectives, research questions, methods, and adjustments to the research design. This research approach was most useful in allowing me to address various phases of the study non-sequentially when various challenges arose, providing flexibility during the process of data collection and analysis simultaneously.

50
3.2 Selection of Participants

Selecting participants for in-depth interviews was based on a repetitive process referred to as purposeful sampling, which seeks to maximise the richness of the data to address the research question (Patton, 2002). This technique is widely used in qualitative research to identify and select individuals who are most knowledgeable in a phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Not only is it important for participants to be knowledgeable but, as Bernard (2002) notes, it is important that they are available and willing to participate, and can communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner.

To obtain a balanced, holistic perspective for this investigation, I sought pedagogues with extensive experience in the training of singers across CCM styles. It was crucial to this investigation that the sample of interviewees was homogenous, with each participant sharing key similarities as they related to the research question. In refining the selection criteria, I found it particularly useful to examine the benchmark other researchers had established when profiling participants for their data collection in studies that aligned with my research purpose. In her doctoral dissertation researching musical theatre pedagogy for emerging adult female singers, Durham-Lozaw (2014) established various criteria for informant selection. The selection process included participants who were working in the field at the time of the research, who possessed extensive experience with voice teaching in contemporary commercial music styles, who were familiar with voice science (as evidenced by publication in peer-reviewed research journals such as the Journal of Singing and the Journal of Voice), and who had a “commitment to dissemination of research to other practitioners as evidenced by presentations at symposia such as National Association of Teachers of Singing Conferences and Voice Foundation Conferences” (Durham-Lozaw, 2014, pp. 56–57).

Due to the evolving nature of CCM vocal pedagogy, I decided it was important for the qualifying participants to meet most of the following criteria:

a. They were, at the time of the research, in practice and had a minimum of 10 years’ experience working with CCM singers across a broad range of styles;

b. They had long-standing profiles as CCM advocates, and/or had contributed to the literature in the field of CCM, evidenced by publication of peer-reviewed research journals or published books;
c. They had established an authoritative reputation as a leader in the field of CCM vocal pedagogy; and

d. They had demonstrated commitment to professional development in the field of CCM.

Through a literature search and professional contacts, and after carefully considering all the criteria, I identified 12 pedagogues who were eligible to participate in this investigation. Three of these were excluded because they had a pre-determined existing methodology that could potentially bias a foundational CCM pedagogical framework. I also feared that, given they commercially advertise their trademarked methodology, it could appear that I was promoting their methodology. I felt I needed to retain an impartial and non-commercial approach to creating a pedagogical framework. Of the remaining participants, nine were identified for an initial approach based on their geographical location. I sent emails to these nine participants, inviting them to participate in the study. They each accepted. Although this is a small sample size, the in-depth nature of the interviews and the foundational quality of the data being generated on the topic at hand meant that this number of participants was most appropriate for the scope of this research.

3.3 Research Design

To lay the groundwork for a pedagogical framework that acknowledges the vast territory and aesthetic parameters of CCM music styles, I chose to collect the data using a semi-structured interview approach. Interviewing is the most basic form of inquiry in qualitative research, as the process allows the researcher to gather information, reflect upon it, and give it a thematic context and interpretation that will provide a foundation for helping other teachers in the field (Phelps et al., 2005). In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique used with a small number of participants to explore the shared understanding of a particular group (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Boyce and Neale explain:

The primary advantage of in-depth interviews is that they provide much more detailed information than what is available through other data collection methods, such as surveys. They also may provide a more relaxed atmosphere in which to collect information—people may feel more comfortable having a conversation with you about their program as opposed to filling out a survey. (p. 3)
This approach allowed me to examine how the participants respond to student demands relative to trends in music markets and the pedagogical approaches they employ to train CCM singers.

To understand how a foundational pedagogical framework could be developed for CCM singers, I prepared a set of semi-structured open-ended interview questions that would allow the participant’s experiences to be heard. These questions centred on the participants’ professional and artistic backgrounds, and on the teaching strategies they had developed as a response to changes and developments in CCM markets. This exploratory approach allowed the participants to provide descriptive information openly and freely. It was also valuable for collecting rich, descriptive data, and allowing me to obtain detailed explanations, repeat questions, omit questions as they became redundant, and change the order of the questions. Furthermore, this approach gave me the flexibility to probe further in order to seek clarification, embellishment, or summarisation. Such an approach is imperative to understanding actions and intentions as they are enacted in the field (Phelps et al., 2005). This form of enquiry permits greater emphasis to be placed on the CCM pedagogues’ own experiences, and allows participants to provide rich narratives about their backgrounds, pedagogical approaches, and philosophical beliefs.

All questions were prepared in advance, based on a review of the literature in the field of vocal pedagogy and voice science, and on reflections of my own pedagogical education, professional development, teaching practice, and diverse background experiences. I designed them around a set of themes, selected with reference to the available literature (see Chapter 2). Ryan and Bernard (2000) explain:

> Themes are abstract (and often fuzzy) constructs that investigators identify before, during, and after data collection. Literature reviews are rich sources for themes, as are investigators’ own experience with subject matter. More often than not, however, researchers induce themes from the text itself. (p. 780)

The interview questions, although devised prior to data collection, continued to be shaped during the course of the research. The questions centred on two main areas of investigation (see Appendix A). The order of the interview questions remained flexible, but broadly took the following structure:
Interview Questions Group 1: Participants’ Backgrounds

The first set of questions related to the professional and artistic backgrounds of the ‘master’ pedagogues. An exploration of the participants’ backgrounds served to provide an understanding of their teaching beliefs and the formulation of their pedagogical approaches to CCM. This first set of interview questions examined the participants’:

- Personal vocal training,
- Pedagogical background and training,
- Performance experience, context and style,
- Pathway to employment as a CCM vocal pedagogue,
- Professional use of the CCM acronym,
- Use of a specific teaching methodology, and
- Studio teaching philosophy.

Interview Questions Group 2

Teaching approaches to technique

The first set of themes contained within the second group of questions related specifically to the CCM pedagogical approaches the participants employ to train CCM singers. I selected themes that mirrored the core components of technique as defined in the literature of voice science and vocal pedagogy. Theme selection was also informed by my own perspectives, experiences, training approaches, and interactions in my teaching studio. I formulated the questions in a way that might elicit responses that could serve as core components in a foundational pedagogical framework for CCM singers. These components, the key elements of technique in voice training, are alignment, breath management, breath flow and support, resonance, and articulation.

a. Alignment

Correct alignment is the basis for all good vocal technique and precedes all other areas of instruction (McKinney, 1994; Zangger Borch, 2005). The body must be correctly positioned and operating in a state of freedom to enable optimal vocal efficiency. According to Chapman (2006), “The muscles which allow for this efficiency are all attached to other structures, which in themselves are affected by the posture of the singer” (p. 24).
b. Breath management

Breath is the fuel for a singer; efficient breath management skills are necessary for a singer’s vocal longevity (Zangger Borch, 2005). Developing efficient breath management skills is a balancing act between controlling exhalation and coordinating vocal folds for the demands of the musical task (McKinney, 1994). Miller (1996) advises, “To accomplish skilful control of breath management for singing, special coordination of the phases of the breath cycle (inhalation, onset, phrase duration, release) must be learned” (p. 20).

c. Breath flow and support

Breath support is a dynamic relationship between the inhalation and exhalation muscles necessary for supplying the correct amount of air pressure to the vocal folds to produce a desired pitch and volume (McKinney, 1994; Zangger Borch, 2005). Zangger Borch (2005) explains “Good breathing strategy will allow you to deliver finely tuned flow and pressure. It is a prerequisite for long term vocal health” (p. 32).

d. Resonance

The quality of a singer’s voice is unique, and the singer’s individual sound stems from the resonating system of the human voice—the vocal tract (Chapman, 2006; McKinney, 1994; Zangger Borch, 2005). As Peckham (2010) explains, “Understanding how your resonating system works will help you broaden your range of vocal colours and sing more expressively. Awareness of how proper resonance feels and sounds will help your voice carry better and flow easier” (pp. 29–30); and the by-product of resonance for a singer is an improved sound (McKinney, 1994).

e. Articulation

To articulate means to pronounce words and phrases with clarity according to the style demands of the music being performed. Articulation can also be used for expressivity, and can directly affect the voice and vocal quality (Chapman, 2006; Peckham, 2010; Zangger Borch, 2005).

Teaching approaches to repertoire, performance and artistry

Questions about the training of professional and artistic development in CCM singers raise themes that are arguably more subjective, as there is little information in the literature that could serve as an authoritative guide for coaching these specific skills.
These questions relate to learning repertoire, style authenticity, artistry and performance.

\textbf{f. Learning repertoire}

As established with the key concepts already outlined, developing the core components of a singer’s technical foundation is vital to their development; however, these components must be slowly integrated into repertoire being learned by the singer (Chapman, 2006). Singers need to develop a strategy for coordinating all the technical factors and learning components of repertoire, such as the lyrics, melody, and timing. (Zangger Borch, 2005). Wilson (2001) remarks, “Learning a new song will involve you physically, emotionally and intellectually, as you memorise and then make sense of its three component parts—music, words and meaning (p. 11).

\textbf{g. Style authenticity}

In the CCM industry, each style and sub-style that makes up this vast and diverse territory has its own set of distinguishing features. It is important for singers to develop the correct and appropriate vocal effects and nuances that define each style so that they deliver a stylistically authentic CCM vocal performance (Bartlett, 2018).

\textbf{h. Artistry and performance}

Vocal technique is the foundation of artistry; once this foundation has been established the singer is free to be vocally expressive and move away from technical components to engage with the artistic, interpretive, and performance components of singing (Chapman, 2006: Zangger Borsch, 2005). Every singer develops artistry and performance skills at varying stages of their vocal development. Adding personal expression to the song is a crucial part of their advancement as a singer (Chapman, 2006: Peckham, 2010).

\textit{Pedagogues’ perceptions and philosophical considerations}

This set of interview questions was formulated in order to examine the pedagogues’ philosophical considerations towards CCM. These themes relate to how the pedagogues’ beliefs and philosophies have shaped or influenced their teaching of CCM singers. Such perceptions and philosophical influences should arguably be considered when designing and facilitating a CCM pedagogical framework. Questions
addressed repertoire choices, CCM styles, teaching preferences, vocal health, and the imposition of classical training,

i. Repertoire choices

Teachers need to make informed decisions about the appropriateness of repertoire for students based on the student’s age, vocal maturity and ability, and on the vocal effects demanded by each song choice.

j. Umbrella of CCM styles

CCM is an acronym coined by Jeanette LoVetri in 2000 to replace the less validating terminology of non-classical. This phase of questioning investigated the interviewees’ perceptions of the styles they believe should belong to this umbrella term.

k. Pedagogue’s teaching preferences

Given the vast territory of styles that are labelled as CCM, and the vast number of styles and sub-styles that continue to emerge, it was crucial for this investigation to explore how the participants deal with styles they are unfamiliar with or do not have empathy for.

l. Beliefs regarding CCM and vocal health issues

There are reports in the literature that CCM vocal production is more likely to be problematic than classical voice production (see, for example, Bartlett, 2011). Given the participants’ years of professional practice in the field, these questions explored their personal experiences with singers across the range of CCM styles.

m. Implications of imposing a classical teaching model on CCM singers

According to Bartlett (2018) imposing a Western classical pedagogical model on CCM singers could be catastrophic in terms of vocal health. Given the reports that the one-size-fits-all approach continues to be the most common voice training method for all singers in higher education institutions, I thought it would be pertinent to ask the participants their thoughts on the possible vocal health implications this could have for CCM singers.
n. Final thoughts

At the conclusion of each interview, I asked participants if they would like to add any further comments or additional information regarding any aspect of the study or of CCM vocal pedagogy in general.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

I applied to the Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee requesting ethical clearance for this particular study. Within this application I sought approval to identify the research participants when reporting the research data. During the recruitment process, provisions were made for participants to exercise their right to anonymity and to maintain confidentiality of data. Participants were able to exercise their option of privacy and be de-identified should they have wished to protect their identity and reputations as eminent pedagogues. All participants agreed to be associated with and identified in the study. A template of the consent materials is provided in Appendix B.

Pilot Study

A draft list of interview questions was tested on a member of my supervisory team, who checked the content, wording, sequence of the questions, language bias, the need for clarification and elaboration of questions, and the need to include additional questions. It was critical that the questions were in no way leading or would influence responses from the participants. The pilot study served as a means of refining my interview protocol and to ensure consistency would be maintained throughout the interview process with participants. Based on the outcomes of this pilot study, I made some minor amendments to, and formulated a revised list of, the research questions (see Appendix A).

Through my own professional experience and knowledge of CCM, and through the experience of administering the pilot study, I was mindful not to lead or pre-empt responses, nor to participate in discussions during the responses. I also learned not to interject, but to allow for moments of silence so that hesitant participants could deliberate on their responses.
The information I collected in the pilot study was recorded and transcribed verbatim. The transcript was used for test coding and analysis, but the results were not included in this study.

**Interview Process**

The nine pedagogues were individually interviewed for this investigation during the period September 15, 2014 to September 11, 2016 (refer to Table 9).

**Table 9: Details of Interviews**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Participant</th>
<th>Location of Participant</th>
<th>Date of Interview</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pat Wilson</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>September 15, 2014</td>
<td>1.09.31</td>
<td>In Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Peckham</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>September 23, 2014</td>
<td>1.01.22</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Gillyanne Kayes</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>September 26, 2014</td>
<td>1.24.55</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeannette LoVetri</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>October 14, 2014</td>
<td>1.57.44</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Wendy LeBorgne</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>November 13, 2014</td>
<td>0.46.32</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Chandler</td>
<td>United Kingdom and Europe</td>
<td>November 19, 2014</td>
<td>1.12.42</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Diane Hughes</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>February 10, 2015</td>
<td>0.58.04</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Daniel Zangger Borch</td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>March 21, 2016</td>
<td>0.50.02</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace Ng</td>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>September 11, 2016</td>
<td>1.05.38</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I audio recorded and later transcribed each of the interviews. This resulted in 13.12 hours of interviews and 57,985 transcribed words. Once each interview was transcribed, I repeated the process of listening to the audio recordings, not only to review the transcription for any discrepancies, but also to obtain an overall sense of the interview data.

Prior to analysis, I sent each participant a copy of their interview transcription for member checking. Each participant was asked to review their responses for accuracy, and to ensure they had not been misrepresented. This process gave the participants an opportunity to reflect on their responses, and to make any alterations, additions, or deletions to their transcriptions. After receiving feedback from the participants, I made
minor revisions to the grammar or idiomatic speech patterns in the transcriptions in accordance with the participants’ requests.

3.5 Data Analysis

An advantage of data being gathered by semi-structured interviews is that the collected data can be analysed in different ways. In this particular study, the data analysis was ongoing and consistent throughout the duration of the data collection process. While the interview phase of the investigation was in progress, I reflected upon the data to “rethink”, “reflect”, “re-plan”, and “understand” the progress of the interviews (Mills, 2007, p. 16). This allowed me to monitor and facilitate the process, while organising and reflecting upon the data and developing initial codes. I began to identify patterns and links between the threads of information contained within the data. These patterns and links helped me develop a concrete understanding of how the data should be presented.

When all the data were collected, I used the computer software Leximancer to gain an analytical overview of responses across all questions, with the preliminary aim of discovering emerging codes and generating broad themes. These themes guided the subsequent analysis and the creation of categories. Although the categories were loosely related, they were distinct from the previous two groupings. The research questions had been originally framed so that themes could be easily generated. Once the themes were established, a cross-thematic analysis allowed me to discover the prevalence of each code and the emerging relationships between these codes. Each interview was revised and responses coded according to pertinent themes. When I completed the coding phase, the data were organised so that all responses falling into the same theme were grouped together.

3.6 Treatment of Data

The data collected from the first two sets of interview questions—Group 1: Participants’ Backgrounds and Group 2: Teaching Approaches—was organised and analysed in four sections: backgrounding participants; teaching approaches to the fundamentals of foundational technique; teaching approaches to repertoire, performance and artistry; and pedagogues’ perceptions and philosophical considerations.
Step 1: Backgrounding Participants

The first step of data analysis dealt with the participants’ professional and artistic backgrounds. To convey the participants’ voices as directly as possible, I have chosen to present these sections in first-person narrative format, as I believe this is more likely to reveal how the different backgrounds and personal experiences of these pedagogues influence their teaching, perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes to CCM voice training. The first-person narrative helps to impart the pedagogues’ stories, motivations, and viewpoints directly from their voices to the reader, limiting the extent to which researchers impose their own interpretation on these experiences (Sandefur, 2003). Presenting the data this way allows an insight into their individual journeys and the complex relationship between their backgrounds and their positioning in the field of CCM singing-voice pedagogy. Pertinent interview segments appear in Chapter 4.

Step 2: Teaching Approaches to the Fundamentals of Foundational Technique

The second step of data analysis dealt with interview responses concerning the pedagogical approaches the participants employ to train CCM singers. The responses were coded into the key themes that emerged directly from my questions regarding the core components of technique, as defined in the literature of voice science and vocal pedagogy. Each of these themes were defined, reflected upon and critiqued, and are reported in Chapter 5. In addition, I compared and contrasted each of the pedagogues’ responses against the information presented in the literature, and explored the diversity of perspectives by theme, according to the prioritisation, focus, aims, and approach to teaching each key element. The prioritisation of teaching relates to the level of importance in the lesson and whether this particular element of technique is highly regarded in the pedagogues’ teaching of CCM. The focus of teaching refers to the main or central point of attention when addressing that particular key element of technique in the lesson. The aim of the pedagogues’ teaching highlights the intended results the pedagogues are striving to achieve through their teaching approaches. Finally, the approaches to teaching refers to the way pedagogues handle particular singing techniques with students.

Step 3: Teaching Approaches to Repertoire, Performance and Artistry

The third category of questions explored the pedagogues’ teaching approaches to artistic practices in relation to learning CCM repertoire, style authenticity, and performance and artistry. The interview responses to this set of questions were also
analysed thematically and compared for similarities, differences, and emergent codes. Each of these components were examined through the viewpoints of the participants to explore the extent to which they may inform or influence the development of a pedagogical framework for CCM singers. The thematic analysis has been organised to match the previous set of questions: prioritisation, focus, aims, and approaches of teaching. These components are presented and discussed in Chapter 6.

**Step 4: Pedagogues’ Perceptions and Philosophical Considerations**

This fourth and final set of interview questions relate to the participants’ perceptions and viewpoints on issues relating to CCM, as these issues are addressed in the literature. Such issues include: implications of vocal health for CCM singers, the umbrella of CCM styles, and the use of vocal effects. Although this line of questioning did not relate specifically to CCM teaching strategies, it was deemed relevant to the criteria of the study and crucial to the development of a pedagogical framework for CCM singers. These questions helped to clarify key issues, perceptions and possible misconceptions surrounding CCM styles, including the training of CCM singers in terms of repertoire choices, style, perceived vocal health issues confronting CCM singers, and vocal health implications as a result of imposing classical training on CCM singers. A consistent comparative approach to analysis was employed to identify similarities and differences in participants’ perspectives. The results appear in Chapter 7.

**3.7 Considerations of Ethics and Scope**

Although this research was carefully prepared, I am aware of its limitations and shortcomings. Throughout all phases of the study I scrutinised my methods, aiming for transparency while looking through my researcher lens. The following considerations of ethics and scope are particularly worthy of reflection.

**Researcher Positioning**

This research process has been significantly and unavoidably influenced and shaped by my own personal and professional involvement as a commercially active CCM performer, teacher, student and academic. My experiences in the field of CCM have informed the way in which I engaged with the data. Therefore, I have scrutinised the degree to which this research is subjective. I sought integrity in my actions as a researcher at all times, and aimed to make my subjectivity clear throughout. During
the data collection and analysis phases of the research I remained alert to my positioning in the field. In these phases, I tried to ensure that I did not misread, misjudge, or manipulate the words of the pedagogues according to what I believed was the truth. Qualitative research scholars comment that the expertise of the researcher may be considered a strength (see, for example, Olive, 2014). I believe my extensive background and training as a teacher of CCM styles is in many ways a strength in this study; however, I have been mindful to negotiate a balance between emic and etic perspectives:

Regardless of the methodology being employed, many researchers of social behavior reside within the tension between the two extremes. Given the inescapable subjectivity that every researcher brings to a study through his or her past experiences, ideas and perspectives, a solely emic perspective is impossible to achieve. Conversely, if a researcher takes a purely etic perspective or approach to a study, he or she risks the possibility of overlooking the hidden nuances, meanings and concepts within a culture that can only be gleaned through interviews and observations. (Olive, 2014, p. 4)

Particular care was also taken to ensure that interactional or expectancy bias was not communicated with the participants when presenting the interview questions. Seidman (2006) explains:

The process of working with excerpts from participants’ interviews, seeking connections among them, explaining those connections, and building interpretative categories is demanding and involves risks. The danger is that the researcher will try to force the excerpts into categories, and the categories into themes that he or she already has in mind, rather than let them develop from the experience of the participants as represented in the interviews. The reason an interviewer spends so much time talking to participants is to find out what their experience is and the meaning they make of it, and then to make connections among the experiences of people who share the same structure. (pp. 127–128)

Since I was sensitive to the potential for interviewees to want to provide a response that they believed I may have been seeking due to my emic positioning, I was cautious not to engage or be reactive during the interview process. I aimed to conduct the
questioning in a manner that encouraged the participants to respond freely and to offer descriptive detail. The pilot study was instrumental in helping me frame the interview questions in a neutral and non-biased manner.

Given this emic positioning and the pre-existing relationships that have been developed over years of professional involvement in the field, a question arises regarding the openness of interviewees about their own practices. There was a chance that participants would not want to share or disclose information, perhaps due to protectionism, competition between the participants, or the fear that I would critique their teaching. However, I sensed that the participants were very generous in sharing their knowledge, and that they supported this research and recognised its value.

Another consideration was the possibility that my existing professional relationships, and those of my supervisors, could have affected our positioning and reputation within the CCM community because of the criteria for inclusion and exclusion of participants. These criteria were extremely specific, but there may have been other pedagogues who felt that they too would have been suitable candidates for the research and should have been interviewed. These may include CCM practitioners who had already developed a methodology or specific pedagogical approaches for training CCM singers. An up-to-date, rigorous investigation of the singing-voice literature failed to identify a pedagogical model specifically for the teaching of CCM. My rationale for exclusion of particular teaching methodologies was addressed in Chapter 2.

The aim of this research is to lay a stronger foundation for the development of a CCM pedagogical framework, and my own lack of formal undergraduate education training may be perceived as a limitation. To talk of pedagogy is to talk of the appropriate ways we interact with each other as teachers and learners. It is clear that teaching practices in CCM must go beyond simplistic views of telling as teaching, and listening as learning, if we are to genuinely pursue effective CCM instruction. When voice teachers coach students who have chosen to pursue training, whether as preparation for a professional career or simply for personal pleasure, it is important to provide essential skills and knowledge. Successful students need highly skilled and competent teachers. Voice teachers come from a variety of backgrounds, ranging from professional singers with long-standing careers to highly qualified educators with a voice emphasis. Their background and training are likely to shape their pedagogical approach. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, I rigorously engaged with the relevant
literature, which built upon my existing knowledge gained through completing a master’s degree, specialising in vocal pedagogy. Principles from education research have informed the development of this pedagogical framework. Therefore, I feel well equipped to create such a framework, having engaged in contemporary thinking about the best teaching approaches.

**Number of Interviews**

The number of interviews was determined by what was considered a fair representation of the most prominent CCM teachers in the field who could contribute significantly to the body of information required for the scope of this study. Baker and Edwards (2012) state:

> In a similar vein, Charmaz also advises researchers to learn ‘what constitutes excellence rather than adequacy in your field’ and conduct as many interviews needed to achieve it. Becker also advises researchers and students to think about how they would convince the most ardent critics of their research and to gather enough evidence to forestall their criticisms. (p. 6)

The depth of data provided by the nine interviewees was sufficient to meet the intentions and objectives of the study. A future study could be conducted with a wider representation of teachers across a variety of backgrounds, cultures, and experiences.

**Classical Influence**

Upon looking at the styles and the framework for developing a CCM pedagogical model, I became aware that most participants came from classical backgrounds. Therefore, there was a risk that the findings of this research perpetuated a model that had its roots in classical training. Pedagogues commented that, during their own voice training, a framework that was responsive to the teaching of CCM styles had not been developed, and they had to direct their own learning of CCM.

Participants told how they employ critical listening skills to accommodate styles they do not understand. Fundamentally, these teachers have had to rely on their own musicality to teach CCM, and subsequent musical biases have likely led to inconsistencies in the teaching of these styles. This issue is addressed further in Chapter 8.

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Cultural Bias

As discussed in previous chapters, because CCM is a global phenomenon, it is important to conduct a study that takes into consideration a multicultural space. Limitations in scope and participant size in this study did not sufficiently allow for full acknowledgement of cultural hybridity and the infiltration of CCM styles into other continents, such as Asia and Europe. The inclusion of only one pedagogue from each of these continents is a limitation because the sample size is not representative of CCM practices across all representative locations. Extensive attempts were made to contact five master teachers from across Asia. All but one, Grace Ng, declined or did not respond to my emails. It is possible that the language barrier, and thus a lack of understanding for the research, may have discouraged potential participants, or they may not have been interested, motivated, or comfortable in connecting with the investigation. One potential explanation for this lack of engagement from participants in countries such as Korea and Japan, where they have a vibrant popular music culture, is that the leading pop idols are crafted in production houses. The creation of these iconic performers can be traced to the launch of the genre’s leading talent agency, Johnny and the Associates. Although such agencies have been creating pop idols for over 50 years, the secrecy and suspicion that surrounds the treatment of artists-in-training makes it impossible to infiltrate these productions houses to find out who is training their aspiring singers.

3.8 CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER

In analysing the nine pedagogues’ responses against the pre-identified key themes, I sought similarities and differences in perspectives and approaches. I present these findings in chapters 5, 6, and 7, and then draw them together to propose a foundational CCM pedagogical framework. The outcomes of each set of questions are outlined in the concluding sections of those three core chapters, where I summarise each of the themes and present what I interpret as the key findings. Based on these outcomes, as well as the existing literature, Chapter 8 offers a preliminary framework intended to underpin the teaching practice of singing in the field of CCM. Before presenting these findings, however, the next chapter presents the backgrounds and experience of the participants using personal narratives.
CHAPER 4: PARTICIPANTS’ BACKGROUNDS

I have experienced and witnessed a lot of good and bad teaching, so I guess I’ve done what most teachers do—I’ve cherry-picked the things that I like, the things that I understand, and the things that I can make work in my studio. By “things” I mean not only exercises but also ideas, concepts, and research.

(Meylan, 2018, p. 177)

In this chapter I provide information about the nine pedagogues who participated in this research. I begin each section with a brief biography drawn primarily from their public online profiles. I then provide information about their backgrounds in a section entitled “Engagement with CCM”. This information was drawn from the interviews conducted between September 15, 2014 to September 11, 2016. In particular, I describe their professional and artistic backgrounds, detailing their own vocal training, both formal and informal, their individual journeys into how they came to teach CCM, and how they developed their CCM pedagogical approaches. In this section I also provide information on pedagogues’ CCM teaching perspectives: their use of the CCM acronym, specific methodology, and teaching-studio philosophy. I chose to present these sections using first-person narrative to best represent the pedagogues’ sense of how their different backgrounds and personal experiences have influenced their teaching, perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes to CCM. The first-person narrative imparts the pedagogues’ stories, motivations, and viewpoints direct from their own voices to the reader, minimising the impact of my own interpretation on these experiences (Sandefur, 2003). The interview questions relating to this chapter are provided in Appendix A.

4.1 PAT WILSON

Biographical Information

Pat Wilson combines her performing experience with many years’ experience as a vocal technician and coach, training students from beginners to musical theatre stars. As a singer and pianist, Wilson performed in theatre, musical theatre, cabaret, concert, piano bar and jazz settings. She has recorded three albums of her original satirical songs, worked as a music supervisor and composer for a children’s television show, broadcasted original satirical material on a weekly basis for two years with the ABC,
published two books and composed a commissioned musical theatre show, as well as much music for theatre productions of many kinds. She continues to work as a musical director in theatre.

Wilson holds a Master of Applied Science (in singing research), a Graduate Certificate in Singing Pedagogy (with distinction), a postgraduate specialist qualification from the University of Western Sydney, and piano credentials. In addition to her private singing studio, Wilson also teaches singing in tertiary drama training facilities at the University of Western Sydney, the Actors’ College of Theatre and Television, and the Drama Department of Flinders University in Adelaide. She is a conference keynote speaker and a regular presenter of masterclasses on vocal technique and performance for professional musical theatre. Wilson has authored and co-authored books, book chapters, and journal articles on the training of singers and actors.

**Pat Wilson backgrounding interview**

**Engagement with CCM**

*My initial training, both in piano and voice, was classical. My father was my first singing teacher and he formally passed those basic classical techniques onto me. Due to his training, I was always very aware of technique as an underpinning of anything that you did as a singer. This has served me very well as a foundational basis for function. When I got too old to listen to my dad, I went to a number of other singing teachers, and it wasn’t straight classical, it always included jazz and musical theatre styles. Later I undertook a Graduate Certificate of Singing Pedagogy through the University of Western Sydney, followed by a Master’s in Applied Science in Communication Sciences and Disorders at Sydney University. This program was entirely singing research-based, and I found out how much I didn’t know.*

*With regards to my pedagogical training, the first influence was my father who was an innate teacher. However, the technique in my childhood was all classical and my repertoire was all CCM therefore, I found that I had to learn formally the approaches that were the least invasive and the most effective for CCM. When I taught, it was from a CCM position right from the beginning, never classical singing, because over that period of performing both piano and voice, I built a strong repertoire and*
understanding in CCM. I developed my CCM teaching approaches through what I learned in the Post-Grad Certificate of Pedagogy, and after that, it’s been attending conferences, Australian National Association of Teachers of Singing (ANATS) meetings, and I subscribe to the Journal of Singing.

The basis of my life is very much music and when I started to teach from sheer economic necessity, I was already a performer, a pianist and a singer. I teach people who want to make money out of their singing voices, and that affects my pedagogical choices. I have to hear what people are paying for these days—now, this week. What I am teaching may sound beautiful, but if it ain’t going to sell, I am not serving my students well by teaching them that beautiful, [classical] non-commercial sound. It will make them sound old-fashioned, as if they can’t cut it. I am a great believer in crossing that great divide between classical and CCM.

For years, my father and I performed together from when I was very, very small. I grew into a person who could play piano and sing well, so I began working in piano bars, both nationally and internationally. As a performer, I headed towards CCM quite early, and began playing jazz on piano from when I was 13, after I heard Errol Garner’s “Concert by the Sea” album. I later developed a solo show called “Pat Wilson: Words and Music”, because I was starting to write original material, which was basically satirical cabaret material. Shortly after, I met Adrian, and we have together performed a series of original satirical cabaret shows at Adelaide Festival, Melbourne Festival, Edinburgh Fringe, all sorts of tours; essentially one piano, and two voices. I have worked as an actor and at management level as musical director in theatre productions, which sometimes has meant that I have had to perform, too. I have performed quite extensively on television and radio broadcasts.

**CCM teaching-studio practice**

I have been teaching for probably 36 years. The phrase I use is: “I teach actors to sing and singers to act”. I frequently do use the term CCM in professional writing. For my peers, I will refer to CCM as the way to talk about popular musics (plural) that are rock, pop, jazz, rap, R&B. Because
CCM is not a term that’s fully recognised, say, throughout theatre or agents and casting agents, I will spell it out more specifically. “I teach pop music too”.

My teaching does definitely not adhere to any methodology, I am a passionate believer in what works for you, and what works for the person in the room that day, that very minute, is the best technique. It’s what is in your tool-box, and what you can access quickly to fix things when you are in trouble; and I also wanted to offer students a variety of ways to deal with voice issues.

In terms of my teaching philosophy, I am actively concerned that the person that I am working with should not be in any way harmed, emotionally or psychologically. There is a breadth and openness of spirit so the student can develop their voice for themselves, and it’s not up to me to give them one. If I have a safe and harm-free type environment, they are more likely to come out of their shell and become themselves.

4.2 ANNE PECKHAM

Biographical Information

Anne Peckham is a singer, voice teacher, and international author in the field of contemporary vocal pedagogy. Peckham has been Chair of the Voice Department at Berklee College of Music since 2011, serving the needs of more than 1300 voice principals, with 75 dedicated faculty members. For more than two decades before becoming chair, she was a professor in the Voice Department. She has worked with many high-profile vocal performers, including Grammy Award winners and successful recording artists.

Peckham travelled extensively as a voice clinician and adjudicator for Berklee, as well as for song and choral festivals in North America, South America, Mexico, Europe, and China. Her masterclasses and vocal pedagogy seminars for students and teachers embrace the foundations of good vocal technique, while building skills in rock, jazz, pop, and R&B. She is a member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing and served on the Boston chapter’s board of directors.
Peckham’s performance experience includes work with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, and recordings with the Boston Pops. She has performed with regional theatre companies and worked as a professional soloist with area choirs. She is the author of *Vocal Workouts for the Contemporary Singer* (2005), *The Contemporary Singer: Elements of Vocal Technique* (2010), and *Berklee in the Pocket: Singer’s Handbook* (2004). Her *Contemporary Singer* books have been translated into Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Russian, and Portuguese, and are used as texts in many college voice programs.

**Anne Peckham backgrounding interview**

*Engagement with CCM*

When I was in my Bachelor of Music degree, I studied classical music, because if you wanted to study voice, you studied classical as there was no other choice. Once again, I found myself with a classical teacher at graduate school, as there weren’t really options for studying contemporary music styles. My real love was for all kinds of vocal jazz music and musical theatre, so I had to learn those on the side on my own.

I started as a teaching assistant when I was in undergraduate school, but I have been teaching professionally since 1984. In 1987, I was hired at Berklee as they were looking to hire teachers with a background in classical music who could teach basic vocal technique to a wide range of students. CCM was unheard of at that time and I was thrown into this melting pot, and I really learned a lot on the job. I began to develop my own pedagogical approaches to CCM before there was a specific methodology. I knew that students didn’t want to sound classical, and I tried to find ways to help them get the sound that they wanted and that was relevant for their specific style of music, in a healthy manner that wasn’t going to injure their voices. As a contemporary voice teacher, I have found that I’m better teaching it than doing it myself, mainly because my own background was so solidly classical for so many years.

Over the years I became more familiar with other CCM teaching methods such as the Estill method. Mary Barton Saunders [Saunders-Barton], a very dear and welcoming person helped me to further understand more about contemporary music and her particular approach to teaching, which
was mostly musical theatre. I also attend NATS clinics as an outlet for exploring different approaches and for developing my own professional work. I try to keep my horizons broadened by attending various clinics, such as belting clinics and different kinds of masterclasses, reading anything I can get my hands on that has to do with contemporary music especially contemporary music pedagogy. Although I don’t agree with everything I read, I find it fascinating to read different approaches. I studied Alexander Technique for a few years and took a couple of years of voice lessons with an Alexander trained teacher.

One thing that has really influenced me was going to a workshop that was presented by Richard Miller, the great vocal pedagogue who has written several important books. I was so excited to hear what kinds of things he would have to say, because he was obviously a learned person and very articulate. Someone sang something musical theatre for one of the masterclasses. I raised my hand and asked, “What do you think of belting? What is your approach to working on belting in any kind of contemporary music?” He responded, “I don’t even want to talk about it. I have nothing to say about it”. This was a pivotal moment for me as a teacher, and as a vocalist, too. I couldn’t believe that this great vocal pedagogue wanted to know nothing about it; he didn’t want to learn about it, he had no curiosity about it, didn’t want to talk about it, it was not his thing and that was that. The germ of the idea was nurtured and started with that very moment when I realised there wasn’t a lot of guidance for people who had questions [regarding CCM], and there were so many vocalists in the world who needed voice lessons and not so many teachers who really knew what to do with vocalists who didn’t want to sing classical music. I was quite struck by this as this was true in my own personal case, too. It made me want to learn more, and it made me want to write my books differently to his books. Writing my book about CCM, “The Contemporary Singer”, helped me develop my technique, solidify my ideas and clearly articulate some of the things that I thought were important for all singers in contemporary music styles.

Mostly I performed classical and musical theatre, and the jazz music I performed sort of bordered on pop in some ways. I sang with the
Tanglewood Festival chorus for four years, performing on two recordings with the Boston Pops, including a featured solo in their televised Gilbert and Sullivan presentation, which aired on PBS. I also performed with regional theatre companies and worked as a professional soloist with area church choirs; and I perform frequently in recital and cabaret venues. In 2006, I was on the TV reality series Trial by Choir, a show featured on the Learning Channel, and was featured on the children’s television show Fetch in 2007. Because my training was not in a contemporary style, the classical sound was hard to undo and I almost had to try to figure out how my voice fit into contemporary music. Later, I started experimenting a little with improvisation when I did some study with Patty Coker, who is a wonderful jazz singer.

CCM teaching-studio practice

I started as a teaching assistant when I was in undergraduate school, but I have been teaching professionally since 1984. I teach pop; well, I teach technique in any style of music; that’s what I would say. So that could be classical, pop, rock, R&B, some gospel. But mostly I think of myself as a person who works on vocal technique in any kind of contemporary commercial music. I use the terminology CCM to describe the styles that I teach.

I do not use a methodology because I like to gather ideas from several different methodologies. Good teachers want to help their students, and there are so many styles of learning, so many types of singers in the world that you just can’t use one approach and push a student into that particular approach. I think that having as many different tools at your disposal as possible, as many different ideas, as many different ways to explain the same thing so it really resonates with more than one person; if you only have one way of explaining something, I think it’s very limiting as a teacher, so I really try to be open.

With regards to my teaching philosophy, this is not going to sound very elegant, but I feel that I can work with people with whatever they can bring to the table whether they are an advanced singer or beginning level singer. I feel that I am good at assessing students’ needs and trying to help them
in a way that’s positive, and work on eliminating negatives such as tension, and things like that.

4.3 GILLYANNE KAYES

Biographical Information

Gillyanne Kayes is a writer, researcher, teacher, and singing expert. She graduated from York University with a Bachelor of Arts in Music, and subsequently worked as a professional chorister in London, and as a lieder and early music specialist around the UK. Working with actors at the E15 Acting School was a watershed in Kayes’ teaching career, and it inspired her interest in vocal function. In 1996, she became one of the first Estill Vanguard licensees, pioneering the work in the UK and Europe for the next five years. She founded Vocal Process with Jeremy Fisher to meet the changing needs of vocal performers and teachers.

Kayes’ has authored and co-authored a number of publications with Jeremy Fisher. Kayes and Fisher have also contributed a chapter (with Lisa Popeil) to the Oxford Handbook of Singing (Welch, Howard, & Nix, 2014) on the pedagogy of different sung genres. However, she is probably best known for her book, Singing and the Actor, (2004) which highlights the difference between classical and musical theatre vocal training.

Kayes’ doctoral thesis How does genre shape the vocal behaviour of female singers: Empirical studies of professional female singing in Western Lyric and Contemporary Commercial Music genres (2015), examined the relationship between comfort, genre, and voice quality in the female singing voice for different music genres. She has presented papers, workshops, and keynote speeches on the singing voice for the Pan-European Voice Conference, the British Voice Association, ATHE (Awards for Training and Higher Education), VASTA (Voice and Speech Trainers Association) and the Physiology and Acoustics of Singing International Conference.

Kayes trains teachers and performers across all genres, and is a consultant, advisor, and workshop leader for numerous educational institutions.
Gillyanne Kayes Backgrounding Interview

Engagement with CCM

My own singing training was all classical in a one-to-one learning situation, very much the regular master-apprentice approach, as there was nothing else available as far as I was aware. What I did have was some exchange lessons with a voice and text teacher; we got on very well. We used to go into each other’s classes and say “What do you do in yours?” “This is what I do” “Oh what is that approach about?” So we had this big curiosity about each other’s work and, in due course, I did do some skill swaps with other voice teachers also. That’s how I learned to use my chest voice, because you know that in classical singing if you are a soprano, chest voice is a no-no.

I began to teach CCM by accident, and completely learned on the job. I had been working in a school, just doing mainstream classical grade exams, when someone in my region was looking for a singing teacher for the local drama school, heard that I was doing well, and so they asked if I would like to have a trial term teaching. It was only when I started working in that drama school that I was introduced to Gershwin, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Kurt Weill, and the great American song book. It was gradually getting to grips with music within that context, and I thought that was amazing. I found myself working with actors who had a very small amount of pitch range, and about a third of them couldn’t really sing on pitch at all. I had to learn very, very quickly, what are the first principles that I have to teach? The decision had to be made at that point “they must all have the same bits so they can all sing”. And that was what really took me forward and fired me to find out more about what actually enables us to do that from a physiological point of view. So that was a complete accident, and what I found was that I loved it, and that I loved working with actors. I was very interested in literature and text. I always had been.

When I was training as a singer in the UK, there were no pedagogy courses, and I was unaware of anyone teaching people to teach. My training arena was attending university, as well as taking private lessons, doing masterclasses and attending summer schools. My knowledge came
from being a member of the British Voice Association, which is a multi-disciplinary organization, trying to build an interface between medical knowledge, voice science and singing pedagogy. There was a whole group of us out there, in the 1980s, who were working mostly in musical theatre, and some with pop singers as well, who were going along to these conferences and these training days and saying, “Yes, but how do we do what we need to do?”

My CCM pedagogical approaches were developed by listening, investigating, and talking with other teachers. About the early 90s, there were a number of CCM singing teachers who went to see Jo Estill, because we were so hungry to find out more about the voice. I did a lot of training in that particular method; however, there were questions in my mind and other people’s minds about how to understand where it came from. At the same time, because I thought it was worth finding out more, I set up a series of vocal anatomy and physiology courses for singing teachers with Meribeth Bunch (now Meribeth Dayme). During one of these courses, we had interesting conversations in which she would say “Yes, that’s a good exercise, but it doesn’t actually do what Jo Estill says it does because that’s not how the physiology works”. Being curious, we set up a series of courses for singing teachers, which were very much a form of self-study and a great way to learn what was actually underpinning the stuff that any singing teachers are talking about. It was a case of, if the training wasn’t available, I set it up so I could have the training that I needed.

In my early 30s I found myself in a position where I was teaching so many hours a day that I started to have problems with my own voice. I developed an understanding about the speaking voice and discovered that it actually wasn’t about the singing, I was using too many glottal attacks, and I wasn’t utilising the airflow in the same way as in singing. Another big influence has been learning about phonetics because, when I was training as a classical singer, one is not really taught how to form the sounds, and I was not singing the correct vowels.

After I left university and came to study in London, I worked as a professional chorister, singing in a number of ensembles, sight reading
new music on a regular basis, and I was also working as a solo recitalist. It was all classical music. Often, I was setting up my own work with other musicians at music clubs or music societies, and they are very much a regional thing; and then the music clubs would set up their own concerts, so I might get paid to do a concert like that. I did that for about 15 years, but you can’t earn a living that way.

**CCM teaching-studio practice**

I have been teaching for 32 years. I do use the term CCM, but it’s usually with reference to jazz and popular music styles, not musical theatre, as I think it should be separated from CCM, for the simple reason that their needs are very different.

Regarding methodology, it’s always tricky. I certainly use some of the Estill methodology because I was historically an Estill licensed teacher. I was a Vanguard licensee. I also trained extensively as a classical musician and singer. I use really whatever I can get that works. I think I have a particular approach which is based on knowledge of vocal function, and there are some of the Estill techniques that are very useful for eliciting better vocal function, but it’s by no means the only methodology out there. I certainly don’t teach a method. I like the word methodology, that is far better.

**Philosophy:** my overall approach is that I need to be client focussed, which means whatever music it is that the client wants to sing, my job is to facilitate that. My job is not to say, “Oh no, you can’t do that, that’s not good for you”, or, “I don’t want you singing in that way”. So it’s really more about building on something that is going to work for that client. Of course there are sometimes situations where someone is doing something that is vocally unsustainable and in which case I will say, “What you are going to find is that if you continue to use your voice in that way, then that is not going to work for you and you will continue to get vocally tired, but let’s find a way for you to help you make that sound for that genre within those target ranges, within the style and the voice quality that you need to produce. Let’s find a way to do that”. That’s my philosophy.
4.4. JEANNETTE LOVETRI

Biographical Information

Jeannette LoVetri is an international singing teacher who coined the term, *contemporary commercial music* (CCM) in 2000 to replace the term *non-classical*. The acronym CCM is now in accepted use in academia, research, medical, and clinical journals.

In 2002 LoVetri developed her method, Somatic Voicework™ at the request of the former Dean at Shenandoah Conservatory, who asked her to create a program based on her teaching practices that could be shared with others. The Dean created an Institute for LoVetri called The Contemporary Commercial Music Vocal Pedagogy Institute. LoVetri’s work has expanded and is now presented in a new, larger, and more dynamic institute at Baldwin Wallace University in Ohio. Over 1200 people have participated in this training program at several national and international locations.

LoVetri is a lecturer at Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia, and has been a keynote speaker at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor Medical Center, the Duke University Medical Center, the Chicago Institute for Voice Care at the University of Illinois, and the Deutsche Stimmklinik in Hamburg, Germany. She has taught at numerous other universities throughout the US as well as internationally. LoVetri has been a master teacher twice for the National Association of Teachers of Singing, and for various state chapters including Virginia, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Rhode Island; and she is on the advisory board of the Voice Foundation in Philadelphia. Her students are Grammy Award winners and Tony-nominated Broadway leads. They have appeared in some of the world’s great venues, including Carnegie Hall, the Lincoln Center, Albert Hall, and the Hollywood Bowl; some have appeared on television, in jazz venues, and in international theatres and concert halls. LoVetri worked as a singing specialist for 20 years with the Grammy Award-winning Brooklyn Youth Chorus.

LoVetri has been a presenter and panellist at various international voice conferences on numerous topics, and has written four book chapters in pedagogy and for medical texts. She has also published numerous articles in peer reviewed journals for both singing and science. LoVetri is the recipient of the Van Lawrence Fellowship, a lifetime achievement award from the New York Singing Teachers’ Association, and a citation from the Centro Estudos da Voz in Sao Paulo, where she was a guest lecturer.
Engagement with CCM

When I was 15, I started singing lessons with a local classical teacher, who trained me in a very gentle, pretty generic way. I got the lead in *Music Man* when I was about 17, and I learned a great deal about theatrical performing from the Broadway Professionals, who were staging it. In 1967, I was accepted into Manhattan School of Music; however, there was no musical theatre degree program there, so I went towards classical singing because it was the best available match for my interests. While there, I studied with a Wagnerian soprano who hated my voice and how I sang, and by the end of the second semester of my first year I was absolutely vocally and morally demoralised. That was the end of my college studies.

Over the decades, my lessons were always classical, and I was on my own in making the lessons apply to all the kinds of repertoire I did. There came a time when I started to have very severe vocal problems but, unfortunately, my teacher at the time kept telling me that it was psychological and my voice was just moving into the “next place”. So I taught myself to keep getting stronger and louder, all the while continuing to sing classical music at my lessons and moving into heavier material there as well. I finally got to a point where it seemed that I couldn’t sing anything, and I was even having trouble talking. I was very confused, so I gave up performing and stopped trying to sing. In 1979, after 13 years of study, I became my own teacher and I never took technique lessons with anyone else ever again. I decided that if I couldn’t teach myself and work with the mechanism successfully, that I had no business teaching anybody anything, and that I should just throw in the towel and give up.

I began to teach at 22 after I music directed a rather large musical. At first, I just plunged in and made it up as I went, and I did rather well; but when I made the commitment to become a singing teacher, I decided I was going to find out everything there was to know about teaching and vocal health. In 1978 I attended my first voice science conference at the Voice Foundation Symposium, and it was at that time I became interested in
understanding more about vocal function, especially as I had previously experienced some vocal pathology. My first influence was the work of Cornelius Reid, and I then followed this with exposure to a number of other medical doctors who allowed me to sit in their offices and watch them treat patients and to ask questions later. I worked with two of the great voice scientists in the world—Dr Johan Sundberg in Sweden and Dr Ingo Titze.

The rest of my education has been learning about voice science largely through self-education, reading books and attending conferences. I have also participated in research, which allowed me to learn about the voice by working on myself and to apply what I was learning as well. I have obtained my knowledge by studying alone, without a teacher or mentor; by doing, looking at the protocols, by experimenting with my own voice in many ways. Eventually in 1988 I was asked to teach at the Voice Foundation and I also garnered many invitations to go to various colleges and universities, and this eventually led to my being asked to teach a few sessions at Shenandoah Conservatory. I wrote the first course based on answering the kinds of questions people had asked me while I was doing masterclasses all over the world. I also included basic voice science and health information in these classes so teachers would have easy access to it.

The development of my CCM pedagogical approaches was a special kind of education—one person at a time, one topic at a time—over the course of decades. I was motivated by my own need to sing in all these different styles in order to keep working, but also I really wanted to know what I was doing in a way that made sense from a health standpoint. There were no resources in the literature as the only books available were aimed at classical singing. There was no one to ask, and no one could tell me; therefore, my motivation to develop the pedagogy came from my own life experience. I believed that someone should have answers to these questions, and I was determined to get some so I made it my business to know, and I do.

When I lived in Connecticut, I was the lead in three musicals, sang in church, and at concerts. I sang modern music. I sang old music. I played
the organ in church for ten years and sang at weddings and funerals, and then I did cabaret. When I moved to New York City I sang at Lincoln Center, at several large churches including our biggest jazz church, and did an Off-Broadway musical review. I sang for five years with a group of Broadway singers who were primarily gospel-based. I also sang some opera and performed in several classical recitals. After I stopped performing, I kept up singing by doing small cabaret performances and vocal recitals. One of my most recent performances: I sang “O Holy Night” and “My Buddy” (a World War I song) in a jazz arrangement. I am doing my best to stay out there.

CCM teaching-studio practice

I have been teaching for 43 years, almost 44. I would reference the styles [I teach] as contemporary commercial music, CCM.

My methodology is the method that I devised myself, which is called Somatic Voicework™ and it’s a three-tier program (Level 1, 2, and 3). Somatic Voicework™ asks people to understand that each style has its own integrity. If you are going to teach them, you have to respect the integrity of each style by knowing what the foremost exponents of that style do, how they sound. In terms of the market place, the work is aimed at helping teachers produce singers who can work.

My philosophy is that I let the voice guide me. I approach a lesson without a preconceived notion of how someone should sound. When I come to a lesson, I observe how a voice is behaving, and I allow the behaviour to guide me to work with the singer in each moment to find the best response the throat and the body can make, and that the singer’s mind can understand and direct. The other part of it is that I strive to help make the path of a singer’s heart and soul more clearly available to them as artists so they can expand their artistic palate.
4.5. WENDY LEBORGNE

**Biographical Information**

Dr. Wendy LeBorgne is a voice pathologist, speaker, author, and masterclass clinician of vocal wellness and vocal athletes. She has spoken on the professional voice more than a hundred times, nationally and internationally. During her 20-year career as a voice pathologist and singing-voice specialist, she has served as the clinical director of two successful private practice voice centers (the ProVoice Center in Cincinnati, and BBIVAR in Dayton, Ohio), evaluating and treating patients with vocal injuries.

LeBorgne holds an adjunct professor position at the University of Cincinnati’s College-Conservatory of Music as a voice consultant, caring for the voices of the actors and singers. She also teaches undergraduate vocal pedagogy, a new doctoral-level commercial music pedagogy course, and a new course entitled “Vocal Wellness for Vocal Athletes”. She completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Musical Theater from Shenandoah Conservatory, and master’s and doctoral degrees from the University of Cincinnati in Communication Sciences and Disorders. Her original peer-reviewed research has been published in many international journals, and she is a contributing author of several voice textbooks. More recently she co-authored the text and workbook, *The Vocal Athlete* (LeBorgne & Rosenberg, 2014). LeBorgne maintains an elite private studio and continues to perform professionally. Her patients and private students can be seen and heard on radio, television, film, cruise ships, Broadway, Off-Broadway, national tours, commercial music tours, and opera stages around the world.

**Wendy LeBorgne Backgrounding Interview**

*Engagement with CCM*

*I have been studying voice from the time I was probably 12, all the way through graduating at a university level in music theatre. I had classical training as a young girl and through my teenage years. The belting and musical theatre stuff I learned a lot on my own, and I have been doing that since I was probably 7 or 8 when I started as a music theatre singer. In college I developed a very good classical foundation, but also had musical theatre training. Occasionally, I still take some classical as well as belting lessons. Another set of ears and another set of eyes is always useful*
because the voice is dynamic and there are always things you can learn along the way.

In graduate school and with my doctoral program, I was able to create a cognate in vocal pedagogy. I took all of that course work at Cincinnati Conservatory along with their master’s students, and so I did everything from songlit, to pedagogy, to independent studies in pedagogy, to specific self-guided studies in belting, and then of course my dissertation work. I did a huge historical review of classical pedagogy, as well as commercial pedagogy; whatever is out there as close as I could to get up to date. I have also attended NATS events, workshops and other training programs.

In undergraduate, I took voice science and pedagogy. I have a BFA in music theatre and my master’s and doctorate are in speech pathology, with a specialization in voice disorders. My dissertation is on the belt voice, and I just finished writing a pedagogical commercial music text book called ‘The Vocal Athlete’.

When I made this transition to science, one of my professionally personal goals was to try to bridge this gap between art and science. In my research and in my writing, I like to take what I love from lots of different pedagogues such as Jeannie LoVetri, Mary Saunders-Barton, and elements of Jo Estill. I have been so amazingly fortunate to have such great mentors in the world of voice pedagogy and of voice science.

My pedagogical approach to commercial music is a bit eclectic and a bit science-based. It is very student-dependent on what that student needs and how they best communicate as to what I choose in my studio. A lot of my pedagogical approaches to CCM are probably based on my knowledge of how the voice and speaking voice works, how the sub-systems of voice work together, and then taking the literature that has been written in pedagogy throughout the centuries and applying what made physiological sense. Science to some degree has guided my pedagogical thinking. I think one of the things that maybe goes beyond the teaching aspect is the mind, body, spirit approach to CCM, because so much of CCM is based on emotion. I think that CCM music in general is used to convey a story, whether that’s R&B, or music theatre, and these performers have to have
that emotional connection because the voice is so intimately involved with the soul, for lack of a better word.

*I have performed professional regional theatre here in Cincinnati and sung featured roles as well as Choral concert work. I had the opportunity to sing at the Kennedy Centre a couple of times in DC, and then performed some concerts in Europe. I have also performed with contemporary worship bands, and in recitals and cabarets.*

**CCM teaching-studio practice**

*I have been teaching for 18 years. I do use the term contemporary commercial music, but sometimes I will use non-classical or commercial music.*

*I do not have a specific methodology.*

*The philosophy I use for teaching is based on the thought process of “how can I get this instrument most efficient and most effective in whatever genre they sing to meet the market demands”, whether it is heavy metal or rap or music theatre, because in my clinic my job is not to judge. My teaching goal is to get the student efficient and healthy, and so whatever that takes.*

**4.6. KIM CHANDLER**

**Biographical Information**

Kim Chandler is a contemporary singing specialist. Since 1995 she has taught singing to thousands of singers, both institutionally and privately. As an industry vocal coach, she runs a private studio where she teaches and mentors an elite team of professional singers, recording artists, and other vocal coaches. Academically, from 2000 to 2010 Chandler was a Principal Lecturer in Contemporary Voice at Leeds College of Music and a Senior Lecturer at the London College of Music, the institution at which she obtained a Master’s degree (with distinction) in performance. For two years she was also the academic head of the UK’s oldest, most established pop vocal college, Vocaltech (now BIMM London).
Since 2007, Chandler has been an endorsed coach with the top international vocal technology company, TC Helicon, and twice served as a Vocal Coach in Residence for their Voice Council Magazine. She works regularly at the well-known Abbey Road Studios, leading their “Record a Song” sessions, and was part of the coaching team on the UK Audition Tour for Series 3 and 6 of *The Voice UK*. Now working on a completely freelance basis, Chandler is regularly invited to lead vocal workshops and masterclasses, and is a regular presenter at national and international vocal conferences, including as a keynote speaker in Australia in 2010. She is the Head of Communications of the British Voice Association but also served two terms as a director, and is a recent past president.

Chandler’s vocal pedagogy writing includes chapters in two published books: *The Ultimate Guide to Singing* (Barker & Alexander, 2014) and *Teaching Singing in the 21st Century* (Harrison & O’Bryan, 2014). She also has a keen interest in the latest voice research, methodologies, and pedagogy. In addition to extensive reading on the subject, Chandler attends regular ongoing training.

**Kim Chandler Backgrounding Interview**

**Engagement with CCM**

I grew up in a very musical family. My parents both sang, and my grandmother, who was a big influence in my life, was a professional musician. In my years growing up I saw myself as primarily a flute player who played piano as well, and sang on the side. I didn’t believe that I had the beauty of tone that my own parents had, although my pitching was always excellent. My mum said she heard me singing harmonies along to TV ads when I was three, so I guess my life as a session singer was kind of set in stone from a very early age, and I would always gravitate to harmonies.

When I left school at the age of 17 I moved to Brisbane and, during this time, I joined a vocal jazz harmony group and I did some TV singing competitions. I decided that I wanted to take music more seriously, so I enrolled in a Bachelor of Music Education degree at the University of Queensland in 1984. My principal instrument was flute, my second study was piano, all the way through except for one semester when somebody suggested that I should do some singing training. There was only classical
training available at the time and it didn’t match me at all. When it came to me having to perform the classical pieces for my exam, as soon as I went to sing, out came my jazz voice. It was a bit embarrassing seeing the judging panel sitting there trying not to laugh out loud because it was so wrong stylistically. I had no other singing training, apart from those few second-study classical lessons, purely because it was ‘classical or die’.

It was fairly inevitable, in hindsight, that people would ask me for lessons; however, I pushed the enquiries away for many years. Then one day I thought, “Actually Kim, really, you are a trained teacher”. Although I was not a singing teacher, I had the structure of teaching from being a music teacher. What I needed to study up on was vocal pedagogy, vocal technique, how I am doing what I am doing as a vocalist, because clearly it’s working, given that I am getting a lot of singing work. I had to figure it out on the fly, and became self-reflective as there was no one to go to, to be trained in CCM singing at that time. There barely is now if I am honest.

I did a fulltime postgraduate, MMus study in vocal performance at London College of Music in 2000 and 2001. I was the first non-classical singer allowed into that course, as it had been purely a classical course until that time.

I can honestly say that my pedagogical background primarily is ‘the field’, that is, the music business and its requirements. I see what singers actually need to be able to do sustainably and to a very high professional level, and that becomes the filter through which something is deemed useful or not. I think the years in the field inform everything about the priorities, the skill sets needed, the techniques that will work, the stamina that is required, how to deal with all the problematic issues such as poor fold back, late night performances et cetera. et cetera. You have to know how to advise people on dealing with these issues, because that is what singers experience. The reality of the situation is my number one informant. Number two, where I personally get fed as regards on-going professional development, is in the British Voice Association, as a multi-disciplinary association. I get the latest, evidence-based vocal information, techniques, and teaching ideas from the seminars, symposia and conferences they hold on all fields to do with the voice, not just CCM. It’s that whole multi-
disciplinary body of knowledge and the research in fields such as acoustic science and medicine that feed my knowledge base about the voice in all its complexity.

I have had a really eclectic kind of background in terms of performance. I was a band singer for many, many years, doing anything within a wide range of styles, fronting a glam metal band as well as a funk/soul/R&B band. In 1990, I became a studio session singer, and it’s been a main part of my income (having sung over 2000 commercials by the time I left Australia in 1999).

CCM teaching-studio practice

I have been teaching professionally since 1995. I will use the term CCM only when I am talking to other pedagogues and when I am presenting at conferences to teachers and academics. It’s not a particularly meaningful descriptor to my client base. I would probably call what I teach ‘pop/rock’, and I also use other terms like ‘contemporary singing’ or ‘commercial singing’. There is not an ideal umbrella term in my opinion as yet that feels so comfortable that I want to use it.

Methodology: categorically not! And the reason I have made a deliberate decision to not adhere to any one methodology is that I don’t believe that any one vocal ‘world view’ or vocal ‘map’ (I call a vocal methodology a ‘map’) covers everything. That’s why I think, personally, it’s good to have different pedagogies on hand because not everything works for everybody. I personally advocate a ‘pick and mix’ approach, somewhat like a shopping cart, or to use an Australian analogy, a magpie; and I will just pick and choose from the various methodologies that I have had some training in or some encounter with. So if you have a strict methodology that you adhere to, to me that just smacks of limitation rather than pedagogical freedom. That’s why I have deliberately kept myself methodologically independent so that I can use what I want to use for my clients and keep it changing, growing and evolving.

In terms of teaching philosophy, I think the best people to answer that question are my clients as I don’t have a conscious, over-riding philosophy
that adheres to everybody, except perhaps that everybody is seen on their own merit. I’ll do whatever needs to be done and dip into whatever skills and tricks and techniques from many years as a performer myself and from the years as a teacher, and the fact that those two feed into each other. I will do whatever I need to help that person.

4.7. DIANE HUGHES

Biographical Information

Associate Professor Diane Hughes teaches in vocal studies and music at Macquarie University. In 2014 Hughes received an Australian Office of Learning and Teaching Citation. This followed her 2013 Vice Chancellor’s Citation for her outstanding contribution to facilitating student engagement and learning through the design of contemporary and innovative music curricula. Hughes has an extensive background in contemporary popular singing pedagogy, and has been an invited speaker at conferences and seminars. Her work within the industry has involved artist development and recording. Hughes’ research interests include vocal artistry, vocal pedagogy, vocal recording, vocal performance, and singing in schools; and her current research projects include career pathways in the new music industries, emotion and voice, the singer-songwriter, cultural musicology, and collaborative producing in recording. Research on singing in schools led her to become an advocate for the development of cross-curriculum voice studies in school education.

From 2013 to 2017 Hughes served as the National President, Australian National Association of Teachers of Singing. At the time of writing (early 2019) she is on the board as National Vice President.

Diane Hughes Backgrounding Interview

Engagement with CCM

My first singing teacher was a local classical teacher, as there were no contemporary teachers at the time. However, I wasn’t singing classically and I have never sung classically, but I was keen to find out how I could improve my singing, and so I went to a particular teacher for about six months. Back then I didn’t have any understanding, but I think that she was really astute in how some exercises and some methodology can actually shape the voice in a certain way. From there I went to the UK and
did some study with Cleo Lane, a fabulous jazz singer, and John Dankworth, who had set up a foundation to support young musicians and young singers. I learnt a lot from Cleo about expression and dynamic control and all of those kinds of things.

When I came back to Australia, I found Bob Tasman-Smith, who was really ahead of his time in the sense that he was a classical singer who embraced musical theatre and all different kinds of styles of singing. He was really instrumental in developing the other aspect of my teaching philosophy, which is recognizing the uniqueness of all voices. I didn’t understand when I started going to him just how he treated every voice and every student as an individual, and he didn’t try and give students the same exercises or the same repertoire. They are things that I now don’t do either. Although I had other teachers, Bob was the main one for a number of years.

Teaching wasn’t something that I set out to do. I started out as a professional singer who was really keen to find out how the voice worked. I was asked to fill in some classes for a friend in a dance school environment where it was all teenage girls. They did not sing particularly well and they had a lot of problems in that higher area of the lower register. I left that class really hungry to find out ways of helping people, because I thought teaching could be something that I would really enjoy based on that one experience. Initially I didn’t feel I had all the information I needed, so that started me on this lifetime of learning and research.

In developing my pedagogical approaches, I was partially mentored by my own teacher, Bob Tasman-Smith, but also did what probably most teachers do and that is use a lot of reflection on my own practice and devising strategies that worked well for me into teaching methods and strategies. Later, I attended a vocal pedagogy course at the University of Western Sydney (UWS) and I was the only contemporary singing teacher. When I did the UWS course, voice science was just starting to come into its own at that point. Jean Callaghan was running that course and she was a great exponent for voice science and basing pedagogy. In fact, I think that was a real turning point for my career because, while I had put in place a lot
of strategies and exercises, I hadn’t really made the connection as to why they worked or why things didn’t work.

My own research has looked at different aspects of singing pedagogy from the last probably 14 or 15 years. It has taken me to do further training and to look into other teachers’ practices and methodologies for my own professional development. This includes Sundberg’s course, which was “Foundations of Singing”, and I also went to one of Lisa Popeil’s courses in Los Angeles a couple of years ago. I have sat in on other singing teachers’ lessons, including Jeannette LoVetri’s, for my own professional development.

A lot of my work has reflected my kind of varied interest in different styles of music, therefore I have had a very diverse career, singing with rock bands, jazz trios, and piano bars. In the last few years I have been doing a lot of producing in recording studios for other singers.

CCM teaching-studio practice

I have been teaching for probably over 20 years. I never use the term CCM, because it has never fitted what I do in a really broad context. I think the moment that you add commerciality, it implies something else, and I know that a lot of my students over the years haven’t had commercial intentions. I teach popular culture music (PCM), which I introduced into the literature in 2010, mainly because I have concerns about labelling what we do as contemporary commercial music.

There is no particular named methodology. I have developed my own beliefs which underpin my own teaching philosophy, and that is to have a healthy vocal production to enable all the colours of the voice to be used.

My philosophy is based on: there needs to be healthy production. If the voice is hindered in any way, then a singer’s not going to have capability for full expression or a full vocal palate of colours.
4.8. Daniel Zangger Borch

Biographical Information

Daniel Zangger Borch holds a PhD in music performance, from the Voice Centre in Stockholm, Sweden. He is the first singing-voice specialist to scientifically study the functioning of the rock, pop, and soul voice, and is a pioneer in areas such as vocal distortion.

Zangger Borch is a professional singer who shares his vocal talents on CD’s, on television, and at concert performances. He is regularly hired as a guest speaker by singers and teaching institutions all over Europe. His teaching methods are built on a knowledge base of voice physiology, anatomy, and research, and how these apply to the vocal ideals of a rock, pop and soul singer. Zangger Borch is a vocal consultant at the Voice Centre where he is sought after by elite artists in Sweden. He regularly works with other music industry personnel from record and production companies, and teaches at a variety of educational establishments around Europe, such as the Royal College of Music in Stockholm. Zangger Borch appears regularly as a vocal coach for popular television shows such as Idol, True Talent, The X Factor and Eurovision.

Daniel Zangger Borch Backgrounding Interview

Engagement with CCM

I began singing lessons when, at the age of 18, I got a record deal. When I went to record, I became hoarse and decided to go to a singing teacher. The only voice teaching available at the time was classically training, and after applying that classical technique into a rock style, I ended up with a review the following tour saying “Daniel sings well, but sounds like a musical theatre singer in a rock band”. This was disastrous for me because incorporating that technique into rock left me sounding like a musical theatre dude, and you never want to sound like that when you are from the pop/rock scene. I realised something was wrong and I stopped the lessons. Some years later I trained with a jazz teacher just to learn some theory before applying to the Royal Academy of Music where I had some further vocal training. At the time, I was still touring full time in the rock band, performing over one hundred gigs per year; therefore, I could apply the
exercises from my singing teachers straight away. However, I found with this institutional-based training, nothing worked in the reality of touring.

Due to my high profile as a member of quite a famous band in Sweden, I was asked to make an instructional video. It was thought that my professional standing would add a commercial element to build on for singers. I questioned what I needed to have in this instruction video to make it real. It was then that I realised no-one knew anything about teaching the (pop) voice, from a science point of view, at the Royal Academy. I contacted Johan Sundberg, who was a big influence on me due to his approaches to learning and his knowledge, and I asked him to help. After making my video, I became a reviewer of singing material in a big Swedish magazine, so I read all the Sadolin material as well as all the American publications on voice and pedagogy. I viewed all the instructional videos and tried all the methodologies from a variety of books. I enrolled in the Estill program and did levels 1 and 2—basic and advanced—as well as having some speech level singing training. I found that what I am against in some of the methodologies is that they are just a package of confusion. Don’t invent new terminology where it is not needed.

In 1996 I began researching CCM as a PhD study because I thought we needed to know more, and someone needed to do this work. I think pedagogical approaches to CCM should be science-based, or at least empirically validated as much as possible. I now teach many established pop artists, and I don’t only coach singing and build voices, but also work as a vocal producer, style coach, and a business coach in an artistic sense. I also coach singers in areas of touring and television.

As a performer, I have worked predominantly in the rock/pop scene. I performed more than 100 concerts per year over a number of years with the rock band. There were many other bands and performances before and after that also. I have competed in the Swedish Eurovision twice. I have made many television appearances, such as performing for the Royal Family in Sweden, singing with the Royal Orchestra and many other TV shows. I have done all you need to do to make it in the music industry, for
thirty years. The foundation for my teaching, I would say, is that I know how it is to work in the industry. A lot of teachers have never done that. It is like having a baby. You can imagine that it would hurt, you can imagine that you will love the child, but you cannot feel it until you do it.

**CCM teaching-studio practice**

*I have been teaching singers in popular music styles since 1992. CCM is not a term that is commonly used in Scandinavia and I never use the term, as I believe this is misleading terminology. The term contemporary has nothing to do with music styles; it is just stating something is current and that could be within any field.*

*I would say that I have my own method (the Zangger methodology™), which is based on science, my 25 years’ work with Johan Sundberg, as well as on my own experiences as a singer. I believe my methodology is built on three things. Firstly, the exercises should be adapted to the vocal physiology as much as possible. For example, to practice and sing falsetto on semi-occluded vowels because it’s easier to obtain a falsetto sound there. A (reversed) trachea pull effect if you want to sing louder in chest register, or someone would call that belting. The work should be focussed around real melodies presented with real harmonies, no arpeggios or scales as we want to make the transition from practice to performance as easy and short as possible.*

*My philosophy is that I want the students to develop and achieve results from wherever they are now.*

**4.9. Grace Ng**

**Biographical Information**

Trained as a lawyer, Ng holds teaching diplomas in speech and drama, and classical singing, as well as a performance diploma in public speaking from the London College of Music.

As a teacher of crossover singing from classical to pop, Ng is researching the interaction of singing training with speech training. She is fascinated about the effect of the body, the mind, and the emotions on the voice. She has attended seminars and
teaching conferences worldwide to hear from voice experts and upgrade her knowledge, and she also takes webinars in voice-related fields.

Ng has knowledge of Jin Shin Jyutsu, Fitzmaurice Voicework, trigger point massage, Alexander Technique, tai chi, Laban and Meisner techniques, and the dance forms of tap, jazz ballet and belly dance. She road-tests all modalities on her own body, which she is very happy to do because they have changed her life, her personality, and her world view. Her students have represented Singapore internationally at the World Championship of the Performing Arts in Hollywood, at the 2014 Llangollen Eisteddfod in Wales, and at national events such as ChildAid and Chingay.

**Grace Ng Backgrounding Interview**

*Engagement with CCM*

*My dad is a piano teacher and I started learning piano when I was very young because of him. I began classical voice training at 16. I did external diplomas in voice through examination boards such as London College of Music and Associated Board, and I have attained my teaching certificates from there.*

*It’s not a reputable thing to be professionally involved in the Arts in Singapore, or in Asian culture, so I was trained as a lawyer. Good girls do not go into the Arts. Good girls become lawyers and doctors, engineers and accountants. I did practice law for a while until I decided it wasn’t for me. I then went into the Arts. The demand for piano in Singapore is much greater than singing, so I began as a piano teacher, and then one of my friends needed a voice teacher for her group class and gave me a break. That is how I started as a CCM teacher. About two years ago I was forced to teach Mandopop at the Nanyang Academy in Singapore. China and Taiwan are the hubs for Mandopop, and Singapore produces and exports Chinese pop superstars who are bilingual. This was an area completely alien because I do not speak Mandarin at home and I had to be tutored.*

*When I began teaching, I taught as my teacher taught me, and I found that when my teacher solved my problems, they were not the same as other people’s. I am a very inquisitive person and I began to have questions, and questions led onto questions, led onto questions. This is because I really
care, and I am personally invested in seeing each student being able to express themselves and to progress. To further my knowledge I have attended two NATS conferences, and I have completed the post-Somatic Voiceworks course as well as postgraduate courses in Shenandoah. I have taken all sorts of ideas from different areas, including private Alexander Technique classes, Dalcroze Eurhythmics, tai chi to belly dancing, which is good for exploring the pelvis, chest, and head alignment. I learned languages such as Arabic, which is really deep in the throat, which is as low as you can go, and Mandarin, which is twang essentially. I believe there are many ways that you can actually educate yourself about your voice besides attending formal classes, and all of this is self-knowledge really. When ideas become fossilised, it becomes an institution, and that’s when the ego comes in. I barked up many trees and many places and finally I landed on Jin Shin Jyutsu. This work is body-mind, so I have to do a lot of work on self-reflection to understand why my body works in a certain way. I have not found anything that has so far gotten to that extent of which Jin Shin Jyutsu has giving me in the field of psychoneuroimmunology, PNI which is a new field.

My work has been more in the research and the teaching; however, I did amateur theatre as well as professional cocktail gigs from time to time.

**CCM teaching-studio practice**

I have been teaching for 11 years, and I teach what I would call a holistic style, which incorporates what is happening on the inside of the singer’s mind, how it manifests in the body, and how all of this comes together in a unified manner of self-expression. My area is the body-mind and I incorporate the Jin Shin Jyutsu physio-philosophy, a healing modality, which comes partially from traditional Chinese medicine. The term CCM is not used in my studio. I use the term crossover because I believe that the chest voice and head voice in balance is really reflective of the yin yang in the body.

I like Somatic Voiceworks [methodology] because it is really cut and dried. It’s only chest voice and head voice, and everything is based on registration and allows you to access the voice. The voice works as the
voice works across all cultures, because we are all human, we are all the same whether you are singing Hindi or singing in Arabic or singing in Chinese or singing in English.

*Jin Shin Jyutsu philosophy says everything is perfect. The student comes in perfect as he or she is at this point in time, and the progress that it goes at is perfect. You do not know what is going on in that person’s life. We are not just voice teachers; I think we really are life-changers because the voice is only one part of self-expression. If a student is holding the voice back, subconsciously through muscular tension and shallow breathing, that is telling us something about their lives. As we free all of that, peoples’ thoughts change as the breath changes, people’s thoughts, people’s way of life, who they are, their health begins to change as well. So we are not just dealing with or teaching tiny muscles; the tiny muscles are part of a bigger thing that is happening within that person’s life. The smallest things create the biggest change.*

4.10 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have introduced the nine pedagogues who participated in this study: Pat Wilson, Anne Peckham, Gillyanne Kayes, Jeannette LoVetri, Wendy LeBorgne, Kim Chandler, Diane Hughes, Daniel Zangger Borch and Grace Ng. The data collected during the interviews has provided an overview of the pedagogues’ experiences and approaches to teaching CCM. The responses from the pedagogues about their own learning reveal that they have all had some form of classical training, and this was mostly the only formal training they received. Many of the pedagogues said that such training was due to the lack of specialised CCM training at the time of their own vocal development. All nine pedagogues said that they began to teach CCM styles in response to student demand. They each reported that, without a structured guide for the teaching of CCM, and without the experience of learning CCM themselves in a structured way, they have had to develop their own CCM pedagogical approaches based on a combination of their own performance experiences, active participation in professional development, attendance at voice conferences, and examination of the voice science and vocal pedagogy literature. Although the sample size does not permit generalisability, it may be reasonable to assume that this is a common experience for CCM teachers, given the lack of specialised CCM training.
When asked about CCM terminology and what acronym they use to describe this group of styles, only Jeannette LoVetri confirmed that she uses the term CCM consistently. In contrast, three others, Ng, Zangger Borch and Hughes, said they never use the term CCM to reference this music. A further four of the nine pedagogues (Chandler, Wilson, Kayes and Peckham) said they use the acronym in a professional setting exclusively, and never in their teaching studios because it is not a recognised terminology with their students. The remaining pedagogue, LeBorgne, said that she uses the term CCM, but also uses other descriptors. The pedagogues said that some of their preferred descriptors for this group of styles included *popular culture music* (PCM), *non-classical, commercial music, contemporary or commercial singing*, and *crossover singing*.

In terms of a teaching methodology, only three of the nine pedagogues (LoVetri, Ng and Zangger Borch) said their teaching adhered to some form of methodology. The remaining six pedagogues were clear that their teaching approaches were not grounded in a particular methodology, but were influenced by a number of different approaches from a variety of teaching methods. These six pedagogues said their training approaches were focussed on a case-by-case approach that is adapted to the needs and special interests of the individual student. When discussing their teaching philosophies, the pedagogues’ said that their underlying common goal was to provide student-focussed teaching that enabled the student to facilitate the voice and develop a healthy and efficient vocal production.

The aim of this chapter was to identify and understand the factors that have influenced and informed the pedagogues’ teaching approaches to CCM. It serves to help understand the underlying pedagogical beliefs that underpin their teaching approaches. Having outlined the CCM teaching, artistic, and philosophical backgrounds of the participating pedagogues, I now turn to the range of CCM teaching approaches that the pedagogues employ when dealing with key elements of technique. The next chapter compares and contrasts the pedagogues’ responses about their approaches to teaching the key elements of technique.
CHAPTER 5: PEDAGOGUES’ TEACHING APPROACHES: THE FUNDAMENTALS OF FOUNDATIONAL TECHNIQUE

Acquiring a steady and reliable vocal technique is the foundation for everything. It is the ground on which a singer stands. Without it, a singer is inconsistent and probably will not have longevity.

(Agresta, 2018, p. 103)

This chapter examines the nine pedagogues’ responses to interview questions regarding the foundational elements of technique as defined in the literature of voice science and vocal pedagogy. These foundational elements are alignment, breath management, breath flow and support, resonance, and articulation. In this chapter I define, reflect upon, and critique each of these key elements in relation to the pedagogues’ responses to the interview questions (see Appendix A). In addition, I compare and contrast each of the pedagogues’ responses, and explore the diversity of perspectives according to the themes of prioritisation, focus, aims, and approach, as they relate to teaching each key element. The prioritisation of teaching refers to the importance attached to a particular element of technique when teaching CCM. The focus of teaching refers to the main or central point of attention when addressing a particular key element of technique in the lesson. The aim of the teaching refers to the intended results the pedagogues are striving to achieve through their teaching approaches. The approach to teaching refers to the way in which they deal with a particular issue relating to technique with a student. Some of the responses reveal an overlap of these themes, particularly in relation to the teaching aims and focus.

5.1 ALIGNMENT

There is agreement in the literature that the singer’s whole body is his or her instrument, and that singers, as vocal athletes, function most efficiently when the whole body is stabilised and in a state of dynamic equilibrium (Brown, 1996). According to McKinney (1994), “The main purpose of the hard framework called the skeleton is to support, protect and give shape to the body; the main purpose of the muscles is to produce movement and to assist in positioning the body” (p. 33). When correct habitual alignment is established, an environment is created in which any movement that requires the sequenced co-ordination of neuromuscular events can be initiated, and optimal vocal efficiency can be achieved with minimal effort (Thurman
& Welch, 2000). Therefore, there is an interrelationship between efficient singing and effective alignment.

**Prioritising Alignment in Teaching**

When asked to describe their pedagogical approaches to alignment, eight of the nine pedagogues agreed that the organisation of the body’s connective structures during the phonation process was one of the fundamental principles of voice instruction. Peckham, Wilson, Chandler, LeBorgne, Kayes, and Ng agreed that certain conditions had to exist in the skeletal framework for efficient phonation. Only one pedagogue (Hughes) said that this was not an area of focus in her teaching. In contrast to all other participants, Hughes said that she did not address alignment in lessons unless it was problematic, and then it was approached from a student-centric standpoint. She commented, “If someone’s posture and alignment is really good, I necessarily wouldn’t even talk about it”. Two others commented that, while alignment was important, it was not a priority in their lessons. Zangger Borch and LoVetri said that they did address alignment with their students; however, after I reflected on their brief responses, I found it difficult to draw conclusions on any prioritisation of alignment in their lessons.

Two pedagogues of the remaining eight said that they prioritised alignment with every student by addressing it at the commencement of each lesson. For example, Peckham incorporated alignment work into the warm-up phase of the lesson specifically to relieve any unnecessary, pre-existing muscle tension that could possibly reduce the student’s vocal function:

*Doing stretches at the beginning of a lesson, as a warm up, as part of the lesson I think is quite important. It helps undo some of the muscle tension which accumulates as part of sitting at the computer, sitting at the piano, and carrying a backpack; all of those things sort of get you in a crunched position and just opening up the chest and feeling like you have realigned your body and stretch that can help with alignment too.*

Similarly, Wilson introduced gentle alignment work at the beginning of each lesson, focusing specifically on reducing the effects of inappropriate alignment created by tension. Wilson stipulated that poor alignment had the potential to compromise vocal efficiency:
Alignment is so basic, and it happens before anything else happens in phonation. If you are working with a kink in your system, you will always have that tension there, and you will never be the best you can be. If my students are feeling fine, I put them on the balance board, but if a student is really, really tired, I just work around their fatigue and have them sit on a Swiss Ball and bounce just very lightly. I do one or the other right at the beginning of the lesson.

However, unlike Peckham and Wilson, four pedagogues said that they prioritised issues pertaining to alignment to a lesser extent in the lesson. For these four pedagogues, alignment issues were managed according to individual student’s needs; that is, on a reactive basis. Each of pedagogues in this group reported a unique perspective on how to detect and evaluate alignment concerns. For example, Kayes explained how observing a student’s general physical state offered an insight into his or her physical condition. Observation guided her thinking on how best to correct issues of alignment with a particular student:

One of the things I will do with a new student is that I will look at them when they come in, and I notice things like body language and their general stance. I will also see if I can find out about how they use their personal effort e.g. I like to notice, if I shake my client’s hand, how hard they grip my hand. So it’s what in my approach I will call a resting effort level. What feels like the resting effort level in this person? Therefore, how am I going to communicate with them about physical concepts?

Likewise, Chandler addressed the management of any alignment concerns in a reactive way, and issues were determined by the unique physicality of each student: “Sometimes the wall or door is their ‘friend’ and sometimes it isn’t; it depends on the body shape of the person, but I do some gentle ‘hands on’ correction, too”. LeBorgne said that, when dealing with alignment issues, the physical components of stage performance were an important consideration. She introduced another concept, movement, and explained how she was guided by the individual needs of each student based on performance demands and the direct implications of movement on vocal production:

I try to work with commercial music singers in the postures that they are required to perform. They need to understand how that alignment affects
the other systems of voice, and then at the end of their performance be able to come back to neutral through whatever means they need to.

The literature also provides commentary on the choreographic demands of CCM performances; that is, singers are often required to dance rigorously, move rhythmically to the beat of the music, and/or accompany themselves on a musical instrument while maintaining free tone production (Harrison & O’Bryan, 2014).

Uniquely among participants, Ng discussed the importance of alignment in terms of disharmonies and the physical impact on the individual singer:

It’s impossible to talk about alignment without talking about Jin Shin Jyutsu. If energy is not flowing through the body as it should, up the back, up the front, all over, everything is not going through the body as it should do, then you will have disharmonies, and the body will react accordingly.

In summary, eight of the nine pedagogues agreed that alignment was an essential principle in voice production, and it was addressed in their teaching of CCM singers. However, there were contrasting viewpoints in terms of prioritisation of alignment in the lesson: two pedagogues addressed alignment in each lesson with every student, while six others addressed alignment case by case.

Focus on Teaching Alignment

As stated earlier in this chapter, the literature describes the singer’s whole body, rather than the larynx alone, as their instrument. The muscles that encourage efficient vocal production have multiple attachments to physiological structures; therefore, movement will be directly impacted by inefficient alignment of the body (McKinney, 1994). Wilson, LeBorgne, Kayes, and Ng agreed with this perspective and were very clear that a whole-body focus was essential to establishing the appropriate alignment with their students. In her comments concerning alignment, LoVetri emphasised her focus on the whole-body relationship, adding that this relationship was a prerequisite to breath support:

The rib cage expansion is helped by all the exterior muscles in the skeletal system and also by the core muscles in the abs so that the rib cage is being held up by everything except the shoulders. The neck is loose, the outside neck muscles are loose and the head is mobile, not stuck.
However, while agreeing that singing required whole body engagement, two pedagogues said that, when addressing alignment with students, their specific focus was on the relationship between the head and neck. Chandler said, “In a nutshell, alignment is mostly about the neck and head relationship”. Peckham also emphasised the significance of the neck and head relationship when establishing alignment. In contrast to Chandler and Peckham, Hughes’ focussed on the positioning of the larynx and its relationship with the head, neck and shoulders: “Alignment to me is where the larynx sits, so that the chin is not forward or the shoulders are not round affecting that alignment of the larynx”. Zangger Borch offered a different perspective on alignment; he focussed on the abdominal cylinder to encourage optimal phonation. According to Zangger Borch, “I would say that it’s more like, if you feel extended in your solar plexus area, but it’s really more like the intercostal area is expanded, then everything falls into place and you just relax your trapezius too”.

In summary, while seven of the nine pedagogues in this study endorsed a whole-body focus, two presented contrasting viewpoints about their particular focus. Opinions included the significance of the neck and head relationship; the head, neck and shoulders relationship; and a focus on the abdominal cylinder to establish efficiency of alignment.

**Aims in Teaching Alignment**

Some authors in the literature suggest that a ‘correct’ alignment in CCM singing can vary from that of physicality (where the body can be described as being buoyant, flexible, and tension free), to one of the aesthetics required of a confident performer to immediately put an audience at ease (McKinney, 1994; Chapman, 2006). In terms of physicality, Thurman and Welch (2000) suggest that establishing correct alignment is important in providing stability and balance to the vocal athlete because the body is not a fixed structure but continually moves and re-balances to adapt to the demands of the activity being performed. Due to the greater anatomical mass in the upper body areas such as the head and chest, the upper part of the body is heavier than the lower part (Thurman & Welch, 2000). The resultant centre of gravity is high in the body and must be compensated for. Thurman and Welch add that “the way your body is made means that it is inherently unbalanced and unstable” (2000, p. 327).

Two of the nine pedagogues said that their specific aim when working with singers of CCM styles was to establish a balanced instrument. Zangger Borch commented that
“Posture is about balance and needs a practical approach”. LoVetri articulated her aim for a balanced alignment:

The head has to be over the torso, the torso has to be balanced from top to bottom, and right to left. You have to be situated on your legs such that you can feel your feet and your weight is balanced. Your knees are not locked and you must make sure that the spine is extended and loose, so that the pelvis is not tilted up or dropped down. The neck is loose, the outside neck muscles are loose and the head is mobile, not stuck.

In addition, four pedagogues emphasised the significance of eliminating unnecessary tension. Chandler aimed to establish “a nice, open aligned stance which is flexible and never rigid”. She explained that it was important to create a balanced and tension free alignment due to the implications of repetitive movement and poor body positioning for the CCM singer while phonating because, “They need to be able to move and dance, which is obviously required in our field, but still remain ergonomically balanced for optimum vocal efficiency”. Hughes supported the concept of a balanced body that was free from unnecessary tension: “I look at a balanced and tension free alignment”. Peckham also agreed that a singer’s body must be free from tension and her aim was to “undo muscle tension and achieve a feeling of release particularly in the head and neck”.

Wilson’s aim was to “achieve an alignment which is unconscious and automatic”. Although she did not comment directly on the relationship between balance, tension, and alignment, she later reported using a balance board and Swiss Ball assisting students to achieve a tension free body to establish efficiency in alignment. The balance board is designed to improve balance, coordination and core stability. Similarly, a Swiss Ball is designed to develop overall muscle tone as well as to improve core stability, posture, and muscle balance in the body (Carrière, 1998). Wilson commented, “This [Swiss Ball] will get good alignment from the crown of your head to your tailbone as much as you would on the balance board, but just that little bit easier”.

Although Kayes mentioned balance in relation to alignment, her specific aim was to establish correct alignment “to promote the efficient use of the abdominal muscles for breath management and support”. Kayes highlighted the relationship between
alignment and a balanced instrument: “Obviously general posture is how somebody stands, whether they are able to balance their weight”.

Of the remaining two of the nine pedagogues, balance was referenced in contrasting contexts and was not stated as their particular aim. LeBorgne said that her aim was for students to develop an understanding of how alignment affected the other systems of voice and create pathways to find a neutral stance at the end of their performance. Ng supported the concept of the mind and the body acting as one; that is, the mind being the controller of the body and the body responding accordingly. She further claimed that her aim was to align her clients with their “passion, purpose, and happiness in life”.

In summary, the pedagogues’ responses highlighted a common aim when addressing alignment: for students to organise their bodies correctly in order to minimise effort and maximise efficiency. Most pedagogues focussed specifically on developing a balanced instrument for the creation of optimal phonation.

**Approaches to Teaching Alignment**

Over the last few decades, the interactions of a range of physical disciplines such as Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais, and Pilates have been responsible for the development of a multidisciplinary approach to the training and maintenance of singers. For example, Chapman (2006) states:

> Sports science has contributed greatly to our potential for understanding the holistic nature of the singing machine. Great practitioners from other fields such as Moche Feldenkrais, Frederick Alexander, Joseph Pilates, Ida Rolf and many others have given singers and teachers to make sense of our particular requirements for the efficient and long lasting use of the voice. (p. 24)

It was evident from their responses that four of the nine pedagogues supported Chapman’s statement about the benefits of using a variety of multidisciplinary approaches specific to establishing appropriate alignment in their students. For example, LeBorgne stated:

> I use some versions of Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais, Pilates and exercise physiology principles as well to achieve a balanced physical
alignment. I am also trained in myofascial release so I actually do a lot of hands on work with my patients and with my students to some degree, to find any fascia restrictions and maximise that.

Peckham explained why the application of Alexander Technique was her preferred method of working with singers of CCM styles:

I do like to incorporate some Alexander Technique ideas in talking body alignment because I find that’s a very therapeutic and helpful technique that is great for all performing artists, but particularly singers of contemporary commercial music because so many get their body misaligned with their head that goes forward because they lock up the head and neck. I find Alexander Technique is very supportive of that feeling of release, particularly the release of the head and neck.

In keeping with this multidisciplinary approach to alignment, Kayes specified that her approach was student focussed and that she took into consideration the elements of the CCM singers’ movements when performing. In Kayes’ opinion, some movements could be detrimental and have the potential for voice damage:

However, I do have a few things that I use and I also became very interested in body approaches such as Feldenkrais and the Meziere’s method, which is more of a European thing. This was a really big influence on me in terms of how you have got to pay attention to the whole body because essentially it looks at how posture can affect breathing and how the repetitive moves that a musician must make can be damaging.

Similarly, LoVetri supported a whole-body approach to alignment:

Ideally speaking, the head has to be over the torso, the torso has to be balanced from top to bottom, and right to left. You have to be situated on your legs such that you can feel your feet and your weight is balanced. Your knees are not locked and you must make sure that the spine is extended and loose, so that the pelvis is not tilted up or dropped down.

Ng endorsed a distinctive holistic approach that incorporated the physical, spiritual, and psychological aspects of the body. She advocated the use of Jin Shin Jyutsu, a
physio-philosophy about the art of releasing tension that is believed to be the cause of various symptoms in the body. Ng described her approach:

Alignment is how we carry ourselves in life, whether we go with a mental or physical approach. ... If energy is not flowing through the body as it should, then you will have things like illness, we call it disharmonies, although we are not supposed to call illness or anything negative because that will suggest that the body will react accordingly if we have disharmonies happening. The ways that we think, that is alignment. You align with your purpose in life.

Three of the pedagogues offered contrasting approaches to alignment. Wilson’s response revealed a whole-body approach, but with no specific area focus:

So it’s an unconscious alignment I am working towards, so I am not saying, “Hold your shoulders back, stick your sternum out, put your head back on your spine”. I am just saying “Stand on that would you, darling?” Because then the alignment is automatic. There will be no pressure attempting to achieve alignment. So if I say, “Don’t have tension in your shoulders”, the student thinks, “Oh no! It’s the shoulders. I must have tension there”. I find that if I micro-focus on people’s little bits of their bodies, even if I say, “Relax” to them, they’re thinking about that, rather than “ahh”, and releasing the sound freely. They will work against, not towards, what I want.

For Chandler, establishing alignment was dealt with on a case-by-case basis only, and was based on the individual needs of the student. It was unclear how Zangger Borch approached alignment.

The pedagogues’ responses did not reveal a common approach to alignment. Rather, while they all considered alignment to be important for efficient singing-voice production, their descriptions were quite individual and endorsed a diverse range of instructional strategies.

**Summary to Teaching Alignment**

For most of the participants in this research, alignment appeared to be a fundamental principle of voice instruction. Eight of the nine pedagogues suggested that the singer’s
skeletal framework must be organised correctly to achieve optimal vocal efficiency. These pedagogues said that their specific aim when addressing alignment was for the student to develop a tension-free, balanced instrument. Interestingly, the pedagogues’ responses revealed that alignment in the lesson was mostly prioritised in response to the individual needs of the student, and each used their preferred approach, which might or might not encompass a method such as Alexander or Feldenkrais.

5.2 **Breath Management**

Breathing is a natural process, and the breathing apparatus is the body’s air pump for sustaining life. This primary function of breathing occurs automatically with no conscious effort (McKinney, 1994; Zangger Borch, 2005). The breath is also the power source for the voice; the pressure of the breath against the vocal folds sets them into a ripple flow action, and phonation follows. The breath requirements for singing are more demanding than they are for speaking. Breath management is a process in which the singer consciously regulates air pressure according to the requirements of the vocal task ahead (Chapman, 2006). For style authenticity in the CCM repertoire, phrases are sung in a more relaxed, conversational manner; however, the singer is still required to develop efficient breath management skills and learn the balancing act of controlled exhalation and the co-ordination of the vocal folds for the demands of each musical task (McKinney, 1994). According to Brown (1996), “Having sufficient breath for singing is not related to lung capacity. Singers do not necessarily have greater lung capacity, but they are much more efficient at utilising the air stored in their lungs” (p. 30).

**Prioritising Breath Management in Teaching**

When asked to discuss the strategies they employ to develop breath management with their students, eight of the nine pedagogues agreed that breath management was a learned skill crucial to a student’s vocal development, and they addressed it in lessons. However, they offered a variety of perspectives and conflicting opinions about the prioritisation of breath management during lessons. Chandler emphasised her prioritisation of breath management development in lessons, and believed that the foundation of breathing for singing needed to be established very early. Three pedagogues said that they worked on establishing breath management skills as part of a student’s foundational learning; however, this training was student-directed and prioritised on a case-dependant basis. Peckham acknowledged that introducing breath
management tasks into the lesson should be informed by the individual requirements of the student: “I try to personalise my approach because everyone’s body is slightly different, and so are everyone’s needs”. LeBorgne also endorsed a student-centric perspective: “How I work with breath management is case dependant. What the literature tells us, and what I know, is that people can breathe in a variety of different ways”.

Kayes and LoVetri concurred with this viewpoint, and explained that their teaching strategies and prioritisation in dealing with breath management in the lesson was governed by the individual student issues at hand. Furthermore, LoVetri said that if the student’s instrument is working effectively, irrespective of the breath technique the student had been trained in, she would not interfere with the breath at all:

*I usually say pull them in and up, but if I am working with someone who has been taught to do something else, like to have the abdominal muscles go down or out, and it seems comfortable for that person, as long as they can control the pressure over the muscles, I will accept that.*

In their responses, Hughes, Zangger Borch, and Ng reinforced the notion that breath management needed to be integrated in the lesson as a foundational skill, but were not definitive about the role of breath management as a particular aspect of voice instruction for CCM singers.

In contrast to the other opinions, Wilson was adamant that teaching breath management as a specific skill was unnecessary, and she espoused a ‘primal’ approach to breath management. *Primal* sounds are defined as those which are involuntary and distinct to the individual (Brown, 1996). These sounds express various needs and emotions, such as a cry from pain, sighing with relief, calling out for help (Brown, 1996). Wilson believed that phonation was inspired by a basic need to communicate, and that breath would respond involuntarily to the vocal production task ahead; however, phonation did require the necessary training.

According to Chapman (2006), “Primal sounds emulate from our human needs, have emotional triggers and are a part of a whole pattern of responses involving the body and mind in a holistic way” (p. 17). Wilson’s comments aligned with Chapman’s:
I don’t teach breath management as breath management in a lesson, because I think some of it is as artificial as hell. If there is no physical pathology, if the alignment is good, then breath management is usually not necessary as a breath management task. When you are singing, you think about the story and you get the story out as best you can, and your breath follows. So breath management is about meaning, isn’t it? You don’t have to think about breathing.

To summarise, all but one pedagogue believed that breath management should be taught as a foundational skill and as a prerequisite for proficient singing. However, they did not support the prioritisation of breath management as a technical component of lessons. The development of breath management skills were mostly directed by the individual needs of the student.

**Focus on Teaching Breath Management**

The establishment of efficient breath management in singing usually requires a longer inhalation phase, with the duration of exhalation controlled and prolonged for the next musical phrase. When developing breath management skills, the focus should be on training the respiratory muscles in terms of strength, coordination, flexibility, and endurance (Chapman, 2006).

The pedagogues offered great diversity in thought and application of breath management. Ng focussed on minimizing the degree of muscular effort and creating a tension-free instrument for breath efficiency: “The appropriate thing is to release tensions in the breath and allow the breath to drop”. Peckham also mentioned the relationship between tension and low breath: “If they end up just trying to take a huge breath, and everything is coming up under the armpits and they look very tense, we try to do some more relaxed low breath, relax the body”. However, Peckham’s response revealed that her primary focus when teaching breath management was on “expansion”. This term is associated with the upward and outward movement of the ribs as prescribed in a classical model of voice training (Miller, 1996; Vennard, 1967). Peckham explained her approach:

*Does it feel like they are getting a full breath or are they getting everything tensed up when they are taking in breath? I try to observe what they are doing from the start and then help them. Of course, if they are not taking*
in enough breath, there may not be enough expansion, so we talk about expanding and try to observe what works for their body.

Additionally, Peckham focussed on lower engagement and activation of abdominals in phonation; that is, belly out for inhalation and belly in for exhalation. She referred to the suspension of the ribs (the suspension phase of the breath cycle) remaining as near to the inspiratory position as possible. This concept of breath management is derived from the appoggio technique, which is based on an Italian ideal for breathing techniques going back to the sixteenth century (Miller, 1996; Winnie, 2014). Early pedagogues and vocologists agreed that a certain type of abdominal muscle engagement was required for efficient and effortless phonation (Miller, 1996). Peckham described her focus as follows:

*I want you to relax your belly away from your spine and let gravity just take over. Then they can feel the abdominal muscles release, and if they get in touch with that movement, sometimes that helps facilitate the ability to take more breath in. Sometimes it has to do with keeping the ribs open so that they collapse in the upper body. That is a harder one to master because the feeling of suspension in the ribs and the openness in the chest is a little bit more work. So you want to make sure that they understand the concept without working too hard.*

Zangger Borch focussed on the training of muscles in the abdominal region, and discussed the expansion of the rib cage for controlled breath management. Although recognising this as a classical approach, Zangger Borch acknowledged that the breath requirements for CCM styles required a different focus from those necessary for classical singing:

*It seems to me that I focus more on the abdominal region, high up around the solar plexus and diaphragm area with an expanded rib cage, focussing a lot on where we do our high lifts, so to speak, or where we would do this high manoeuvre. I found that this gives an effective subglottal pressure without pushing too much, so I don’t really do a lot of this big diaphragm inhale with a low larynx and feeling the support on the sides of your waist anymore.*
Miller (1996) explains “To accomplish skillful control of breath management for singing, special co-ordination of the phases of the breath cycle (inhalation, onset, phrase duration, release) must be learned” (p. 20). As part of breath management work, Hughes’ focus was on the actions of the laryngeal muscles during the onset and release of phonation. She explained that if a student could be guided towards producing a balanced onset—the coordination of breath and full vocal fold closure—this would repair all problems associated with breath management:

*Breath management to me is not only capacity, but it’s actually how the breath is used to phonate, so I’d treat those two things independently. It’s looking at the onset and the release of sound and then how they phonate between those, so trying to reduce breathy phonation or a soft onset. Sometimes I’ve found that if you can correct the onset of sound, then everything else falls into place.*

Similarly, LoVetri discussed the role of the vocal folds in relation to breath management issues, and explained that vocal fold control was the focus of breath management work in her lessons. Although the voice is a wind instrument that requires air to create sound, LoVetri’s view was that “Everyone is taught that the breath controls the sound, however the vocal folds control the airflow. You must balance the sound and the breath against each other”. Therefore, if the student had control over the valve, the breath would take care of itself. LeBorgne explained that her training approach to breath management skills, like her approach to alignment, was focussed on performance demands: “Breath is the power generator for sound production, so it must be efficient for a given performer to meet performance demands. I go for freedom of breathing with appropriate support for what they need to do vocally”.

To summarise, the pedagogues indicated a wide range of opinions regarding the management of breath-related issues. Viewpoints included a focus on minimizing the degree of muscular effort, the role of the vocal folds, the expansion of the rib cage, the actions of the laryngeal muscles during the onset and release of phonation, and the impact of performance demands in breath management.

**Aims in Teaching Breath Management**

In vocal pedagogy literature, both breath management and breath support are areas in which there is still much debate (Chapman, 2006). There are disagreements in areas
of instruction, especially concerning breathing for singers. According to Blades-Zeller (1993), “The basic function of the breath in singing is a very complex but critically basic and fundamental area. It has historically been a hotly contested subject, with widely divergent approaches endorsed by reputable voice teachers” (p. 48). Chapman (2006) describes some examples of conflicting imagery:

‘Fill every crevice of your body with air’ [a physical impossibility as breath is contained within the lungs], ‘Raise your chest and pull your abdomen in as you inhale,’ [a reversal of natural inhalation function] ‘Use your intercostals,’ [these are muscles between the ribs which activate automatically on inhalation] ‘Breathe into your buttocks,’ and ‘Sing from your little Mary dear’. (p. 39)

Teachers should be clear in their aims and objectives because such advice can be easily misinterpreted by students.

Three pedagogues mentioned the relationship between breath management and abdominal activation. Peckham explained her strategy for teaching breath management: “Taking in a full breath to start with, rib expansion, controlling the air flow, lower engagement and abdominal activation”. According to Winnie (2014), this practice perpetuates a classical approach to breath management as prescribed in the writings of two eminent classical voice pedagogues, Miller (1996) and Vennard (1967). LoVetri’s aim is to hold the ribs open during the exhalation process: “I ask them to keep the rib cage open as much possible while they exhale, and gently contract the belly muscles”. Kayes also discussed the role of the abdominal muscles in relation to breath management:

I am very keen on using the Accent Method approach, which is about releasing the middle of the abdomen to breathe in so that the diaphragm can get maximum lowering, and then just gently activating the abdominal wall to get the breath out to elicit the breathing out and breathing in response.

These responses are perhaps not unsurprising because breath flow and support are intrinsically linked.
Five pedagogues suggested that breath did play a role in singing, and that their aim when working with their students was one of breath awareness. Chandler commented, “To adopt a natural style of breathing, they shouldn’t be breathing in too much or out too quickly”. Zangger Borch aimed for an “effective subglottal pressure without pushing too much”. Hughes’ approach was to “activate support muscles and create an awareness of being able to move the breath”. LeBorgne said that breath awareness was important for whatever the task required, and recommended “freedom of breathing with an appropriate support for what they need to do vocally”. LoVetri similarly commented:

*The goal is to be able to get the singer to take in a large amount of air without too much fuss and to continue to exhale for as long necessary to sustain the phrase while maintaining the air pressure while the lungs deflate.*

Two pedagogues proposed that “primal sound” was integral to efficient breath management. Brown (1996) describes primal sound in singing as an emotional response. Wilson stated that her focus was on the primal sound of emotional engagement: “All I need to do is to get that person to bloody well care about what they are singing about. If you have a need to communicate, your breath will go”. Ng explained how she focussed on a primal sound engagement by “just letting the body do and letting the person be”.

In summary, the pedagogues aimed for free and easy flowing breath and abdominal support in order to create efficient phonation for the length of the sung phrase.

**Approaches to Teaching Breath Management**

A cross comparison of the interview data revealed that the pedagogues employed a variety of contrasting teaching approaches to develop breath management skills specific to CCM singers.

One of the nine pedagogues (Kayes) endorsed a particular method for establishing efficient breath management; that is, the Accent Method of breathing developed by Professor Svend Smith, a Danish speech therapist and voice scientist (Macdonald, Rubin, Blake, Hirani & Epstein, 2012). This is a structured model of breath instruction that aims to encourage supported breath flow by recruiting some of the core muscles that enable skilled and effortless respiration. Although it was created for patients with
speech disorders, the Accent Method can be used to assist in the development of appropriate breath management skills for singers because it focusses on “abdomino-diaphragmatic breathing, voluntary control of respiration, and repetitive rhythmic exercises” (Chapman, 2006, p. 50). Kayes preferred the Accent Method because she believed it was pointless doing breathing exercises on their own: “They have to be done with sound, so I will maybe use voiced and unvoiced fricatives as from the Accent Method to elicit the breathing out and breathing in response”.

Three of the nine pedagogues used ‘primal sound’ in their approach to integrating breathing in students’ training. Ng used a primal approach to breath management and prescribed a combination of two specific methods to inspire the natural functions and actions of the body’s respiratory system. According to Hast (as cited in Brown, 1996), “the needs of an animal probably determine its phonatory activity—the repertoire of functions being recognition, mating, social organization, territoriality, etc” (p. 2). The voice responds to these emotions. Ng explained her primal approach:

For breath management I like the Somatic Voiceworks approach of just letting the body do and letting the person be, as well as incorporating Jin Shin Jyutsu. Basically the body knows what to do but that does not mean you don’t need singing training. You can do your staccatos and your panting; however, the rest of it is up to you.

Similarly, Wilson and Chandler advocated a primal approach to developing breath management skills; however, they did not endorse a specific method. Chandler rationalised this:

I explain to my clients that their ability to breathe is obviously very good because they are alive in the lesson; however, the requirements for breathing for singing is over and above the requirements for everyday life. I also explain that if someone was to video them whilst they were asleep, they would see the natural ebb and flow of their lower abdominal area. Basically, what we are trying to achieve here with breathing for singing is a slightly bigger version of what they do naturally anyway.

Voice teachers often apply an image-based approach to address technical aspects in the training of their students (Blades-Zeller, 2002). In contrast to the other responses, LoVetri endorsed imagery as an approach to dealing with breath management issues:
“I ask them to inhale with the idea that they are filling up to the bottom of the lungs with the rib cage open, allowing the breath itself to push the belly slightly forward as they fill up”.

Peckham and Hughes prescribed a reflexive approach towards creating efficient breath management. Peckham commented:

* I try to watch what the singers are doing and do not mess with something that is going well; for example, if they are able to manage phrases and sing well without strain. If the tone is clear and not forced sounding, and they’re doing it right, we might just check in and say, see what you are doing.

Likewise, LeBorgne said that her approach was based on the individual needs of the student:

* I look at where they are starting because, if I have a dancer who sings, I am going to probably approach that breath management a little differently to a singer who dances. My actors who sing, their breath tends to come from an emotional place, as opposed to my singers who tend to breathe and then emote.

Although Zangger Borch did not specify the use of a particular training approach, he acknowledged that singers of CCM styles required a different approach from those training in classical styles. According to Cleveland (1998), “Experience has shown us that classical and non-classical singers use different breath management strategies during singing” (p. 45). Due to the variations in the use of the inspiratory and expiratory muscles for CCM singing, it makes sense to adopt a different approach from that used in classical styles.

In summary, the pedagogues endorsed diverse strategies in addressing issues relating to breath management, including a primal approach, a case-by-case approach, the Accent Breath Method, and an image-based approach.

**Summary—Teaching Breath Management**

Analysis of the data on breath management did not reveal a clear explanation of its role and how the pedagogues manage breath in terms of a CCM pedagogy. This is not
unexpected given the lack of any consensus on the teaching of breath management generally. The literature reports that classical and CCM singers use different breath management strategies during phonation. According to Cleveland (1998), “Although these strategies can be observed in the chest and abdominal wall movement of singers, it has been difficult to quantify the movements and discern their importance to the management of breath in singing” (p. 45).

5.3 Breath Flow and Support

During skilled phonation, there is a continuous core of breath flow, and the singer must learn to control expiration to meet the musical demands of phrase length, pitch range, dynamic range, musical articulation, and space between phrases (Blades-Zeller, 2002; McKinney, 1994). According to McKinney (1994), “Breath support is the dynamic relationship between the breathing in muscles and the breathing out muscles, the purpose of which is to supply adequate breath pressure to the vocal folds for the sustaining of any desired pitch or dynamic level” (p. 53). Breath support requires the opposition of the primary muscles of inspiration and expiration so that a steady stream of air with the correct amount of pressure is provided to the vocal folds for the required vocal task. Supported breath flow is vital for singing, and the singer must be trained to make fine adjustments to air pressure. Such training requires explanation, discipline, and practice (Chandler, 2014; McKinney, 1994).

Prioritising Breath Flow and Support in Teaching

When asked what approaches they use for developing good breath flow and support, all but two of the nine pedagogues agreed that supported breath flow was a learned skill that needed to be addressed in lessons with students. LoVetri was adamant that this work was unnecessary for CCM singers: “Breath flow and support are terms that come from classical singing so I generally don’t talk about them often”. Ng, the other pedagogue who did not address breath flow and support as a specific task in the lesson, explained: “I work through the songs. I don’t actively pursue doing exercises because students get bored really fast”.

Of the remaining seven pedagogues, five said that in their lessons they prioritise working on breath flow and support. Semi-occluded vocal tract exercises are commonly prescribed by voice therapists and voice teachers to assist with a variety of phonation issues, including breath flow (Dargin & Searl, 2014). During these exercises
the mouth is partially closed and, according to Andrade et al. (2016): “The semi-
occlusions can be achieved by constricting the vocal tract, for example, when
phonating into different types of tubes or straws, using lip and tongue trills, or the so-
called hand-over-mouth technique” (p. 36). The back pressure created by semi-
occluded exercises help the folds vibrate more efficiently and with less muscular
effort. Wilson regarded straw phonation as particularly important:

Flow, plastic water bottle, straw. I would use that as a practical measure
for any beginner, to help them identify the sense of flow and resultant torso
muscle support, because it just kicks in automatically as soon as you start
and you can feel it.

Peckham’s comments concurred: “Good support is a feeling of balanced use of breath
and, with every student, I try to find the way to find the balance”. Kayes also
acknowledged the importance of breath flow and support: “For me the foundation of
the voice is what’s happening at the level of the larynx. Have we got the relationship
between the breath and the vocal folds working? That is the beginning of everything”. Similarly, Chandler and Zangger Borch endorsed the prioritisation of breath flow and
support in the lesson and agreed that it was important for the CCM singer’s technical
foundation.

Two of the remaining pedagogues recognised the importance of establishing
appropriate breath flow and support; however, their teaching was case dependent and
they addressed these aspects reflexively. LeBorgne said, “I think that working with
breath management and support is so individual”, and Hughes agreed that breath work
should be undertaken according to the individual needs of the student: “There’s not a
specific exercise that I would use, and again it would be case dependent on whether a
student needed it or not”.

In summary, all but two of the pedagogues believed that breath flow and support were
fundamental to the vocal development of a singer of CCM styles, and that these
elements should be established in the lesson.

Focus on Teaching Breath Flow and Support

Unlike the long legato phrases performed in classical music styles, phrases in CCM
repertoire are commonly sung in a more conversational way (Harrison & O’Bryan,
2014). Although a speech quality is required to deliver an authentic performance of a
CCM repertoire, the breath demands are still greater than for those of passive expiration. The support system needs to be flexible and dynamic. All nine pedagogues stressed that, when teaching breath flow and support, their focus had to be appropriate for the musical and style demands of the particular repertoire. LeBorgne explained: “If they are already hyper-functional in support, then we work on the reduction of effort, and we have got to think, from a pedagogy standpoint, of decreasing that effort level to produce the voice that’s needed for the task”. Ng agreed: “It’s through the songs; I try not to do exercises, and I like to give it stimuli and let it do its thing”. Zangger Borch explained that his aim was to find the “perfect subglottal pressure for the note you want to reach. Not less or more”. Kayes also focussed on repertoire:

> A lot of stuff to do with breath management is actually about recognizing the breathing patterns that underlie the rhythmic structure of a song. And so instead of getting someone just to take a deep breath and make it last as long as possible on the way out, I would get them to do patterns. I find that is a really helpful way to get people to think about how they use the breathing techniques that I give them in the context of the song.

Likewise, Hughes commented:

> Usually if I’m addressing that they need more breath energy, which is how I used to describe it—and I do describe the breath and the energy for the breath as one of the components of the voice—so often I will be addressing the breath flow or the energy of the breath in relation to exercises or songs that they are doing.

In her comments about breath flow and support, Wilson said that her training was both repertoire and laryngeal focussed. She mentioned the use of semi-occluded vocal tract exercises, which are associated with the freeing of laryngeal tension:

> So I am a great fan of that bottle and straw. I also will use Kazoo, particularly for people who are looking at improvisation in jazz, and melisma in pop songs. Sing that phrase on a kazoo instead of singing it on words, and you are not worried about the words; just worried about nice shapes in the music. You can pretend you are a trumpet player or a saxophone player, and you play a little melody of your own and that helps also with flow, support and musical improvisation.
Similarly, LoVetri supported a laryngeal focus on breath flow and support, and described how the breath reacts to the larynx:

_To discuss in a more science-oriented manner, the transglottal air flow and subglottal pressure are regulated by the open/closed phase of the vocal folds. The overall coordination of the support (which has to do with glottal resistance) and the balance of the larynx in the throat, as well as the entire postural stance, contribute to maximum efficiency of breath management and breath flow. A lot depends on what you want._

In her teaching of breath flow and support, Chandler concurred with seven other pedagogues in focussing on style. However, Chandler also drew attention to the abdominal cylinder engagement: “If you are doing high intensity singing and you need to call on more help, you can also recruit the latissimus dorsi or the ‘lats’. I see them as a ‘turbo charge’”.

Peckham, on the other hand, focussed on the ribs and abdominal area:

_So it is the buoyancy of the ribcage and the firmness, and I’d like to use that term, the firmness of the abdominal muscles. Those two actions working together, or against each other to create a balanced support. As the abdominals firm up, they might move in a little bit, as long as the ribs and the upper body stay open, so I try to describe things in a way that it feels that support is a balanced use of breath._

In brief, eight of the nine pedagogues adopted a style-based focus when addressing matters concerning breath flow and support.

**Approaches in Teaching Breath Flow and Support**

The art of voice training started to evolve many centuries ago; however, controversy remains over which technical approaches enhance vocal efficiency (Thorpe, Cala, Chapman, & Davis, 2001). According to Macdonald et al. (2012), “Supported singing has traditionally been difficult to learn and teach. There are many issues relating to interpretation understanding, terminology, language, and all manner of psychological and physiological idiosyncrasy” (p. 815).
In the process of comparing and contrasting the pedagogues’ opinions about breath flow and support, six of the nine pedagogues professed to having a systemised model for teaching breath flow and support to their students. In the Accent Method of voice training, fricative sounds are repeated to a number of different rhythmic patterns. Kayes saw the benefits of using this model as an initial approach to establishing abdominal support (Chapman, 2006; Harrison & O’Bryan, 2014; Morris, 2017):

*I use the Accent Method, that is, voiced fricatives and repeated rhythms. A lot of stuff to do with breath management is actually about recognizing the breathing patterns that underlie the rhythmic structure of a song. And so, instead of getting someone just to take a deep breath and make it last as long as possible on the way out, I would get them to do patterns.*

Another approach that teachers have long used in the singing studio as a vocal warm up are semi-occluded vocal tract exercises (Dargin & Searl, 2014). Chandler endorsed this training exercise, using it as her approach to achieving balanced breath flow and support: “I use a range of semi-occluded exercises, some of them strongly occluded, that reflexively engage the TVA (transverse abdominus) muscles in order to learn ‘support’ and an even breath flow”. Wilson also acknowledged using semi-occluded exercises as her preferred teaching approach, especially as a way to introduce breath flow and support to the novice student:

*I would use a plastic bottle of water, straw, the Ingo Titze way, as a practical measure for any beginner, to help them identify the sense of flow and resultant torso muscle support, because it just kicks in automatically as soon as you start, and you can feel it.*

Peckham had earlier endorsed the appoggio technique for breath management. She again referred to it as her preferred approach for teaching breath flow and support:

*I am trying with every student to find the way to find the balance, the appoggio, the openness between the buoyancy and firmness of the ribs of the abdominals working in tandem with each other, which makes the engagement of the diaphragm. Sometimes they think the diaphragmatic work is just like pumping iron, you know heavy-duty lifting. It’s really more of a gentle firmness around the mid-section.*
The appoggio technique is based on an Italian classical teaching model. Miller (1996) comments:

In appoggio technique, the sternum must initially find a moderately high position; this position is then retained throughout the inspiration-expiration cycle. Shoulders are relaxed, but the sternum never slumps. Because the ribs are attached to the sternum, sternum posture in part determines diaphragmatic position. If the sternum lowers, the ribs cannot maintain an extended position, and the diaphragm must ascend more rapidly. Both the epigastric and umbilical regions should be stabilized so that a feeling of internal and external muscular balance is present. This sensation directly influences the diaphragm. (p. 24)

Over the past 50 years there has been great confusion and misinterpretation by voice teachers surrounding the application of the term appoggio. This concept is based on old science and is not often referred to anymore because it has been proven that the diaphragm is the primary muscle of inhalation and the prime opener of the rib cage. While the diaphragm is a participant in exhalation, the abdominal muscles influence the diaphragm by slowing down its ascent. According to Chapman (2006), “Pedagogues have misused the idea of inspiratory and expiratory muscles in a way which has not accounted for the interdependence of the abdominal girdle, diaphragm and rib cage” (p. 41).

Zangger Borch also perpetuated a classical model approach by referencing total lung capacity when training breath. He noted, “One thing is that you really try to use your total lung capacity and not collapsing in this area that I talked about in your solar plexus area”. This appeared to contradict his earlier responses regarding the differences between CCM and classical voice production. According to Cleveland (1998), “Total lung capacity refers to the volume of air contained in the lungs and airways at the end of a maximum inhalation. There are several divisions of the total lung capacity” (p. 45). Total lung capacity can only be achieved by taking a low release breath every time, which is not appropriate for CCM styles. Contrary to this, LeBorgne told how her teaching approach to inhalation and exhalation was based on the individual student’s needs:

Gosh, I think that is so individual. It depends on where that person is, that is the biggest thing. I look at, in general, whether they are hyper-functional
... or hypo-functional. Depending on where they fall in that continuum, if they need more breath flow, then we will work on exercises to promote flow during sound production. If they are already hyper-functional in support, then we work on reduction of effort.

In sum, six of the nine pedagogues reported using a systemised model for teaching breath flow and support, while the remaining three pedagogues offered various opinions regarding their focus on breath flow and support.

**Aims in Teaching Breath Flow and Support**

Pedagogues reported diverse approaches to the teaching of breath flow and support, and analysis exposed inconsistencies in these approaches. Seven of the nine pedagogues (Wilson, Peckham, Kayes, LeBorgne, Chandler, Hughes and Zangger Borch) said that they aimed for a balanced and consistent airflow in their students’ voice production. Although Ng did not specify her aim, she did acknowledge that her work on breath flow and support was repertoire focussed. In contrast to all other responses, LoVetri’s aim was to achieve a balance of breath flow and support consistent with style requirements:

*If you are singing CCM material, the sound determines both the rate at which the breath flows out and the amount of pressure on the abdominals while you sustain the sound, according to the pitch and the volume. If you are going to sing long legato phrases, then you must manage your exhalation. If you are singing a breathy jazz sound, then you have a very high open closure and you are going to have an enormous amount of air going out which will cause you to run out of air more quickly. It’s impossible to “support” that. That’s why that kind of sound needs a microphone.*

**Summary to Teaching Breath Flow and Support**

When establishing efficient breath flow and support for singers of CCM styles, eight of the nine pedagogues recommended a balanced use of breath flow. The data collected in this study suggests that the establishment of proficient breath flow and support is an integral, foundational skill for CCM. The pedagogues’ responses revealed that the teaching of these skills was often repertoire and style focussed. As with the pedagogy of classical voice, there were varying opinions on the ideal approaches to breath flow
and support. These differences were sometimes based on conflicting opinions on physiology. A commonality in the pedagogues’ responses was found in their aim to create a balanced breath flow in their singers.

5.4 Resonance

Resonance, a foundational component of the voice, still provokes great debate amongst pedagogues (Blades-Zeller, 2002; Chapman, 2006). Referring to classical singers, Chapman (2006) states, “Resonance is one of the most important parts of an operatic singer’s stock-in-trade because their voices must carry unamplified through a large orchestra and fill a large auditorium” (p. 89).

According to definitions in the literature, resonance is the enhancement of a fundamental tone through sympathetic vibration. Kirkpatrick (2009) states:

At the most basic level resonance is sympathetic vibration, where the effect of the source vibration is magnified by synchronous vibrations. Resonance can occur when a vibrating object touches something solid, as is often the case in mechanical settings, or when the air within a room, tube, cavity, musical instrument, or other enclosure vibrates in sympathy with the vibrator. The latter type of resonance is of primary importance for the singer. (pp. 15–16)

The fundamental tone is produced in the vocal folds and the resonance in the human voice occurs in the vocal tract. The vocal tract contains a complex series of air-filled spaces primarily in the pharynx and oral cavity. The size, shape, texture, and aperture of the individual cavities affect tone quality by giving it amplification, warmth and colour (Blades-Zeller, 2002). The quality of each singer’s voice is unique, and the individual singer’s sound stems from the resonating system of the human voice (Chapman, 2006; McKinney, 1994; Zangger Borch, 2005). The sound produced in the larynx is simply a pitched buzzing sound, therefore resonance is crucial in creating what the listener perceives as tone and quality—the aesthetics of the voice (Bunch, 2000; McKinney, 1994).
Prioritising Resonance in Teaching

When asked to describe the methods used to create resonance, the pedagogues gave contrasting opinions about their prioritisation of teaching resonance; some even questioned whether resonance should be addressed at all.

Two of the nine pedagogues were adamant they did not teach resonance; they believed that a resonant tone emerged as a response to efficient vocal production. Wilson emphasised this point:

*I think resonant sounds don’t get created. Like petunias, they grow from seeds. Those seeds have to be planted and watered, loved, and given a lot of sunshine. It will come, just like love. Don’t look for it, and it will turn up.*

Although LoVetri believed that resonance was not a prerequisite for CCM voice production, she agreed with Wilson that resonance was the result of healthy phonation:

*I don’t worry about resonance. The only people who need to worry about resonance are classical singers who have to generate a singer’s formant cluster so that they can be heard over an orchestra in a house. Virtually every other style of CCM music, professionally, but even at an amateur level, is amplified. Therefore, resonance is of no consequence except as a side effect. It is the by-product of good vocal production and we do notice it when it shows up.*

The remaining seven pedagogues shared the view that resonance should be managed as a specific task in the lesson. However, three of these seven pedagogues acknowledged that establishing healthy vocal production was a requirement for creating resonance. Kayes remarked:

*I just want to back up slightly because for me the foundation of the voice is what’s happening at the level of the larynx. My approach is to have the relationship between the breath and the vocal folds working because this is the beginning of everything, and it doesn’t matter what we do with the resonance, it’s not going to be efficient otherwise.*
Hughes said that she did work on developing resonance but believed there was a difference between what resonance meant for a CCM singer and the requirements of a classical singer:

*That’s really interesting because resonance for classical people means a full resonant sound, whereas resonance for contemporary people can mean not sounding constricted, and sounding free and sounding full in a different way. From that perspective what I do focus on is the sense of the air stream coming forward to the tongue, teeth and lips so that it’s not constricted, so it is free.*

LeBorgne remarked that she began to focus on resonance once she was certain the student was developing a strong technical foundation for the voice.

The remaining five pedagogues agreed that resonance was significant to the sound quality of the singer. LeBorgne said that resonance was necessary for sound enhancement, and that it was a response to efficient phonation: "Resonance is all about this balance between breath, sound, and resonance to create optimal sound output". Peckham discussed the use of extreme forward nasal resonance to help students find a balanced resonant sound: “One of the best ways to teach a student to find a clear, resonant tone is to use a lot of upper tract resonance, and exclude lower tract resonance to help students find that buzzing feeling”. Chandler described resonance as having “two main levels—one, for standard resonance; and I use the resonant consonants of ‘m’ and ‘ng’ to help singers to feel the secondary resonance of the voice in the facial bones”.

Ng described the resonant sound as *twang*: “Hums are what I use but; primarily anything that gets the sound forward. Mostly forward, with twang with reference to common phrases that have applicability of use”. Twang boosts the higher frequencies in the acoustic spectrum (Sundberg & Thalen, 2010). Dehn (2016) explains: “Twang is achieved through thin vocal folds (cricothyroid dominant), high larynx placement, retracted false folds, and a high tongue position that maintains contact with the upper back molars” (p. 48). In CCM styles, the use of twang as a vocal quality is employed to enhance vocal production without damaging the voice (Dehn, 2016). Twang allows the CCM singer to perform with dynamic range; it can best be described as a bright, brassy ringing quality (Estill, 1988).
Chandler said that she focussed on establishing twang: “If people need a resonant edge, as a lot of pop singers do, then I teach them twang”. Hughes mentioned twang in her comments and stated: “If they suddenly are able to apply twang correctly, the voice is just free and it’s an amazing difference”. Hughes explained that CCM singers must develop a freedom of sound, which is a consequence of a forward focussed sound:

Resonance for classical people means a full resonant sound, whereas resonance for contemporary people can mean not sounding constricted and sounding free and full in a different way. From that perspective what I do focus on is the sense of the air stream coming forward to the tongue, teeth and lips.

In contrast, Zangger Borch referred to the formation of vowels during articulation to create an enhanced sound: “You find the spots and the vowels and the vowel sounds, where it is the easiest to make the note sound like you want it to sound”.

Addressing their prioritisation of resonance in the voice studio, seven of the nine pedagogues agreed that resonance was important in developing a good tonal quality and was crucial to the student’s vocal development. Of those seven, four admitted that resonance was not addressed in the lesson as a specific task because it was considered to be a response to balanced and efficient phonation.

Focus on Teaching Resonance

Resonance occurs when the singer is able to produce the most amplification with the least amount of vocal effort (Blades-Zeller, 2002). Resonance can be influenced by establishing and correcting the foundational principles of vocal technique (Chapman, 2006). According to Chapman (2006), “As the posture becomes better aligned, resonance is affected; as breathing and support are developed, resonance is affected; as phonation issues are sorted out, resonance is affected”.

Three of the nine pedagogues validated Chapman’s statement and referred to areas of foundational technique as their focus for creating a resonant sound. Kayes said that resonance was dependent on efficient phonation, and that she focussed on establishing efficient breath flow and vocal fold co-ordination in her students: “Resonance is only important once you have breath flow and vocal fold action, therefore the approach is breath flow and vocal fold co-ordination before resonance can be achieved”. LoVetri
and Wilson did not offer a specific teaching focus but said that they aimed to develop the core components of vocal fold production skills to elicit a resonant sound.

Peckham referred to applying upper tract resonance and excluding lower tract resonance. Peckham’s definition of this forward resonance implied a twang quality: “Resonant tone. I think it’s a bright, even hyper-nasal kind of sound, like VEE, VEE, VEE and eee, using bright sounds”. LeBorgne remarked that she aimed to find the balance of the breath and sound to create optimal sound output, using exercises that were based on what she used in speech pathology: “I use Lessac-Madsen resonant voice exercises to find an optimal resonance place. It uses frontal focus”.

Zangger Borch referred to formant tuning as his focus for teaching resonance: “Resonance is mainly about tuning your formants with your tongue and jaw, lips and larynx”. Formant tuning is a term generally associated with classical singing and refers to vowel modifications made by the singer to increase the intensity of the sound (Thurman & Welch, 2000). The shape of the vocal tract is responsible for determining vowel sounds, and these can be modified by changes in the position of the articulators; that is, the lips, the tongue, the jaw and the larynx (Miller, 1996).

While one acoustic set-up may be appropriate for classical voice production, CCM styles require a different acoustic set-up. Spectrographic analysis of CCM singing reveals the presence of the raised second formant while the formants are not tuned. This is not unexpected because the desired sound for CCM styles is most closely related to a speech quality vocal production (Bartlett, 2010).

In summary, a variety of opinions emerged around the training of resonance in CCM vocal production. Four of the nine pedagogues suggested that the establishment of efficient phonation was necessary for creating resonance. Four of the five remaining pedagogues focussed on using twang to enhance the sound of their CCM singers.

**Approaches in Teaching Resonance**

The various structures in the vocal tract work simultaneously, in various combinations, to create the shape that produces resonance in a singer’s voice. The sound quality that emerges as a result of this physical process is often defined as the timbre or colour of the voice. For style authenticity across CCM styles, a singer is required to apply a variety of vocal colours, sounds, and vocal effects, some of which can be described as bright, warm, or breathy.
Most of the pedagogues agreed that creating resonance in the voice required a style-dependant approach that was adjusted to the student’s individual needs. For example, Kayes found that “different styles of music tend to favour different resonance shapes, and you have to take into account an individual student’s physical make up”. Ng and Zangger Borch agreed, endorsing a case- and style-dependent approach to resonance. Ng described how her teaching was guided by the language the student was most fluent in: “The Mandarin and Asian languages naturally have lots of twang, unlike English. Sometimes Singaporeans are bilingual and sometimes I might refer to Mandarin phrases or even the formal form of pidgin English called Singlish”. For Zangger Borch, “It depends on who it is and what should be done”. LeBorgne explained how she implemented a variety of resonant voice exercises based on speech pathology exercises to create different sounds. These exercises were customised in her case- and style-dependent approach:

*With my commercial music singers, we play a lot with what I consider colours of the voice. So if you have red, blue and yellow, we have got to know where those anchor, but you have got to be able to mix all those colours. So you have your rainbow of resonance.*

According to Chandler, the level of resonance a CCM singer required is dependent on style. Some styles such as pop and rock required more “edge” than others. She explained: “If you need even more resonant cut, you can draw on twang. Regardless, I reinforce to them when it’s in the right place and leave it well alone. It depends on the learning style of the person and how body-aware they are”. Hughes agreed that a case- and style-dependent approach was the most appropriate approach to creating resonance once students were kinaesthetically aware of what they were doing with the sound of twang and how effortless it felt. This was particularly the case for singers who worked so hard that they overloaded their voices.

In contrast, Peckham’s aim when teaching students to create extreme forward resonance was to “help students find that buzzing feeling. Then we kind of back off of that too, let it go and bring it back again because the pendulum doesn’t always swing to the centre”. This buzzing was intensified, working the sound from the brightest to the dullest in the hope that students would find a balanced resonance.

Wilson acknowledged that the resonators helped to create the singer’s individual sound; however, she did not have a specific approach to teaching resonance. Similarly,
LoVetri said that her approach to creating a resonant sound was by developing efficient vocal production and, as stated above, she believed that only classical singers needed to develop such resonance to be heard over an orchestra.

When discussing their approaches to resonance, most of pedagogues indicated that this required a style-dependent approach that considered the student’s individual needs. The pedagogues mostly agreed that vocal production for CCM styles required varying levels of resonance for style authenticity.

**Aims in Teaching Resonance**

Resonance is not only a vocal element applied to enhance the voice; it also provides the desired shade and colour to the sound. According to Blades-Zeller (2002), “Good resonance for singing occurs when singers get the most amplification for the least vocal effort and the tonal quality of their voice supports the expression of the music” (p. 35). Eight of the nine pedagogues in this study spoke of having a specific aim when working on creating a resonant sound.

Zangger Borch aimed for the singer to find the spaces where the voice was projected, but required minimal physical effort: “You find the spots and the vowels and the vowel sounds where it is the easiest to make the note sound like you want it to sound”. When working to develop a resonant voice, LeBorgne aimed to find the balance between breath, sound, and resonance to create optimal and efficient sound output. Wilson did not teach resonance as a specific task in the studio, but she aimed for it to appear in the voice by establishing efficient phonation that was “unique to the singer”.

Chandler referenced the implementation of twang as an effective tool for singers who performed CCM styles. Chandler’s objective in teaching resonance was to reduce vocal loading in live performance: “Twang to me is an indispensable tool for gigging singers to help them cut over the band without resorting to brute force”. Hughes mentioned the benefits of twang for the CCM singer and said that her goal for developing a resonant sound was to create vocal freedom and sustainability: “I actually think twang in a contemporary sense is the saviour of the voice really in many ways, because it prevents other methods where students might want to power and sing loudly; twang enables them to do what they want to do more safely”. Peckham also discussed the use of twang, and aimed for her students to make a clear resonant tone by implementing a forward, focussed sound. Ng’s aim when working with all students,
irrespective of their first language, was to achieve a forward resonance: “I like to use twang”.

In contrast to these responses, Kayes said that her intention when working to create resonance was to encourage students to make space in the various cavities of the vocal tract:

\[
\text{You can achieve resonance through air-filled spaces. I explain to my students that when I show them a picture that the vocal tract is an air space, so anywhere where we have air molecules we can make resonance. So we can have resonance down here, around the vocal folds; we can make resonance up here in the back of the vocal tract, in the pharynx, and then we can make resonance in the mouth space.}
\]

As mentioned, LoVetri’s position on teaching resonance to CCM singers differed from the other pedagogues’ views because of the need for classical singers to be heard over an orchestra.

In short, opinions were divided about the aims for teaching resonance. Four pedagogues aimed to employ ‘twang’ as a means of intensifying the sound in a sustainable manner, without overloading the voice. All but one of the remaining pedagogues provided a variety of aims for creating a resonant sound; the common underlying aim was to train the singer to find the spaces in the vocal tract; thus, providing them with a free, balanced and efficient voice production.

**Summary—Teaching Resonance**

Five pedagogues believed that stylistically appropriate resonance was important for CCM singers. However, some pedagogues revealed that resonance was not always considered an integral foundational skill. The pedagogues offered contrasting viewpoints with regard to the relevance of resonance for CCM singers. Two pedagogues agreed that resonance was not necessary for CCM singers because they were not required to produce the sound levels that were necessary for classical voice production, and they used amplification. Two pedagogues were adamant that addressing resonance in the lesson was unnecessary because it appeared in response to efficiency of respiration and vocal fold action. When teaching resonance, five pedagogues focussed on the use of ‘twang’ as a means of intensifying the sound in a
safe and sustainable manner, and this was applied in the lesson using a student- and style-dependent approach.

5.5 Articulation

In speech, articulation can best be described as the formation of clear and distinct sounds. According to McKinney (2005), “Articulation is the process by which the joint product of the vibrator and the resonators are shaped into recognisable speech sounds through the muscular adjustment and movements of the speech organs” (p. 143). The primary movers, which form the main components of the articulatory system, include the tongue, lips, lower jaw, soft palate, and, to a lesser degree, the glottis, epiglottis, and larynx. These components work in collaboration with the teeth, alveolar ridge, hard palate, and the pharyngeal wall to create recognisable speech sounds. By altering the size, shape, spaces, and other physical characteristics of various parts of the articulatory system, vowels and consonants are formed (McKinney, 2005).

Prioritising Articulation in Teaching

In the field of vocal pedagogy, articulation is widely accepted as an important foundational component of voice technique (Blades Zeller, 2002; Chapman, 2006; Edwin, 2008). The articulatory system in singing is not only responsible for shaping sounds into vowels and consonants; it can have a direct impact on the voice and vocal quality (Chapman, 2006; Lyons, 2009). In classical styles, the vowels are responsible for creating the beauty of tone and a smooth legato line, while the consonants are necessary for sound intelligibility and expressivity (Lyons, 2009). In contrast, CCM styles require a consonant-driven vocal production, based on speech quality phrasing, with a clear voicing of diphthongs (Bartlett, 2014; Edwin, 2008).

When asked to describe the approaches that they use to work on articulation, eight of the nine pedagogues acknowledged the significance of articulation in the training of singers across CCM styles. However, each of them offered a different rationale for addressing articulatory issues within the voice studio. Wilson rated articulation as highly important work with each student in every lesson. She was very clear about articulation being a priority:

*I am ferocious in articulation in singing, and I am a great believer in tongue twisters because they actually work. I will get everybody, in every
lesson to do one of these. That’s a part of your daily work when you do your warm up at home.

Tongue twisters are a sequence of words or sounds where the first consonant is repeated. They are usually difficult to repeat quickly and precisely, and are prescribed to develop clarity of diction by developing efficient movement of the tongue and lips.

Ng prioritised articulation. Because of the language differences with the international students who attend her studio, vowels rather than consonants were her preferred method of eliciting changes to articulatory issues; “Most of my students are Singaporean, except those from Nanyang Academy who are from China. Singaporeans have an accent that is very strong, back of tongue, which makes it very hard to do EE”.

Chandler considered articulation important and noted that any corrective work had to be appropriate for the repertoire being performed: “I believe, wherever possible, that vocal exercises be as directly relevant to the repertoire so that singers can see the correlation between the exercise and how it’s going to help them in singing real songs”. Chandler likewise believed that articulation must be appropriate to style:

Articulation needs to be balanced for working in contemporary music. If it’s over articulated, it can sound overly formal for that particular style of music. So we try and find the balance between being clear, articulating clearly and sounding appropriately for the musical style.

LeBorgne managed articulatory issues from a speech pathology standpoint, on an individual, case-by-case, student-centric basis: “Articulation, unless it is a problem, I generally work simply from a speech perspective”. In contrast, Kayes insisted that articulation should be addressed with every student, and was adamant that there was not enough focus on articulation in CCM training generally:

It is important, but articulation often gets left out. I am very interested in phonetics, although not an expert in that area. It’s so tricky you know, because singers have to sing words; and certainly in all the forms of the English language, the way that we write the words is often very different from their phonetic construction. It enables you to categorise what might be going wrong in terms of the vowel or consonant positioning.
Hughes and Zangger Borch agreed that articulation was a pre-requisite for establishing a strong foundational CCM vocal technique. Hughes commented:

> Articulation to me is a lot more than consonants, and when you sing, you are singing the vowel sounds, so I guess the consonants are very important in articulation. But articulation to me is also having a loose jaw and having a tongue that is also free and not bunched up at the back. So while a lot of people will talk about articulation as the tongue, teeth, lips, sometimes I don’t think teachers address root tension and jaw tension in relation to that.

Conversely, LoVetri did not address articulation other than to reinforce the consonant requirements in vocal production: “I don’t worry too much about articulation, other than teaching people that they need to make a little more effort to pronounce consonants than they normally would in speech”.

The pedagogues were almost unanimous in their views on the prioritisation of articulation. Eight of the nine concurred that articulation was an important foundational component of voice technique, suggesting its importance in the training of CCM singers.

**Focus on Teaching Articulation**

In classical styles, the purpose of articulation is to extend the vowels in order to maintain a beautiful legato sound (Dehn, 2016). Conversely, CCM singers are required to emphasise consonants to interrupt the legato flow, at the appropriate time, with rhythmic and percussive intensity (Lyons, 2009). Six of the nine pedagogues in this study agreed with Lyons’ viewpoint, and said that their teaching of articulation was consonant-focussed. Wilson used the relationship between tongue twisters and consonants to address articulation: “I have tongue-twisters focussed on specific issues such as problem consonants”. Hughes also focussed on consonants: “When you sing, you are singing the vowel sounds, so I guess the consonants are very important in articulation”.

In CCM styles, articulation can enhance or reduce the rhythmic energy of any song that is uptempo or contains a regular pulse. Chandler focussed on creating rhythmic consonants because “articulation work is specifically consonant pressure-based work as far as I’m concerned. Very basic beat boxing can teach a lot about underlying
groove, as well as be an excellent articulation exercise”. Zangger Borch agreed that consonants should be used as a percussive element when singing CCM repertoire:

*I work with a little package and then I divide it into these areas where you form your consonants, and then you put them together of course, and then I want them to be percussive with as little movement as possible in your lips or in the structure that moves, but still with an explosive, percussive effect as possible.*

Although Kayes was very specific about the application of consonants when addressing articulatory issues, her focus was repertoire- and student-directed:

*In singing it’s also about how you time the consonants, and your experience of making the consonant changes in a different part of your range. There are certain consonants which are really hard to do when you are singing very high. You have to work carefully with that, and I have to say, in terms of performing songs and song coaching, I often find that consonant articulation is the thing that I have to address most often. I do my diagnostic checklist. And then the challenge is to devise an exercise with a student that will elicit a change in the behaviour, which is what teaching is all about.*

Peckham said that she sought a balance between clear articulation and sounding appropriately informal, and that she tried to match the style of articulation to the style of the music. In contrast, LoVetri addressed articulation in lessons only when necessary. However, her focus on issues relating to articulation was centred on ensuring that students placed sufficient effort into creating speech quality consonants.

Inefficiencies in articulation can act as a diagnostic tool in the voice studio, indicating there may be a problem occurring elsewhere in the phonation process (Blades-Zeller, 2002; Chapman, 2006). LeBorgne considered poor articulation to be a by-product of inefficient breath flow or a lack of resonance: “It’s not a specific articulatory issue; most of what I would consider poor articulation comes from laziness in breath or laziness in resonance or hyper-breath or hyper-resonance”. Due to linguistic issues, which arise from training international students, Ng had a distinct focus on the use of vowels to correct articulatory problems: “Singaporeans tend to mumble a lot. I look in
the mirror and go EE EH EH AH EH OH OH AH so it’s very visual. That’s where the OH language thing came in, to use language to get what you want”.

The data on articulation revealed that six of the nine pedagogues had a consonant-centred focus on articulation. Although CCM requires an informal articulation, most pedagogues agreed that consonants were important for achieving clear articulation, adding a percussive component, and realising style authenticity.

**Approaches to Teaching Articulation**

Vocal pedagogues have long engaged in conversations centred on the significance of articulation and how to approach disordered articulation (Blades-Zeller, 2002; Harrison & O’Bryan, 2014). In this study, the pedagogues’ responses outlined a variety of corrective approaches to address articulatory issues. According to Chapman (2006), “Many faults can exist, dependent on the singer’s anatomy, speech sound system or habit and each singer must be looked at individually” (p. 111).

Three pedagogues endorsed a case-by-case approach to dealing with articulation. Wilson commented that tongue twisters were her preferred method and were adapted to the individual needs of the student. Wilson explained how she used tongue twisters in her lessons: “In every lesson I will use a range of cards containing tongue twisters. First, I will ask them to speak it, and then to sing it, gradually ascending”. LeBorgne supported a case-dependent approach with the use of consonants as a corrective measure:

*I do work depending on the singer sometimes, that if they are doing a lot of hard glottal attacks, although I don’t consider that an articulatory issue, I consider that a laryngeal issue; but I will have them use consonants to emphasise, say, voiceless consonants to take pressure off the actual vocal production.*

Although Kayes espoused a student- and repertoire-directed approach, these were only part of a multifaceted approach to correcting articulatory faults. Kayes highlighted a kinaesthetic approach for her particular methodology, and referred to the work of Dr Ron Morris, an expert in the Accent Method (Morris, 2017). She devised a variety of exercises from this assortment of approaches to elicit a change in the individual student:
I do my diagnostic checklist. What is going on? What’s here? Which bit can I fix? What do I need to do to make that work better. So my approach is to enable the student to understand how they form the sounds, not just talking vowels here, we are talking consonants. There is also an important issue in terms of articulation where there are misunderstandings, often with the singers and singing teachers, about the relationship between voicing and articulation and breathing.

Singers of CCM styles should aim for speech-based sounds to create an informal style of articulation (Edwin, 2008). Peckham believed that articulation should not be overly formal for CCM styles, and explained that a style-dependent approach needed to be adopted to match articulation with the style of music:

CCM sounds more conversational in the articulation, especially R&B and radio pop kind of music; there has to definitely be a kind of spoken quality to the articulation. For traditional musical theatre, you use a very much more classical, formalised style of articulation, and then there is everything in between, too. Traditional jazz standards use slightly more clear or formal articulation, but not nearly as much as for traditional musical theatre.

According to Lyons (2009), “The underlying ‘heartbeat’ of a song determines the attitude and articulation the singers will employ during the performance” (p. 15). Chandler discussed the relevance of percussive consonants in her style- and case-dependent approach to articulation:

I tend to favour direct repertoire examples, such as taking little snippets of songs that feature fast articulation patterns, and use them as the exercises by means of improving articulation. So I believe, wherever possible, that vocal exercises be as directly relevant to the repertoire so that singers can see the correlation between the exercise and how it’s going to help them in singing real songs.

Although articulation is not addressed as a specific task within her lessons, LoVetri matched the views of Chandler and Peckham, acknowledging that articulation required a style- and student-dependent approach:
I worry about it only in a situation where I think a singer’s pronunciation is really unintelligible, and then I only correct it to a minimum amount. I would say that for most styles, other than the exception of music theatre where articulation is important.

The three remaining pedagogues—Zangger Borch, Hughes and Ng—used a kinaesthetic approach to articulation, with a particular focus on the formation of consonants. Ng commented, “Primarily we are focussing on the feeling of the articulators as they move, visual or otherwise”. Hughes preferred certain exercises:

One of my favourite exercises would be “My Bonny Lies Over the Ocean”. My students will sing that as it’s written, then they will sing it as the vowels only, and then they will sing it with the consonants in there, so it gives them a different perspective on what the vowel sounds are and how they are shaped.

The pedagogues’ descriptions of their teaching approaches suggested a varied approach to dealing with articulation issues, and each had a clear rationale for their specific approach.

**Aims in Teaching Articulation**

In addition to forming vowels and consonants, a singer’s articulatory system can be responsible for shaping their sound (Blades-Zeller, 2002). However, five of the nine pedagogues said that their particular objective to teaching articulation was to achieve clarity of diction. As stated previously, Wilson emphasised the use of tongue twisters to elicit clear diction and to ensure the articulators—the tongue, lips and soft palate—were all working efficiently. Although Peckham’s aim was also to formulate intelligible sounds, she suggested that articulation should be stylistically appropriate; therefore, she balanced clarity with “the appropriate amount of formality for the style”. Four of the five pedagogues aimed not only to achieve clarity of diction, but to create kinaesthetic awareness of how sounds were shaped. Kayes commented:

It’s so tricky, you know, because singers have to sing words and certainly, in all the forms of the English language, the way that we write the words is often very different from their phonetic construction. It’s why I think every singing teacher should learn some phonetics, even if they are only
teaching in English, because it enables you to categorise what might be going wrong in terms of the vowel or consonant positioning.

Ng, Zangger Borch, and Hughes said that their aim was to build kinaesthetic awareness by focussing on how the sounds were formed. Hughes explained: “I am a great believer in building this kinaesthetic awareness in how sounds are formed. Sometimes I will get them to sing with their eyes shut just to focus on how the movements feel and how connectedness feels”. Chandler aimed to develop articulation as a musical tool, and worked within the rhythmic structure of the song to be able to “articulate it cleanly and percussively”. Perhaps due to her speech pathology background, LeBorgne tied articulatory concerns to issues relating to inefficiency in phonation. In contrast to all the other pedagogues, LoVetri had no particular aim when teaching articulation because she did not consider it particularly important for CCM singers.

In summary, most pedagogues commented that their primary goal when teaching articulation was to achieve clarity of diction. Other responses indicated their aim for a balanced and percussive articulation that was stylistically appropriate, and built kinaesthetic awareness of how sounds were shaped.

Summary—Teaching Articulation

Data from the interviews suggested that articulation was important in the development of a pedagogical model for CCM singers. The majority of the pedagogues agreed that consonants were responsible for giving lyrics intelligibility, and were crucial to creating the appropriate rhythmic elements required in the delivery of CCM styles. In addressing articulation in their teaching practices, most of the pedagogues advocated for a student-dependent approach with a focus on achieving clarity of diction and suitability of style for the repertoire being performed.

5.6 Conclusion to Teaching Approaches

This chapter has explored the perspectives of nine pedagogues against five key themes identified from the literature of voice science and vocal pedagogy as foundational elements of technique: alignment, breath management, breath flow and support, resonance, and articulation. The pedagogues’ responses reveal a diversity of views and approaches. However, there were also some common threads across all themes, as described in the final summary paragraph for each theme. I have compared and contrasted the responses provided by the pedagogues against the existing literature and
formulated a conclusion for each theme. In the final chapter of this thesis (Chapter 8) I will further clarify how each theme is relevant to identifying a pedagogical model for CCM singers. It is important to remember that the data were derived from nine individuals; these results reflect exclusively the perspectives of these participants and cannot be generalised. Nevertheless, the analysis presented in this chapter provides a useful basis on which to begin to consider themes, perspectives, and experiences that may inform a pedagogical framework for CCM singers. In the next chapter, I consider the pedagogues’ views on their teaching approaches to core components of repertoire, style authenticity, and artistry and performance.
CHAPTER 6: PEDAGOGUES’ TEACHING APPROACHES: REPERTOIRE, PERFORMANCE AND ARTISTRY

Expressive CCM singing is authentic singing. While CCM teachers should always advocate for efficient vocal production, they should be careful to never discourage the unique vocal qualities or stylistic idiosyncrasies that make the CCM artist who he or she is.

(Hoch, 2018, p. 12)

The foundational principles of technique, as described in the previous chapter—alignment, breath management, breath flow and support, resonance and articulation—are key to voice building. In the literature, singing teaching and voice coaching are two terms that can be interrelated; however, they can also be completely separate. Gill and Herbst (2016) explain that “coaching involves the transfer and establishment of skills that are directly related to stage or studio performance and artistic expressivity” (p. 171). Given that CCM vocal pedagogy is still in its infancy, concepts around coaching are even more subjective. Although scholarly literature on voice teaching discusses components of vocal technique, there is little information in the literature and voice science that serves as an authoritative guide for coaching CCM singers in specific skills. In this chapter, I discuss the core components of repertoire, style, and artistry and performance on a theme by theme basis. I examine these components through the viewpoints of the nine pedagogues to explore the extent to which they may inform or influence the development of a pedagogical framework for CCM singers. I have organised the thematic analysis to correlate with the previous chapter: prioritisation, focus, aims and approaches of teaching each of these components.

6.1 REPERTOIRE

The word *repertoire*, borrowed from the French word *répertoire*, originated from the Latin word *repertorium*, which means ‘an inventory’ (Repertoire, 2018). *Repertoire* can also refer to the comprehensive selection of what one is able to perform. A singer’s repertoire is all the songs that he or she has learned and can perform confidently (Repertoire, 2018). CCM singers are not only required to maintain their previously learned repertoire, but need to continue to update repertoire according to style innovations, the latest recording artists, and audience expectations. Means Weekly
(2014) states, “As with all new songs, it is wise for the vocalist to learn the song as written, both the rhythms and the melody, so they can later include authentic stylistic choices” (p. 59). However, due to continually evolving styles in CCM, no standard approach has been developed that specifically addresses the teaching of CCM repertoire.

**Prioritisation of Teaching Repertoire**

When asked how they would suggest that students learn repertoire, the pedagogues agreed that the three main elements of a song—the lyrics, the melody, and the rhythm—had a clear relationship. The melody of a song is created by singing a sequence of notes that have an organised and recognizable shape, and that contain variations in pitch and rhythm (Melody, 2018). In musical terms, the lyrics are the words or text of the song, and these are arranged into repeated regular patterns (Lyrics, 2018). The rhythmic elements of the song are the placement of sounds, music, and words to time (Robinson-Martin, 2010).

Each of the pedagogues presented their own viewpoint as to which components of a song, if any, should be prioritised during the learning process. Peckham believed that the words, melody, and rhythm were three important ingredients of a song that should be mastered separately, irrespective of the order they were learned by the singer: “I don’t mind what order they do it in, but there are three fundamental things they need to learn. The lyrics need to be studied separately because they need to relate to the text, then to the melody and the rhythm”. In contrast, Kayes believed that the individual components of a song should not be separated during the learning process. Her priority was to sing the song as a whole, while examining note values, rhythms of the lyrics, sound quality, and tessitura. She explained that this was important for the singer “so they can learn the multi-tasking of singing”.

Wilson was adamant that lyrics were of the greatest importance: “Deal with what is easiest first, so learn all the words first, no compromise”. Similarly, LeBorgne begins working on repertoire from a speaking standpoint but asks students to engage emotionally with the lyrics irrespective of genre and style. LeBorgne explained: “Can they speak it? Can they tell me emotionally where they are committed to this? So speaking, then probably learning the melodic line if they don’t already have it”. She suggested that the singer was then able to make decisions regarding music and style choices based on the interpretation of the lyrics.
Hughes’ advocated for ensuring that the notes were correct. Her priority in teaching CCM repertoire was to develop “critical listening skills”. However, words without music could be considered a poem; therefore, the melody of a song defines singing from spoken text. Peckham referenced the rhythm of the melody, while Wilson suggested that her approach was focussed on the rhythmic structure of the words. LoVetri had a different perspective. She suggested that singers of CCM repertoire arguably needed to develop an understanding of the basic variations and requirements of styles and sub-styles of the music. She believed that each style had distinct fundamental characteristics and voice qualities that necessitated repertoire being performed with appropriate stylistic authenticity. Therefore, her priority in teaching repertoire was for the student to consider the style components of the song: “Each style has its own parameters, and you must know what they are musically and acoustically. They must look at songs from a number of angles”.

Similarly, Ng’s priority was on a specific component; that is, for the student to have a deep emotional connection to the song, or to be motivated to sing a particular song from a personal need: “We need to discuss it, and the base point is you, and is this your truth? The priority and the concern is whether you like this enough to sing it, and is this an authentic form of self-expression for you?”

Zangger Borch was the only pedagogue to mention the need for CCM singers to learn music theory. This is a contentious issue among many music industry professionals. Some have argued that using a music score could hamper or compromise a singer’s artistic integrity, and they suggest that aural training could be a pathway for learning repertoire (Kastner, 2012; Means Weekly, 2014). According to Hargreaves (2014):

The pathway centres on students hearing and absorbing patterns of sounds, imitating what is heard and then reproducing ideas based on their storehouse of musical elements and procedures. It does not require a theoretical understanding of music to be successful. (p. 306)

Zangger Borch supported this view, saying that his priority, when teaching repertoire, was also based on the student developing aural skills. He emphasised: “Never sheet music, never ever! You spend years in school learning to read scores, and I used it once professionally, so this is not used in the mainstream commercial music industry, not here [Sweden]”.

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Chandler did not specify any priority for learning the lyrics, rhythm, or melody of a song. She explained that this was not something she needed to address because her students were already commercially active as touring professionals and, therefore, already proficient with the repertoire they were performing:

*When you are teaching people who are touring or gigging as much as my clients do, I don’t really need to teach them how to learn a song. I do realise other coaches do, but it hasn’t been something I have needed to deal with for so long.*

In summary, the pedagogues described contrasting priorities in their teaching of CCM repertoire. Their responses did not reveal a particular structured learning process to assist CCM singers, nor did the pedagogues mention formal music theory training as a priority for CCM singers in learning repertoire effectively and efficiently.

**Focus on Teaching Repertoire**

Within the literature, Means Weekly (2014) suggested: “It is more than singing the notes and lyrics in the written score; acting cannot be left out of the voice” (p. 56). When questioned about their recommended approaches to learning repertoire, five of the nine pedagogues agreed with Means Weekly, saying that the development of vocal expressivity was their focus when teaching repertoire.

Wilson’s focus was on how the lyrics would evolve emotionally for the singer: “So you have a feeling of the lyrics, and you start making decisions as an artist about how you would like to sing these words”. Similarly, Peckham’s focus was for students to capture the vocal expression of the song by developing an emotional connection to the lyrics: “The lyrics need to be studied separately because [singers] need to be able to relate to the text, read through it, and articulate everything pretty clearly, and understand the idea of the lyrics, too”.

Three of the five pedagogues (mentioned above) said that their focus when teaching repertoire was the development of vocal expressivity through the delivery of a song. LoVetri’s focus was for the vocalist to combine the lyrics, melody, and rhythm of a song until they came together creatively as a work of art:

*A jazz vocalist isn’t acting, but she is communicating, using the musical line, the variations of words, pitches, rhythms, volume and vocal colour as*
her vocal tool-box. She may or may not sing with vibrato, with clear or breathy tone, or with nasality, as a part of stylizing the song to personalize it. Other styles ask for other parameters. The vocalist must combine all these things until they come together ‘in the moment’ to create a work of art.

Kayes likewise emphasised that, when learning repertoire, attention should be directed to the development of vocal expressivity, which encompassed a uniqueness in style and individual sound:

*I encourage students to get good backing tracks and, if necessary, if they need me to note-bash the melody, I will do that. Preferably, do not learn to sing your song from the YouTube performance because you will just grab all their little style effects and you won’t be able to make up your own.*

Ng’s emphasis, when developing vocal expressivity, is guided by finding a way for the individual student to connect emotionally with the song. This was irrespective of whether students had selected the songs themselves or Ng had recommended the repertoire for them. Ng’s strategy was to ask the student: “Do you connect with this even if it’s my choice for you? If you do not connect with this, there is no way you are going to sell it”.

LeBorgne had a different focus. She believed that, for healthy performance of repertoire, singers needed to develop good practise habits in the first instance:

*I think teaching them really good practice habits is huge because people don’t generally kill themselves in performance; they kill themselves in rehearsal. I want them to train like athletes, and again I go back to, if you are going to have a really intense session on one day, the next day you do something light and easy, such as some interval training so that your body can recover and be refreshed for what you need to do.*

Contrary to the other pedagogues, Hughes and Zangger Borch stressed the importance of aural training. Hughes commented that attention was centred on the singer producing the correct notes in the melody, while Zangger Borch directed his focus on
the ingredients of the song as a whole: “It’s by ear; melodies, lyrics, everything at the same time”.

In summary, when directing a student’s learning of new repertoire, five pedagogues focussed on the vocal expressivity as a component of the song, which incorporated the style, expression, and emotion required to convey the story of the lyrics. The remaining pedagogues focussed on the development of other skills, such as aural training and practice regimes.

**Aims in Teaching Repertoire**

In my experience teaching and performing CCM repertoire, the words of a song (the lyrics) are the textual elements that come together to create the song’s narrative. In CCM repertoire, the meaning of the lyrics can be unequivocal, abstract, unintelligible, expressive, or embedded somewhere in the form of the song (Brown, 1996). For instance, Wilson’s aim in teaching repertoire was for the student to learn to communicate the song as a storyteller, to see “the lyrics as the whole story, and the words as the pieces that make up the story”. Similarly, LoVetri’s aim was for the singer to convey the story behind the lyrics, while ensuring that voice production was authentic to the emotions of the song: “The rest is about finding the meaning of the words, the emotional intensity of that meaning, and marrying it to a clear communication in the music. And, the vocal quality must always be the appropriate one”. Ng explained that her students were often captivated instinctively by a song, and that, although they may not know why they are emotionally and physically drawn to the song, its story was usually a reflection of their lives at that particular time. For this reason, Ng’s aim was to find a song that related to the student emotionally:

> Most students come in and they want to sing a certain song, and from experience, as well as reflecting, it’s the song that they need to sing, or they need to work towards singing it because the body is smart that way.

The aims reported by the remaining pedagogues were directed at creating practical strategies for learning repertoire. Zangger Borch wanted his students to develop an effective approach in order to learn a new song efficiently. Similarly, Kayes commented, “I aim to go to the song as quickly as I can, and I devise exercises that will fit with the song. So, I don’t waste your time doing a whole lot of routines that don’t take you to the song”. In contrast, Peckham preferred to take a methodical
approach and separate the learning of repertoire into the three distinct areas—lyrics, melody, and rhythm—before reassembling them to create a work of art. When dealing with students’ expectations to learn new repertoire, LeBorgne addressed the segments of a song that had the potential to be vocally unsafe for the singer. LeBorgne’s medical background may have influenced her preference for students not to “sing a song over and over again”, but to understand the technical demands of their repertoire in order to remain vocally healthy. Hughes wanted her students to develop critical listening skills to ensure they were learning the correct notes in the melody:

In some ways, when people do use what they have listened to as a way of learning a song, it’s not only developing their awareness and their critical listening skills, but it’s also developing a sense of where the voice sits in relationship to accompaniment.

No common objective was found in the pedagogues’ responses to teaching repertoire. However, their intentions could be categorised in two distinct concepts: the development of artistry, and strategic learning around voice technique and musicianship.

Approaches in Teaching Repertoire

In approaching the teaching of repertoire, four of the nine pedagogues believed in a strong connection between lyrics, melody, and rhythm as important in setting the mood of a song, as well as for conveying its meaning and emotion. Wilson’s approach supported her prioritisation for teaching repertoire, which depended on the student studying the words first, and then the notes. She explained that learning the words enabled a singer to capture the intention of the song; it was also a prerequisite to learning the rhythm:

The way you learn it is to write out those words on a piece of paper with no dots and be able to say them out loud as if they were something you were saying to a real person, a-rhythmically. Be able to do that before you start to tackle the music so you have a grounding in your own body of what the words sound like spoken out loud. Then learn the notes. You should always have the score. I am fairly rigid about that. Lead sheet is fine, as long as there is music there.
Two pedagogues endorsed a case-by-case approach to the teaching of repertoire. Kayes commented that her approach was guided by the student’s vocal production choices. She encouraged her students to listen to a variety of recordings of the songs they wished to perform in order to inspire their own creative choices. She insisted that students should not emulate the recordings:

_I might say, if you are researching a song, just go onto the internet and look at two or three performances of it so you can get an idea of whether it is going to suit you. Preferably do not learn to sing your song from the YouTube performance, because you will just grab all their little style effects, and you won’t be able to make up your own. I make up some exercises that will get the singer to make the sound quality he or she wants around those notes._

Hughes had a similar, individualised approach to students learning repertoire. This was guided by the musical ability and age of the student, and by the development of critical listening skills for all students:

_If it’s a younger student, I would usually teach a melody line because many of them will want to sing it as they are hearing it in the recordings. Sometimes, if their critical listening is not as advanced, they will fudge melody, so it actually won’t be as accurate as it should be, particularly when it comes to certain types of ornamentation and things like that._

To aid learning, Hughes used sheet music or critical listening of original recordings (learning by ear) depending on the aural proficiency of the student. Zangger Borch had a different approach. While he encouraged students to learn repertoire by listening, if a student was struggling to master a particular section of a song, he would break it down and formulate exercises which could aid the learning process:

_I pick it apart and, if it’s something which needs to be done really carefully, I do it with a, t, d., [a variety of vowels and consonants], then break it down word for word. First, I do it with piano, then I can add the full background when it’s mostly learned._

Likewise, LeBorgne’s approach was to identify the segments of the song which were problematic for the student, and to work on those sections independently. LoVetri’s
approach also involved dissecting the song; however, this was to allow the students to concentrate on the stylistic demands of the repertoire being learned:

If you approach the song with a clear idea of what you want to create by singing it, you will get much further, no matter what approach you take, than if you don’t know. If you sing with the wrong vocal quality, the song will fail. Music theatre, as sung on Broadway, in London, or in Sydney, has very specific requirements, and is driven by the lyrics and the intention of the words. Therefore, singers must create believable characters in realistic situations. In other styles, criteria are different.

Ng was the only pedagogue to introduce the concept of “primal sounds” (Chapman, 2006) as a means to inspire appropriate vocal qualities. She commented that this was useful “if they have an emotional mental need to express themselves in that way, or the need to work with chest voice”.

In summary, the pedagogues did not offer a uniform approach to guiding students through the challenges of learning repertoire. Three pedagogues discussed the importance of developing aural skills and critical listening, while the remaining six pedagogues described their distinct approaches: a focus on primal engagement, the development of individual vocal expressivity, dissecting difficult segments of the song, and a case-by-case approach.

**Summary in teaching repertoire**

Analysis of the pedagogues’ responses did not uncover any systemised approach to teaching CCM repertoire. Their strategies for helping students learn new repertoire were individual and complex. Four of the nine pedagogues acknowledged that there were three important components of a song—lyrics, melody, and rhythm. However, their priorities and approaches to teaching these elements differed. Some pedagogues suggested that students should develop aural skills, which they considered to be indispensable for the CCM singer. Five pedagogues said that their focus when teaching repertoire was on vocal expressivity. They acknowledged that the singer’s emotional connection to the lyrics was a prerequisite for performing a song with individual expressivity.
6.2 Style Authenticity

Authors in the field of CCM suggest that, within the scope of the modern music industry, singers are required to deliver songs in a variety of styles, with authenticity, while being emotionally connected to the lyrics (Hughes, 2014; Means Weekly, 2014; Winnie, 2014). Means Weekly claims, “Authenticity includes the style, expression, emotion, and storytelling used so that the audience is invited into the character’s world through the song” (p. 56). The definition of authenticity and the elements that render a performance authentic are highly subjective. A vocal performance in a specific style may be considered authentic when it conforms to the essential attributes of that genre in terms of its aesthetics and style elements. According to some definitions, the delivery of a particular song might only be considered authentic when it approximates as closely as possible the original recording or the intentions of the composer (Davies, 1987). However, there are genres within CCM (such as country, rap, electronic music, and hip hop) which are associated with a cultural group; work in such genres may only be considered authentic if it is created by a member of that group (Harrison, 2008). My experience as a CCM teacher and performer has led me to believe that style authenticity across CCM relates to the music being accurate, legitimate, and true to the voice elements and effects that belong to the particular CCM style. My perception of authenticity in a CCM style means it is recognisable and meaningful to the listening audience. According to Bartlett (2011), each style that falls under the umbrella term CCM has its own set of parameters:

These elements and effects may include any or all of the following: grit, growl, glottal onsets, scream (particularly for Rock singing); soft onset, yell and vocal fry, (particularly for Pop singing); yodelling, crying and “riding” an “r”, (particularly for Country singing); scat-imitating instrumental sounds on nonsense syllables and breathy onset, (particularly for Jazz singing); belt, legit, pop elements (particularly for Music Theatre singing). (p. 145).

Prioritisation in Teaching Style Authenticity

Due to the rise in popularity and accessibility of CCM styles globally, singers have greater awareness of the sounds necessary to create authenticity in a particular style, and they are seeking appropriate training to further improve their understanding and practice of those elements and effects (Winnie, 2014). An important aspect of a CCM
singing teacher’s role is to provide the knowledge and skills a singer needs to make the distinction between various components of style, and how these can be performed in a safe and sustainable way. The nine pedagogues in this study agreed that teaching style was as important as voice building for developing a singer’s competencies.

When asked to describe how they work on creating authenticity within each CCM style, four pedagogues believed that the development of critical listening skills was a priority for understanding the aesthetic variations of each style. Peckham commented that listening in order to familiarise herself with different styles and their respective elements was important for her as the teacher, but she also believed that listening was “an important part of the student’s learning and development”. Hughes response seemed to concur with Peckham: “I think that again comes back to critical listening skills”. Kayes commented that, to acquaint herself with music styles that were less familiar to her, listening to the parameters of that style was highly prioritised: “Because I work with adults, what I would tend to do is to ask you to bring me some recordings of the type of singer you admire in your genre. Let’s have a listen”. LoVetri reaffirmed the importance of learning about a style and advocated listening widely to a range of vocalists in that particular style:

*First thing you have to do is listen to the style, and that step cannot be skipped or taken lightly. You have to listen to the style broadly, which means you can’t just listen to one jazz singer or even just to vocalists; you have to listen to the instrumentalists, too. The same holds for music theatre—you have to be familiar with all kinds of music theatre shows and roles. You must know what they did years ago, and what they are doing now. I don’t think you can teach a style if it’s not in your ear.*

LeBorgne worked on style according to the individual student’s needs: “Usually when an artist comes to me, they already have a style that they are singing, so my goal is to embrace whatever that style is”. When teaching authenticity in any musical style, Wilson gave consideration to each style individually, due to the “totally different genre demands. Sound quality is different. Placement is different”. Similarly, Chandler’s prioritisation was to “summarise these aesthetic variations, the things that are appropriate for each sub-genre of CCM”. Zangger Borch’s extensive performance career in CCM had led him to develop an empathy for what the singer needed in order to be authentic in any style. However, his priority, focus, and aim were for the student
to be able to describe for themselves what they considered were the important elements in a particular style.

Ng offered a distinct summary of style authenticity, saying that it had no association with the music, its stylistic parameters, or with the composer. Her priority was to find the performer’s truth within the style: “My interpretation of authenticity is not so much the music history, or the major performers; my primary important thing is to see the authenticity of the truth. Is it the performer’s truth? That is my first thing in authenticity”.

In summary, four pedagogues highlighted the importance of developing listening skills as a means of identifying the parameters of a specific style. In three cases, this was as important for them as it was for the students, especially if a student needed to learn how to produce the aesthetics of a style with which they were unacquainted.

**Focus on Teaching Style Authenticity**

The vocal requirements for each style that fall under the CCM umbrella can vary greatly. According to Caffier and colleagues (2018), “In order to achieve certain effects on the listener, rock, pop, and musical theatre singers produce characteristic non-classical vocal effects to highlight the lyrics, situation, or emotional aspects” (p. 340). The pedagogues’ responses varied regarding their focus on style authenticity. Chandler’s focus was simply to ensure that aesthetic variations were appropriate for each style and sub-style of CCM. Similarly, Hughes’s efforts were centred around the singer performing a song within the integrity of the style: “That’s what really differentiates between a technical singer who might be very accomplished at how they sing, but then having a singer who is singing with a lot of integrity to the style”. Kayes believed it was crucial to distinguish rigorously between each style: “I really like the way Jeannie LoVetri talks about the gestalt with each genre, and it’s just finding what that might be for a particular genre”. Wilson’s focus was to develop faithfulness and legitimacy in a style; she considered this especially important for performers who already had a career in the field:

> *Even if I am not working on songs they are performing, I am working in that field, so because it is contemporary and commercial, I have people who are commercially active already focussed on a specific sound because*
that is what their band is being hired for. Often the faithfulness and veracity of style is something that they are pretty rigid about.

LeBorgne similarly agreed that style authenticity was important; however, her focus was on listening “to understand acoustically what the sounds are that are being created”. LoVetri focussed on listening to as many styles as possible; however, she was adamant that teachers who were unfamiliar or uncomfortable with a particular style should not be teaching that style:

*If you have heard a certain style, but not performed it, you might still be able to work with it effectively, but if you are really uncomfortable in the style, then you must not teach it, no matter how much you know about vocal technique.*

Ng also agreed with the importance of listening. Her focus was to allow the singer to “incorporate some of what the original artist does, within limits, so [they are] still expressing themselves”. She explained that, after listening to the recording, the singer’s attention should be on faithfulness to the style parameters, while developing a uniqueness in performance, sound, and expressivity. Ng’s approach to the singer is: “What do you like and what do you not like? Maybe we can just incorporate some of this person’s runs here, or person three’s runs here, and we like the way she expresses herself”.

In summary, the focus of five pedagogues was to help their students develop an understanding of the aesthetic differences between each CCM style, and to ensure that each style was performed with stylistic integrity. The remaining three pedagogues discussed the importance of listening across a range of CCM styles in order to understand the fundamental style elements in repertoire.

**Aims in Teaching Style Authenticity**

Aspiring CCM singers often seek appropriate training across the broad range of CCM styles, and this includes familiarisation with the requisite aesthetics for each style (Chandler, 2014). Peckham described this work as a significant part of the student’s learning and development. Her aim as a teacher was to help students establish an authentic style. Similarly, LoVetri’s goal was to ensure the student created the sounds authentically: “You can give general feedback, but it is up to the artist to let you, as the teacher, know what he or she wants to create. You can then comment whether the
desired goal is being met or not. That’s fair and appropriate”. Likewise, Chandler’s aim was to ensure that aesthetic variations were “appropriate for each sub-genre of CCM”. Wilson’s aim was “to make students capable in the style they want to sing by developing an awareness of sound quality for each specific style”. Kayes reiterated her earlier focus on technique. She said that her aim was to find the underlying components of a particular style through its rhythmic elements:

I will do my diagnostic thing, which is: What is the soundscape here, what are the note approaches, what kind of on and offsets are used? And then I will aim for the kind of vocal production that will take them in that direction. I think the rhythmic element is so important in popular music styles—in a very different way from the way it is used in either musical theatre or in mainstream classical.

LeBorgne aimed to recreate the desired sound within the individual student by working with them strategically on matters of style-appropriate resonance and tone production:

Where do they need space? What are the stylistic vocal choices we need in order to make it appropriate for whatever genre they are doing? Even within a genre like music theatre, are you a character role? All of those things have very different elements so you have to understand acoustically what’s happening and how to create that within whatever instrument they have.

In contrast to the previous responses, two pedagogues said that their aim was for students to find their own uniqueness within a particular style. Hughes sought “individuality, and how the individual singer relates to the stylistic nuances of any given style or genre”. In a similar response, Ng’s aim was to develop individuality, and to discover what the individual artist could contribute to the song by “learning from other people’s ideas. They might not be the same as yours, but everybody has something to contribute, and it makes you richer just by tolerance and understanding and empathy. That is how I work around authenticity”.

In summary, six pedagogues’ responses suggested a common aim when teaching style authenticity: to understand the parameters of each style and establish an authentic vocal delivery for each singer. In contrast, two other pedagogues aimed for students to develop individuality within the parameters of a particular style.
Approaches in Teaching Style Authenticity

The study of CCM singing is still relatively new in comparison to Western classical training. For that reason, singers of CCM, who may require assistance with style authenticity and vocal technique, are often left to their own devices (DeSilva, 2016). Responses relating to the pedagogues’ own training backgrounds (presented in Chapter 4) revealed their classical training background, resulting from the lack of available CCM training at the time they were learning to sing CCM. The pedagogues said that they had to devise their own CCM pedagogical approaches and stylistic techniques to enhance the performance of their students.

Five pedagogues mentioned that listening was their preferred approach, but this was referenced in a variety of contexts. Peckham reported listening to “as many different styles of music that are current, and familiarising myself with different vocalists who are specialists, especially in a style I am not familiar with”. LoVetri used listening to understand the elements that underpinned a particular style, so that she could provide general feedback while keeping the singer’s intentions in mind: “You can give general feedback, but it is up to the artist to let you, as the teacher, know what he or she wants to create”. Ng endorsed listening as an approach to teaching style authenticity: “I ask them to listen to about five recordings of people singing the same song”. Hughes recommended developing a feel for the music through listening: “Sometimes I think that having a feel for that kind of music is something that is innate, or develops through listening or appreciating and loving, rather than doing this, this way”. LeBorgne mentioned listening, although her approach was grounded more in voice science:

For me from a scientific artistic standpoint, what are the features acoustically about whatever they are doing or whatever style they have chosen, and then how do I recreate that in their voice? If I have someone who comes in and says they are singing acid jazz, I may need to go listen to find out what acid jazz sounds like if I’m not familiar, so it depends on how well versed I am in the given style.

Wilson’s approach was to discuss the demands and parameters of each style:

In jazz, appropriateness is to not sing it straight like it is written. Sing it straight once and then change it so its mother wouldn’t know it. Tell me something different every time. Your improvisation has to be different and
your musicianship has to be of a very high standard, so I will talk about what that genre requires.

Kayes said that the scope of musical styles in CCM forced her to take a music-based approach to the teaching of style authenticity. She explained how she worked diagnostically with her students:

There is so much that is required in popular music styles, which is about feel and the physicality, as well as the more obvious things like the voice quality, the attacks and releases. So, I am somewhere in between a more traditional approach that is based on what’s written in the music, and then how do we actually interpret that.

Zangger Borch based his approach on his performance career singing CCM styles, suggesting that this experience underpinned his understanding of what the singer needed in order to achieve style authenticity:

When I teach methodology for universities, I make them find out what the significant things are of different styles. For me the authenticity is within me for the genres that I teach, as I have sung those styles for so many years.

For five pedagogues, it was evident that listening was the preferred approach to developing style authenticity. The remainder endorsed their own approaches, which included working diagnostically, and autonomous student learning.

Summary to Teaching Style Authenticity

All pedagogues understood that the style parameters of the performance repertoire was an important part of a singing student’s education. Five pedagogues suggested that it was helpful for singing teachers to be able to identify the significant variations in each style before they taught it. Most of the pedagogues agreed that listening skills were vital to the establishment of style authenticity, for both teacher and student.

6.3 ARTISTRY AND PERFORMANCE SKILLS

In the modern music industry, the term artist generally refers to a singer or instrumentalist who performs in public or is a recording artist of CCM music. The English Oxford Living Dictionary defines artistry as a creative skill or ability (Artistry,
Hughes (2014) described vocal artistry in CCM styles as “singing in a specific genre or musical style with individual expression and musical skill (musicality). Artistry is viewed as combining the technical and the aesthetics of singing” (p. 290). These definitions suggest that, in developing an artistic approach, singers are enabled to be vocally and creatively expressive, sharing their authentic selves through lyrical interpretation, musical elements, emotion, originality, and passion. A performance is best described as the act of entertaining other people by dancing, singing, acting, or playing music (Performance, 2018). Definitive elements of an exceptional performance are undoubtedly subjective because a performance might communicate different things to different people. In considering what constitutes artistry and performance skills in CCM, I reflected on my own professional music career and my experience as an observer of artists in the CCM industry. An outstanding performer could be defined as one who has the ability to elicit an emotional response from their audience. It is this emotional impact that keeps an audience engaged.

**Pedagogues Prioritisation in Developing Artistry and Performance Skills**

When asked to describe their pedagogical approaches to developing performance and artistry skills with each student, the pedagogues shared a variety of opinions about what constitutes artistry and performance, and how to prioritise the training of these skills. Wilson’s priority was for students to find their own artistic personae in terms of sound and style:

_I try to develop an artistry and a sensitivity and an ability to interpret as an individual, not copying a recording. I can hear something that is clearly emulating, I will ask them to go back to the drawing-board and bring me in something fresh, and not something that is yesterday’s leftovers. So, the development of an artist to bring artistic interpretation to something is something that I think is desperately important but pretty damn subtle. I don’t know if that is a pedagogic approach or a philosophic hesitation._

Miller (2017) regards artistry to be dependent on the development of a reliable technique: “…someone who’s musically well trained, someone who has the ability for imaginative thinking and with dramatic instinct. All that is highly dependent upon reliable technique. If you don’t have a reliable technique, none of the rest counts” (p. 175). LoVetri’s comments seem to accord with Miller’s in that her priority was to develop technical proficiency first:
Without vocal freedom you cannot express emotions in any style of music at all. If you are still developing your technique, it’s very hard to be creatively free. It’s almost impossible to be artistically expressive if you don’t have a solid machine to express with.

Peckham’s priority was to create a sense of self-awareness in her students. This would ensure that their physicality and facial expressions truly conveyed the emotions of the songs they wished to perform. To establish those skills, Peckham encouraged students to participate in auxiliary training, which could help them become expressive artists and performers:

I think that it’s also important for vocalists to study acting or theatre, or have some sort of training so they can understand how their bodies work, and how they can make their faces show what they are thinking and feeling.

Six of the pedagogues prioritised the individual needs and strengths of the student. In their case-by-case training of performance and artistry, four of the six pedagogues prioritised the singers discovering an emotional connectivity in their performance. Kayes stipulated that it was imperative for her to notice what the capabilities of the individual students were. She commented that, based on those strengths, “I will look at text and the meaning of the song and often I will talk to my students about the purpose of the song”. LeBorgne defined artistry as the moment when students were emotionally invested in a performance: “Artistically I think that I need to know they are emotionally committed to whatever they are singing otherwise they are not going to sell their song”. Hughes likewise believed that, in the establishment of artistry and performance skills, it was essential for the student to form an emotional connection with the song: “I think artistry is the voice, I think it’s expressive techniques, I think it’s individuality, and I think it’s how well all of those things are connected”. Ng’s priority was for students to discover their own voice and their own way of storytelling: “You find your truth, your way”. The two remaining pedagogues, Chandler and Zangger Borch, also agreed that the development of true artistry should be prioritised according to the needs of each student and his or her performance requirements.

In response to the prioritisation of teaching, the pedagogues offered a variety of opinions on what constitutes artistry and performance. Although there were conflicting viewpoints in the definitions, their priorities were centred on the individual needs and
capabilities of the singer. The remaining pedagogues prioritised the establishment of uniqueness and the development of the singer’s technical ability and self-awareness.

**Focus Areas in Developing Performance and Artistry Skills**

A memorable and accomplished performance is one that makes an emotional impact on the audience; the technical aspects of the performance are second to the deeper artistic experience. During a performance, the ability of artists to connect with the audience is as important as their technical accuracy. According to Blades (2017), “Training the successful singer incorporates much more than mere vocal technical proficiency; the complete singer is also an effective communicator and a consummate musician” (p. 141). Wilson’s focus, when training artistry and performance, was for students to find their own emotional responses to the song without her imposing her ideas about how the song should be performed: “I encourage the artist in the student to start responding to the song themselves, rather than me cueing them”. LoVetri’s focus, similarly, was to allow students to find their own emotional connection. She stressed, however, that such artistry should be underpinned by sound vocal technique:

*If the voice is secure technically, I will proceed by asking many questions: What does this lyric mean? What does it mean to you? What else could it mean? How do you feel about that? Can you sing it and make it sound that way? I want them to make a conscious connection to their own emotions while they sing.*

LeBorgne’s focus was for students to reflect upon what they wished to sing and why they selected a particular song: “We work a lot from a psychological stand point on developing artistry because the voice is really the emotional valve for your soul”. Hughes also sought to encourage an expressivity and emotion, but her training was guided by the maturity of the student:

*To me artistry actually involves performance skills. In younger students, I wouldn’t probably even look at performance skills until their voice was in a stable enough state, or a developed enough state to then start looking at expressivity and different ways of performing.*

In contrast, Chapman (2006) believes that all singers, irrespective of age or ability, should be offered the opportunity to develop their artistry and performance skills:
Performance can take place at any time in a singer’s development. Indeed, it is vital that a singer has the experience of performing regularly at a suitable level throughout his or her training. This constantly reinforces the singer’s pleasure in musical communication and should be encouraged by teachers even though the singer may not be fully in control of his or her instrument. (p. 140)

Ng’s comments accorded with Chapman’s. She believed that it was through performance experience that a student learned to create an emotional connection with a song and became an effective communicator with the audience:

*I provide you the situation where you can explore and express yourself, but if I impose my truth on you, then what am I teaching you? To get performance skills, it is to get as much opportunity to rent a hall, or we have a little home concert and we have people perform on stage. So you have a feel of the stage and you have a feel of the audience and you can watch other people as well, so you develop your own truth.*

In a CCM performance, the physical and visual effects of a show are a means of delighting and unifying audiences, and of creating another level of connection with them. The physical or visual elements can add another dimension to a performance and intensify an audience’s overall experience. Peckham acknowledged the importance of these elements, but clarified that facial expressions and physicality in performance should communicate the music and the dramatic elements of a song:

*I think it is very important for all vocalists to record themselves, or to video record themselves, because I do think that there is a certain quality we would call natural or expressive; but some people just don’t know how to make that happen. So if they watch themselves, and they can see when they are singing they might be feeling it on the inside but not really showing it, it’s a very, very useful technique. I think that it’s also important for vocalists to study acting or theatre, or have some sort of training so they can understand how their bodies work, and how they can make their faces show what they are thinking and feeling.*

Depending on the venue or live performance context, some visual effects may enhance a performance while others may be distracting or intrusive. Zangger Borch asserted
that the physical and visual elements in live performance should be stylised to the
performance venue or medium. He concentrated on creating an outstanding, confident,
visual performance, rather than focusing on the emotional element. He adjusted his
teaching to meet the needs of the individual student, and the conditions of the
performance venue, explaining that, in a television performance, a singer needed to
understand how to make an audience go wild in the absence of a live audience. Kayes’
focus was to develop a physicality based on the singer’s interpretation of the song,
irrespective of the performance venue. She explained her role:

Getting them to understand what the song’s purpose is and asking them
about that, if that’s appropriate, would be a part of that job; and then
aiming for physicality. One of the other things I use is a physical focus
exercise using movement. By moving with the song, you can discover
changes of mood that may not be obvious.

Every performer is unique. According to Brooks Rice (as cited in Blades, 2017),
“Teaching voice deals with a whole person and a student brings all of his or her own
strengths or weaknesses to a lesson; very often a teacher is there to point them out” (p.
146). Chandler, accordingly stated that her focus in the development of performance
and artistry skills was directed at the individual needs of the students: “Every singer is
taken on their own merit and with their own needs in mind”.

In brief, when establishing artistry and performance skills with a student, the
pedagogues’ focus was on the singer developing an emotional or physical connection
to the song. Most pedagogues agreed that their teaching was centred on emotional
expressivity, while a few emphasised the importance of physicality in performance.

Aims for Developing Artistry and Performance Skills

A secure vocal performance can only be executed with reliable technique and an
appropriate level of precision; that is, good instrumental control, correct notes and
rhythms, a range of vocal colours and dynamics, accurate intonation, and appropriate
stylistic requirements for the repertoire being performed. However, it can be argued
that artistry and performance could be inspired by the need to communicate. Brown
(1996) explained:

Your whole body is the instrument. All it asks is for you to have a
thought—get out of the way—and let your sound out. Not a sound like
your mother’s or your father’s or the latest stars in rock or opera, but your own sound, your primal sound, the sound you were born with. (p. 123)

Five of the nine pedagogues agreed with the principle behind this statement, saying that their specific aim was to create an artistic and expressive uniqueness in performance. Wilson aimed for singers to discover their own story and meaning within a performance of a song: “I try to develop an artistry, and a sensitivity, and an ability to interpret as an individual, not copying a recording, unless of course you are doing a tribute band and you have to sound just like the recording”. Peckham commented that a singer’s individuality in performance “yields a better result in terms of them feeling they are more in touch with their own selves and being more expressive”. LeBorgne acknowledged that an artist needed to develop an honesty in performance: “We can tell a lot about somebody’s heart and soul by listening to their voice and we know that to be true; that is what makes an artist”. Similarly, Ng believed that, to be a true artist, you must “develop your own truth”.

According to Brown (1996), “Your voice knows how to sing. It knows how to sing it better than you do. Think the music and your voice will sing it for you” (p. 123). Hughes’ comments resonated with this; she used the song as a means for the singer to respond with an individuality and integrity in performance. She described her aim: “Sometimes it’s about bringing them right back to a place where they really connect with the song rather than being so used to being larger than life”. Kayes’ aim was for students to engage with the song by achieving an appropriate physicality. She recommended “getting them to understand what the song’s purpose is and then aiming for physicality”.

Audience communication may be influenced and challenged by performance and environmental conditions. Zangger Borch aimed for the singer to develop into a competent performer with the skills to perform in any situation, medium and environment, or at any venue. According to Brown (1996) a singer’s vocal competency can influence his or her performance: “Hopefully your technique is now at the point that you are not limited in your choices. The foundation of a good performance is technique” (p. 136). In contrast to the previous responses LoVetri, like Brown, aimed to develop the singer’s technical ability so that the instrument was able to meet the required performance task: “The vast majority of my work is to help make the
instrument available to the artist”. When the music performed is completely within the technical mastery of the performer, it becomes an almost forgotten part of the process”.

The pedagogues generally agreed that it was important for artists to distinguish themselves from others through their artistry and performance. The common teaching aim was to work with students to create an artistic and expressive uniqueness in performance. Some pedagogues said that their teaching aims were influenced by factors such as performance, venue, environmental requirements, and the vocal competency of the singer.

**Approaches to Developing Artistry and Performance Skills**

Uniqueness is what distinguishes one artist from another. As singers advance in the voice studio, they want to take their craft to a higher level. Therefore, it is important for singing teachers to allow their students the opportunity to distinguish themselves from other singers. Wilson’s approach was to create a positive environment where students were encouraged, without interference, to use their inner sensory processes and respond to a song according to how it made them feel: “It’s the students’ time and their space, and I will try to not offer too many sound examples that they can model on, unless it’s just a couple of notes to try to encourage or correct them”. LeBorgne recommended creating a union between the song and the interpretative process with a student: “There is a lot of discussion of potential character development and song development or: What are you thinking about when you are singing this?”

As a voice teacher guiding the student towards developing artistic skills, this task should not be limited to understanding and interpreting a song. Peckham’s approach was to ensure that students’ facial expressions were reflective of the style and emotions being conveyed in a performance. She recommended, “Depending on the style of music, maybe taking a class that helps increase expression, such as taking a poetry class where you have to be up in front of people, showing and reading, being expressive”.

The way in which music and lyrics are interpreted and performed is unique to each singer, and this must guide the development of artistry. Six pedagogues said they used a case-dependent approach to teaching artistry and performance skills. Chandler justified a student-centric approach because, “it’s so variable, so highly variable, that there isn’t any one-size-fits-all approach that I could outline for you”. Kayes said that
she had borrowed from a number of disciplines, and had used the instructive approach that best supported the learning needs of the individual student. She provided the example of neuro-linguistic programming:

_In masterclasses we talk about eye lines. So, if someone is singing a song that has a narrative, then I will talk about: where do you see that person? Are you placing that person over there on the right? Ok, now you are talking about an emotional memory. Emotional memories are usually somewhere behind. Some of these eye movements come from neuro-linguistic programming, and so you can see I am borrowing like mad from all sorts of disciplines. But, eye movement is so important actually in terms of enabling the audience to believe you._

Hughes’ teaching strategies were guided by the age and personality type of the student: “If you have got a shy student or a young student, the strategies would be very different to someone who just loves to perform”. In comparison, Zangger Borch’s case-dependent approach was based on the age of the student: “Today, many artists are very skilled in camera work because they are from the selfie generation and they are so used to looking at themselves. This is very clear to them and less clear to an older artist, depending on what you have to do”. LoVetri believed that students possessed varying degrees of performance experience which impacted on their ability to communicate the meaning of a song. Generally, her approach was to separate the various components of the song and then bring them back together. However, this approach was influenced by the proficiency of the student:

_I work alternately between the words, the meaning, and the sound, until they come together. ... Obviously, by the time you get to be a high-level professional you have some of that already happening or you wouldn’t have a career, so I don’t often have to bring these things up now, but that’s how I have gone about it in the past._

In her student-focussed approach, Ng provided her students with opportunities for self-discovery as performers and artists:

_For performance, especially stagecraft, the best way to do it is to actually put them on a stage. The thing is everybody is so different. Don’t take my truth, build your own truth and then we will just record you and see what_
you think about that and then you work on it. I don’t think there is one set way we should impose, this is the way we do it, stage by stage.

Summary to Developing Artistry and Performance Skills

The majority of the pedagogues indicated that their approach to teaching artistry and performance was guided by the needs, abilities, and performance demands of each student. They believed that a case-by-case approach was the most effective way to establish artistry within their students. The remaining pedagogues concentrated on encouraging individuality and uniqueness in the singer as an artist.

6.4 CONCLUSION

The pedagogues’ views concerning teaching approaches indicated their belief that CCM performers must develop uniqueness in the way they expressed themselves emotionally and physically as performing artists. Seven pedagogues were strong in their convictions that while performers must establish sound vocal technique, they must also learn to express their passion for singing, conveying their story through the lyrics to successfully engage their audiences in their performances. Six pedagogues suggested that a case-by-case approach be adopted to train students to perform with the appropriate physical and emotional expression. They agreed that, while it was important for singers to be educated in the stylistic demands of their repertoire, it was also important for artistry to be developed from the outset as a student began to engage with new repertoire. A common theme to emerge from the interviews was the development of critical listening skills. The pedagogues endorsed this as a teaching focus, a teaching approach, and a teaching priority for singers to learn repertoire while developing style authenticity, and performance artistry. In Chapter 7, I consider how the pedagogues’ personal teaching philosophies have influenced the approaches described by them in chapters 5 and 6.
CHAPTER 7: PEDAGOGUES’ PERCEPTIONS AND PHILOSOPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Teachers and students need to understand that “good singing is good singing,” and that style should be overlaid on a foundation of genre-appropriate technique, because “bad singing is bad singing” in any style! CCM pedagogues around the world need to come together and speak with one voice. Voice science has great potential to help us in this respect.

(Bartlett, as cited in Forbes, 2018, p. 583)

In chapters 5 and 6, I examined the pedagogues’ responses to CCM teaching approaches that were specific to the core components of technique and other areas of development, including repertoire, artistry, and performance. In this chapter I present and discuss the pedagogues’ perceptions on the landscape of CCM styles, their teaching preferences for these styles (if any), their philosophical considerations relating to CCM repertoire and their beliefs about any correlation of CCM singing and vocal health implications for singers. To best inform the development of a CCM pedagogical framework, the themes are discussed highlighting each pedagogue’s beliefs, experiences and philosophies, and how their thinking has shaped or influenced their teaching approaches when working with CCM singers.

7.1 THE LANDSCAPE OF CCM STYLES

As reported in earlier chapters, Jeannette LoVetri coined the term contemporary commercial music (CCM) in 2000 as an umbrella term to represent all the music styles deemed previously to be non-classical (Bartlett, 2011; Keskinen, 2013; Woodruff, 2011). In an article published some years later, LoVetri (2008) commented: “This [CCM] is a generic term created to cover everything including music theater, pop, rock, gospel, R&B, soul, hip hop, rap, country, folk, experimental music, and all other styles that are not considered classical” (p. 260). As we move further into the twenty-first century, technological developments and globalisation have impacted the landscape of CCM, which in turn has expanded markedly to incorporate a diversity of new music styles and changing performance contexts.

When asked what styles the pedagogues believed made up the landscape of CCM music styles, LeBorgne’s opinion was consistent with LoVetri’s earlier published
work, that CCM was “everything that is non-classical: country, jazz, pop, R&B, rap, hip hop, music theatre”. Although the remaining eight pedagogues were unanimous in their views that pop, rock, jazz, R&B, soul, rap, hip hop, dance, blues, and all their associated sub-styles should be included under the acronym CCM, some differences in opinion emerged regarding the styles that should be incorporated in the group.

Woodruff (2011) defines and explains the relationship between contemporary and commercial, and how these characteristics are associated with the styles that fall under the umbrella term:

The term “Contemporary”, in the USA at least, refers most often to classical music of this and the twentieth century, but in Europe, it can mean either classical or not. “Commercial” music can mean anything, too. It can refer to music technology or the music business or it can mean music for a TV or radio commercial, so alone it could be confusing. However, both terms together had no other association, and the use of Contemporary Commercial Music as a generic term equal to “classical” has been very successful both here and abroad. (p. 40)

Six of the eight pedagogues appeared to agree with Woodruff’s statement; they believed that CCM styles should be classified as all music styles and sub-styles that were considered to be both contemporary and commercial in nature. Wilson was adamant that it was the commerciality and popularity of the music that distinguished CCM styles from classical music: “Contemporary and commercial are the touchstones, and that’s why it’s a really good label”. However, based on this description of CCM, there were some traditional non-classical styles that the pedagogues believed did not fit well under the label. Two pedagogues questioned whether folk music should be classified as a CCM style. Wilson said: “It’s easier to say what it isn’t. CCM isn’t really folk music; clearly not contemporary classical music, traditional classical music, nor early music, all of which are different genres of music”. Kayes agreed with Wilson that folk music should be excluded from the group of CCM styles: “In CCM we were talking about the body of music that is not folk music, world music, but is also not classical”. Hughes’s comments appeared to be in contrast with Kayes’s and Wilson’s perspectives on at least some styles of folk music. She argued:

_There is pop, rock, jazz, soul, and R&B, country, all the sub-genres and the different types of rock, anything from death metal through to whatever._
I would say that new formidable folk is becoming really a predominant style, e.g. Ed Sheeran, Passenger.

Two pedagogues felt that, based on its unique characteristics, musical theatre should be removed from the CCM group. Hughes stipulated: “Musical theatre exists in its own unique art form. It exists in the theatre kind of genre, which to me is not contemporary commercial music in the pop sense”. Along with Hughes, Zangger Borch claimed that musical theatre should be excluded from the group because the singer was expected to play a dramatic role:

Musical theatre does not fit into my category of popular music singing. Musical theatre, that’s another art, playing a role in a theatre, so then you sing a book or you sing a story, and then you adjust your style to the songs and story. That’s not the same in popular music, so that’s why it’s not included when I talk about this. I think it should be the whole music scene, pop, rock ... and the sub-genres. Anything from pop, punk, reggae, disco.

One pedagoge believed that death metal did not fall under the parameters of CCM but that it would best fit under the umbrella term popular culture music (PCM). Hughes explained:

I don’t know that you would get a death metal person thinking they are a CCM singer, but you would get a death metal person being encompassed within the accessibility that popular culture enables the music. That is another reason why for me [Popular Culture Music] is a much more comfortable term, because it does embrace all these styles that are on the periphery as well, but it’s the accessibility for those styles in popular culture.

World music is a term that emerged in the 1980s to describe popular music originating from or influenced by non-Western musical traditions (Erlmann, 1996). Although the sound qualities and commerciality of what is known as world music embodies some of the fundamentals of CCM, LoVetri did not include this music in her CCM descriptor:

Music theatre, jazz, rock, gospel, folk music: meaning roots music, country-western music, which is what comes out of Nashville here, R&B,
blues, maybe bluegrass (another form of folk music), rap, and then depending if you were going into world music, you would have to include reggae, and many of the international styles such as Latin music. I deliberately left out the Latin and world music when I first coined this phrase, contemporary commercial music, because I thought I would have enough trouble handling Western music without adding in the components of world music.

This statement appears to be in conflict with LoVetri’s original definition, that the descriptor CCM encompasses all music outside the classical genre.

Although each CCM style has its own set of stylistic parameters, speech quality incorporated into the vocal production is the common denominator. Woodruff (2011) suggests that speech quality is used to distinguish CCM styles from classical music styles. Peckham also differentiated between CCM and classical music based on vocal production. She noted that the distinct vocal characteristics used in CCM repertoire began to emerge almost a century ago:

*I think CCM is everything from musical theatre that starts as early as Rogers and Hammerstein because, whenever there is a role in a musical that requires belting, I think that is a very contemporary commercial kind of sound all the way to what we hear on the radio now. I think early musicals in the 30s might not come under that, but as soon as the character roles have a spoken quality, or the character roles start taking over, I think we are talking about contemporary music. I think it starts way back and moves forward.*

When describing CCM singing, Woodruff (2011) states:

*Some of the CCM styles don’t venture far from speech in terms of range and volume and all the CCM styles are amplified electronically—something that is not yet common in classical music styles. That one thing, in itself, is a huge difference.* (p. 45)

Kayes’s comments reflected those of Woodruff. She discussed the use of amplification as a means of differentiating between classical music and the vast and diverse CCM styles that continue to emerge:
This is a very interesting thing that was brought up at the last Pan-European voice conference I went to, where they were saying: wouldn’t it be a good idea if we started to categorise singers by whether they sing with a microphone and a sound system or not?

Kayes commented that the landscape of CCM styles was evolving and “growing all the time, because new genres and new styles are emerging. There are so many fusion styles now that are so exciting”.

The pedagogues agreed that the acronym CCM encompassed a wide range of musical styles. However, there were differences in opinion around the inclusion of particular styles. Some of the styles that pedagogues believed should be omitted from the group included folk, musical theatre, death metal, country and world music such as Latin. Six pedagogues commented that CCM styles could be clearly identified by their musical parameters and by the perception that the music was written with commercial intentions. Two pedagogues suggested that the distinction between CCM and classical music styles could be by way of a fundamental speech quality in the singing voice.

7.2 Pedagogues’ Teaching Preferences

The rapid growth in the range of CCM styles has generated a diversity of new sounds, tonal colours, vocal effects, and embellishments. According to Woodruff (2011), “When singers change the style in which they sing, they must also change the vocal production and quality for each style” (p. 45). Therefore, teachers may have to reconsider training singers when they are unfamiliar with elements inherent in a particular style.

When asked if there were any styles under the CCM umbrella that they were not comfortable teaching, two pedagogues affirmed that they did not discriminate and were comfortable teaching students across all CCM styles. They described their approach to teaching CCM styles as inclusive and nonjudgmental, and that they focussed on the development of healthy and efficient vocal production regardless of the student’s style choice. LeBorgne’s priority was to cater for the individual needs of every singer who came to her studio; her teaching of CCM styles was driven by student demand:
Over the last 18 years I have seen things I never ever thought I would see, and I have catered for them myself a lot because there wasn’t anybody else. For me it became a matter of how do I make you do this efficiently if you are doing it six times a week, and I think I can always help people maybe get a little bit better. In my clinical space, where I am dealing mostly with injury and recovery, I will help anybody, and the reality is there are not so many commercial music teachers around at all.

Similarly, Hughes said she accepted every singer’s style preference:

You recognise and focus on the individuality of the voice and healthy vocal production and expressive techniques. Even if you just have an empathy with the style, you can still teach effectively. Its better if you have a great understanding of the style, I guess, but it depends on what the student wants. Sometimes with rock singers, they want to sound as natural as possible; it is a real balance in enabling that to happen and trying to establish a really strong foundation to enable that to happen.

As new CCM styles have appeared, the landscape has become far more diverse and complicated. The remaining seven pedagogues believed they did not have the relevant skills, knowledge, or training approaches to create style proficiency or to manage the specific vocal production required across all CCM styles. Three pedagogues said that they offered students guidance in most styles with the exclusion of rap. Rap has become prevalent in popular music industry. Originating in the African-American culture in the 1970s, rapping consists of recurring beat patterns and rapid rhyming speech that mimics the percussive elements of the beat (Blair, 1993). Peckham explained that if rap were to be a student’s style of choice:

I am not quite sure what to do with them. I can help them with vocal production and tone production, but to me, I like the musical aspect more, and to me, that’s not something that I can relate to as easily.

Two other pedagogues, who believed that they had no knowledge of the required music elements of rap, reported turning away students who wished to perform it. Ng explained that she was not comfortable with the style elements in rap: “I can’t get the quickness of the thing. I can read poetry, but I can’t sing it”. LoVetri also admitted
that rap was a style she would not teach: “I am most comfortable in music theatre, modern experimental, gospel, pop, and rock. I don’t do country, rap, or heavy metal”.

Ng also referenced heavy metal as a style she excluded in her studio teaching practice. Heavy metal originated in the 1970s and is known as a non-extreme sub-style of metal. It features an emotionally charged quality to voice production (Wallach, Berger, & Greene, 2011). Ng did not teach heavy metal “because I don’t know exactly how to manipulate the resonators and the articulators in order to do that heavy metal kind of stuff”.

Death metal is another sub-genre of metal and, unlike heavy metal, incorporates the use of some extreme vocal effects such as growling and fast, chaotic articulation (Phillipov, 2012). Kayes referenced this sub-style as one she would prefer not to teach: “I certainly would not be happy teaching death metal or overtone singing”. When dealing with unfamiliar styles, Kayes’ solution was to refer the student to a teacher who was an expert in the style: “I think there is a whole lot of new stuff, and I will have a go, and if I think I can’t do it, then I will tell the client to aim to find someone who can do it”.

Wilson acknowledged the use of amplification as a requirement for creating an authentic vocal rock sound. She said she did not teach rock styles because she lacked suitable amplification in her teaching studio:

I don’t have a really, really good sound rig in my studio, so I will not be comfortable teaching somebody that had to use extended vocal technique in rock over a long period of time because we couldn’t do it in there.

Peckham revealed there were some styles she found challenging; however, she believed it was her responsibility to educate herself on how to negotiate the stylistic requirements of those specific styles:

Not being comfortable teaching a style to me means that I need to learn more about it and figure out what a student needs so I can address it, because ultimately the style of music doesn’t matter to me as much as being able to help the student make their particular instrument work in a way that is efficient, and that they are able to create the sound that they want
In summary, eight of the nine pedagogues admitted they were unable to accommodate a particular style because they were unaware of or did not understand the parameters, did not have empathy for a particular style, or they had not yet developed an approach to teaching that style. Most pedagogues admitted to not having the relevant knowledge or training approaches that were responsive to the teaching of at least one particular CCM style. Comments from the pedagogues suggested that they may have appreciated and benefited from the opportunity to expand their knowledge of particular styles and to learn the appropriate ways to train singers in the context of their performance choices. An important consideration for the training of CCM teachers should be the development of a pedagogical framework which is inclusive of all popular musics.

7.3 PHILOSOPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATING TO CCM REPERTOIRE

The fach system is the means by which classical singers are categorised by voice type; it takes into consideration the range, vocal weight, and timbre of the singer (Hall, 2006). This system ensures that classical singers perform repertoire that best suits their range and tessitura, thereby helping them to avoid songs that are beyond their voice production capabilities. A comparable system is not available for CCM singers. The pedagogues were asked whether elements, such as age, vocal ability, style-related effects, and vocal maturity affected repertoire choices they might suggest to students, and if so, how they dealt with these issues. Due to the wide ranging responses, each part of this question will be addressed separately.

Age: CCM Repertoire and Young Voices

A young voice is defined here as pre-pubescent; that is, prior to the voice change. Greenspan and Deardorff (2014) suggest that in Western societies, puberty typically occurs between the ages of 8 and 13 for girls; boys enter this phase somewhere between 9 and 14. Anatomical and physiological changes that occur as a result of the mutational voice should influence the way teachers approach the teaching of children and adolescents. Singing teachers need to be mindful of the structure and function of a child’s anatomy and the impact this will have on healthy, sustainable voice production into adulthood.
Significant differences in a child’s larynx, vocal folds, vocal tract, and the development of the vocal ligament compared with those of an adult must guide teachers’ decisions when teaching children to sing. Seven of the nine pedagogues participating in this study said that repertoire choices could become problematic for the underdeveloped voice, when children insisted on emulating their pop idols and wished to perform repertoire that was not appropriate for their stage of vocal development. Peckham said, “I think that repertoire choices are a hard sell for young people because they want to sound like whoever is on the radio”. Wilson was concerned about the suitability of “high, scream belt with an under-developed voice. Here it is not about age being appropriate, but [about the] developmental age of your equipment and how much pressure you are putting on it”.

Children in Western countries commonly use multiple devices such as laptops, iPads, and iPhones to access the internet. Research into the use of technology in Australia revealed that 45 percent of young children aged between eight and 11 years were avid social media users (Kids Matter, 2018). One of the top four most popular internet sites that this age group engage with is YouTube. A number of other music streaming platforms such as Spotify, iTunes, Apple Music, and Shazam, provide free or cheap access to music. Because of their interactions with music streaming services, many young CCM singers want to sing the latest hits, irrespective of whether the repertoire is appropriate for them in terms of keys, tempos, tessitura and range. It seems that much of the music charting in the Top 40 has lyrics containing adult themes and swearing, which parents and teachers may view as inappropriate for children. Many children are desensitised to such inappropriate material, only recognising the general popularity of the songs. Wilson believed that the lyric content was disturbing: “Age is a huge one! I have an innate horror of deeply sexually explicit lyrics being yelled by an 11-year-old child”. Likewise, Kayes expressed similar concerns: “How do we encourage kids to sing age-appropriate material, not only in terms of subject matter and lyrics, but in terms of singing music which has been written for an older voice and for a mature voice?”

Hughes, LeBorgne, and Ng commented that they often dealt with young singers who wanted to sing repertoire that was emotionally and vocally beyond their age and voice maturity or levels of training. Although Chandler concurred with comments about the emotional maturity of the student, her responses were focussed on the challenges relating to vocal issues of pubescent singers who were experiencing the voice change:
Obviously when you are working with adolescent boys with changing voices you have to take that into account, knowing which of the five stages they are in and the range restrictions of that particular stage of ‘adolescent voice mutation’.

Here Chandler referenced the work of James Tanner, a British paediatrician. Tanner devised a five-stage developmental scale to evaluate genital growth in pubertal males (Thurman, 2012). According to Thurman this evaluative scale “is used today, enabling pediatricians to assess normal versus abnormal pubertal development” (p. 15).

Five pedagogues offered a variety of solutions about how to deal with inappropriate repertoire choices for children. Wilson developed a practical solution: “I am very, very passionate about that, to the extent that I have written a little guide book of repertoire for entirely child- and teen-friendly repertoire for musical theatre vocal capability”. LeBorgne believed that it was outrageous and unacceptable for children to perform repertoire that was unsuitable for their stage of physical development:

_I simply talk to them like I would talk to an athlete, and I would say that we can put a ballet dancer on pointe at the age of 8, 9, or 10, but when she is 18, if she is doing things that her muscles in her body aren’t ready for, she will have a shortened career. Let’s pick things that are appropriate age-wise for you and vocal maturity level-wise because, from a physiological stand point, I always have in the back of my mind with young singers that these cartilages are still soft or still developing muscle memory._

Kayes was concerned about singing teachers remaining cognisant of issues relating to students’ ages and repertoire:

_ I recommend that my teachers explain to their students that, if we asked a ten-year old to run a marathon, everybody would be up in arms and would say that is completely inappropriate and it would be considered injurious. How have we not yet developed that sensitivity in singing? If the child can sing something and it’s not hurting their voice and they are not oversinging, then maybe you can make an adjustment and you can make it more their own performance, but I think it has to be handled very carefully._
Ng, Peckham, and Hughes approached these challenges by trying to steer their young CCM students towards appropriate music, offering suggestions that were more suited to the student’s stage of physical and emotional development.

In summary, children want to sing what they love and know, and this creates a number of challenges for their voice teacher. The pedagogues agreed that children needed to accept that their underdeveloped voices were not able to healthily mimic adult voices in terms of timbre, dynamic range, colour, and technique. The pedagogues offered solutions for the management of these issues which, they suggested, could be overcome through patience and gentle guidance by teachers. They were unanimous that the structure and function of a child’s vocal anatomy should be considered when making repertoire choices for all prepubescent singers.

**Age: CCM Repertoire and Ageing Voices**

Singing is a whole-body activity. As the human body ages, the anatomy changes also. Not only must the young voice be managed, but issues around the ageing voice must be considered when training mature-age students. The concept of ageing is subjective, but in this instance, I am referring to the stages of major hormonal change; that is, age-related changes in muscle strength—menopause in women and age-related lowering of testosterone production in men. Although these changes need to be addressed when teaching adults during this life stage, the same key considerations to technique development that apply to teaching children can apply also to the ageing singer. According to Edwin (2012), irrespective of age, singers needed to address individual aspects of the singing mechanism: “… the ‘tions,’ as I like to call them: body position, respiration, audition, phonation, resonance, articulation, and emotion. What is different for older singers is yet another ‘tion’, that one being expectation. (p. 561)

Seven of the nine pedagogues believed that the ageing voice presented a variety of challenges for the singer. Sataloff (2000) explained:

> Indeed, as we get older, there are certainly fundamental changes in the body that often modify the sound of the speaking and singing voice. Typically, we are not surprised to hear breathiness, loss of range, change in the characteristics of vibrato, development of tremolo, loss of breath control, vocal fatigue, pitch inaccuracies, and other undesirable features in older singers. (p. 32)
Kayes experienced her own vocal challenges such as a loss of range, and considered this to be problematic for other women who might be experiencing hormonal changes due to menopause:

*I had a fairly early menopause, so I am very aware that my voice has a different range than it used to. I have lost three semitones at the top of my range and I have gained three semitones at the bottom.*

Kayes believed that the most effective approach for dealing with this was to adjust the key of a piece to suit the individual singer: “Often I will have to sing material that is a bit lower than I would when I was younger”. LeBorgne described other physical changes that occurred in singers’ voices and their supporting muscle systems from about the age of 50:

*As you look at the ageing voice—by that I am probably talking 50 and older—that’s a different set of issues because what is happening is that you start having thinning of the vocal folds, the collagen and the elastin start changing as far as flexibility and recovery, the cartilages are completely ossified in the system, you are not getting as much rib cage expansion, again the costal cartilages have ossified.*

The physical condition of each singer needs to be taken into account when selecting ‘appropriate’ repertoire. Chandler explained that her case-by-case approach to the ageing voice considered the physical fitness of the student, especially when repertoire contained requisite CCM style elements such as belting:

*For the 50s and up, we may need to take into account how physically fit they are and how fit they are vocally because sometimes the heavier repertoire they were able to sing earlier in their life, if they haven’t kept up their vocal fitness and their physical fitness, they are going to feel it.*

Interestingly, Edwin (2012) speaks to some possible advantages of ageing:

*Older singers, however, may have an advantage over youth when it comes to incorporating emotion, since age, because of the life experiences that accompany it, often allows older singers to bring a level of emotion to a performance that is not possible in youth. (p. 563)*
Wilson commented on the appropriateness of lyrics in relation to age: “Equally, 45-year-old people singing “I am 16 going on 17”; although you can sing the words, you can sing the music, and you won’t hurt your voice, it is not right”. Two other pedagogues were also guided by song lyrics when making decisions about repertoire for the mature-age singer. Peckham commented:

> With older students, I would want to make sure they are comfortable with their lyrics, that they have a sense of what they are singing about, that they are not going out of their range, and that they are comfortable and they are finding something that really speaks to them on a musical and expressive level. It’s not just all about choosing their favourite song, but it’s something that they can bring their own personality to, their own expressive quality.

In summary, seven pedagogues said that physical issues related to ageing should be considered when choosing repertoire for elderly singers. They suggested that issues such as loss of range and appropriate repertoire that were relevant to the mature-age student needed to be considered. There was consensus that an effective approach was to guide students into making suitable repertoire choices, and to adjust repertoire as necessary to fit individual voice demands.

**Linking CCM Repertoire and Student Ability**

CCM voice teachers are often challenged in their efforts to find repertoire that not only meets their students’ musical tastes, but enhances their technical development. As discussed earlier, when recommending repertoire, teachers need to consider the strengths and capabilities of the individual student. Arneson (2014) suggests:

> Before you can select repertoire, you need to get to know the student, the voice, previous musical experiences and pre-established skill sets, so that you can determine short and long term goals and decide upon repertoire that will help to achieve those goals. (p. 1)

The pedagogues agreed that repertoire should be selected based on the skill level of the individual singer. Chandler asserted, “we [teachers] need to favour the repertoire that matches the natural attributes of the student vocally, and expectations need to be mediated as to what they are going to sing really well”. Similarly, LoVetri commented, “The repertoire and the text has to be age appropriate to their physical type”. Kayes
said that she felt quite strongly about vocal ability and, when describing her case-by-case approach to repertoire choices, she allowed for “the physical nature of the instrument, the shape and size of it and its weight and its heaviness. So, as a teacher, I try to take into account that uniqueness of the vocal size of the instrument”. She believed that it was not problematic for classical singers because they were categorised by voice type within the fach system:

In classical music and choral music, people are assigned labels, soprano, mezzo soprano, alto and so forth, but [these terms] are not relevant in CCM and we need to have a better understanding of body type in relation to voice.

Zangger Borch did not need to recommend repertoire or take the student’s vocal ability into consideration because he worked predominantly with original artists who had their own repertoire of songs. He reported that on the few occasions when he worked with singers performing covers of other artists’ songs, he tried to work to their specific style choices and make any necessary adjustments. He added that in CCM styles songs could be customised to suit the singer: “The good thing about pop, you can sing it how you want. Unlike musical theatre and classical singing, we have the opportunity to do as we wish”. If after making these changes the song was not appropriate for the student, Zangger Borch would “…do something else. I would not suggest a song if it is impossible for a person, except that I will try to make them do what they can do”.

LeBorgne offered a different perspective by suggesting that vocal ability was “the inherent beauty of the instrument”. When addressing repertoire with the student’s ability in mind, LeBorgne believed that it must not only be appropriate to the student’s skill level, but it must also aid their vocal development:

If you want them to grow, my general rule of thumb—which again comes sort of from my speech pathology world—is, in a lesson I will see how far I can take them; and what I send them home with is about 80 per cent of what their maximum ability level is. The goal is to grow, and the next time their 100 per cent is going to be past their last week’s 80 per cent.

Peckham believed that for repertoire to be effective in achieving learning outcomes, the music needed to be accessible to the individual student and within their level of
ability; if repertoire was too difficult, it could be extremely discouraging for the student singer:

In terms of ability, I think it’s really important for music to be accessible, especially for the beginning singer, to help a singer build confidence, to help them feel as if they can make progress. I think it is important for them to choose simple things that are well within their ability level, that they can be successful on, rather than doing one song that is just really way out of their league.

LoVetri agreed with the concept of keeping repertoire choices within the ability of the individual singer: “I like to choose conservative, easy pieces for beginners, and I don’t want to have the highest, loudest, longest, hardest song that you can think of for somebody who has had only two years of training”. She endorsed a case-by-case approach which took into consideration the individual student’s needs as well as their preferred repertoire style: “I end up giving different kinds of advice to different singers. If you are working with music theatre students, obviously they have to stick to repertoire that they could actually perform”.

Hughes presented a unique perspective and spoke of the industry practice of singers using amplification in their CCM performances. The use of amplification introduces another element of pedagogical practice—the need to train students in its appropriate use. Hughes commented that this was an important consideration because it directly affected the singer’s vocal output:

Vocal ability doesn’t necessarily just apply to young voices; it can impact voices that have been overloaded, either through poor technique or singing too much with not enough adequate amplification, and that type of thing. That again is probably where I would suggest different types of repertoire or different ways of singing repertoire to compensate for that.

The pedagogues were unanimous that decisions on repertoire choices should be guided by the vocal ability of the individual student. The common view was that repertoire needed to suit a singer’s skill level and physical abilities. The pedagogues were also unanimous in their manner of choosing repertoire, using a student-focussed, case-by-case approach.
**CCM Repertoire and Style-Related Effects**

Authentic style effects are often used to heighten or exaggerate an emotion by CCM singers. These effects are used to express something in a manner that is not possible through normal vocalisation. Some of the common vocal effects used in CCM styles include growl, creak, grunt, distortion, and screaming. Belt is both a technique to be learned and a style effect commonly used in CCM singing performance.

Three pedagogues believed that belt, as a style-related effect, should be a consideration when selecting a song for a student. Wilson believed that belt was problematic when the student was unable to access this sound safely and was experiencing constricted vocal production as a result. According to Caffier et al. (2018), “In belting, a specific nonclassical technique, higher positioning of the larynx and changes of the vocal tract shape have been shown. In the high range, the singer brings the chest register above its normal natural passaggio” (pp. 340–341). Wilson commented that she worked carefully with students: “I prescribe them repertoire that is not as demanding until they have built up a confident capability, with me watching them so that I can help them. I will put that technique into a song once it’s more stable”. Kayes believed that belt could be produced in a safe and sustainable manner: “I certainly teach a lot of belting, but I also teach alternatives to belting because belting is high-energy work”. Peckham said that her focus on developing belt was to ensure that the whole voice was developed:

*There has to be some head voice access, upper register access, and there has to be some lower, and then we can hopefully find some way, with time and patience and really dedicated practice on the student’s part, find a way to make a useful belting sound.*

Screaming or *screamo* is produced by singers of metal styles. There is little information in the voice science literature about the production of this sound as a vocal effect. Much controversy surrounds the safety and sustainability of this sound, and three pedagogues said they were cautious in their handling of teaching screaming as a vocal effect. Peckham admitted that she was unskilled in teaching screaming, and she believed that it could injure the singer:

*If you do it once, or you do it in the studio, I don’t think you are in for problems, but I think for people who do it all the time, or find that is a way*
they want to build their voice and they think that screaming is the way to build up their strength, I think that overuse injuries are a real issue.

Kayes was also reticent about teaching screaming, and she referred students who sought such training to a teacher more skilled in extreme vocal effects:

*I have done a little bit on learning how to scream, but I don’t feel it is something I can teach. So we talk about it and say, yes, there is research being done on it. There’s a way to go on learning this, and I am at a stage in my career where I can say there are people who can do this better than me, so go and have a session with them and then you can come back and we can work it back into what you are doing with me. That would be my approach.*

LeBorgne said that an appropriate use of amplification needed to be mastered for screaming to be applied effectively:

*If I am working with a rock singer who screams, we have to talk about how we use amplification appropriately, and I will try to go in to see them perform. I want to see what their monitor set up is like. Do they use inner ears? What kind of microphone do they use? What is the frequency response?*

Distortion as a vocal effect is where the false or ventricular folds are engaged in the sound production creating an audible vibration. Growl is a form of distortion produced at higher levels of vocal effort. Kayes mentioned that she was often approached to teach these sounds, and she believed that both sounds could be produced healthily:

*There was a time when I might have said all of these things are wrong, but we now know that is not the case because we have the instrumentation, we can see people doing the vocal effects, and most distortion is produced by something else flapping in the vocal tract. It’s just an interference with the frequency.*

Extreme vocal effects can best be described as roughness or distortion of a normal healthy sound production. Descriptive terminologies can be wide ranging. The pedagogues used a variety of descriptors such as grunt, gritty, dirty, and gravel when referring to some of the extreme vocal sounds. Wilson commented “There are times
in CCM when you have to have a gritty sound. You cannot sing it nicely, in a pretty classical sound. This is not going to cut it, is it?” Peckham regarded gravel as something that could be useful and could be “used as a colour, rather than as a consistent scratchy sound”. She would help students with suggestions such as “making those sounds with the rattling of the throat tissues rather than at the level of the chords”. When working with students who needed to apply extreme vocal effects in their performances, Hughes highlighted problems such as overloading the voice:

A rock singer has to sound dirty, but when I work with those types of singers, I’ve worked towards building a foundation for their voice and an understanding that they are aware of when they are overloading their voice and developing strategies to compensate.

In the literature, singers have been compared to athletes (Durham-Lozaw, 2014; Hanlon, 2012; LeBorgne, 2001). Just as athletes are encouraged to cross-train in order to exercise muscle groups in a manner that is dissimilar to how they would be used for their specific sport, singers are also advised to cross-train to promote and maintain their vocal health. According to Edwin (2008), “Football players dance, tennis players swim, golfers jog. Just as cross training promotes optimal performance levels and mitigates injury in athletes, cross training for the voice promotes similar results for ‘voice athletes’” (p. 73). For a thyroarytenoid (TA) dominant CCM singer, cross-training would involve warm-up or cool-down exercises using some cricothyroid (CT) dominant sounds most usually heard in classical style singing or legitimate musical theatre singing. The cross-training of singers balances out the physical demands of CCM styles and promotes optimum vocal health (Edwin, 2014).

Three pedagogues acknowledged the benefits of cross-training for CCM singers. LoVetri reinforced the practice:

To really train the voice well in multiple styles, to cross-train the voice, takes time, years. I think that if you don’t take time, you end up with cheap singing or vocal and musical issues that can become debilitating. Taking time allows the instrument to acclimatise to the diversity of vocal production. There are very popular methods out there that advocate manipulation of the larynx or the muscles of the throat in a deliberate way. Squeeze this. Push that. Retract those. Lift this. I am against all of that. I don’t think that you sing freely by squeezing your epiglottic sphincter or
retracting your vocal folds. I don’t think you can anchor or brace something. I don’t think you can put your larynx up or down or hold it somewhere on purpose without sacrificing vocal freedom. Without vocal freedom you cannot be expressive in an authentic manner, period. Without vocal freedom you cannot express emotions in any style of music at all.

Ng said that, although she did not deal with style-related effects regularly, she endorsed the use of cross-training for balance: “I don’t work much with style-related effects in my studio because the private studio is mostly musical theatre, a little classical, and a lot of crossover for balance”. LeBorgne was more specific about her use of cross-training as a way of dealing with style-related effects:

The one thing we haven’t talked about which is really, really, really vital for every commercial singer that I see, is that they cross-train. So if what they sing in rock is low stuff, they need to see if they can float their voice. Even if they never sing that way in public, you have got to cross-train the instrument, and if you are transitioning genres, like if you are singing musical theatre and you want to go to rap or rock’n’roll, it’s been my general experience it takes six to eight weeks to make that transition at an elite level.

Chandler said that style-related effects could be approached safely and were not a threat to a singer’s vocal health: “I do them as the repertoire requires because all of them can be done safely and sustainably. It’s completely up to the client whether they need it or want it, and we will cover whatever they need or want”. Hughes also trained students to implement style-related effects but cautioned: “We have got to accept that they are there. They might not always be healthy, so part of it is to make singers aware and give them the choice then of whether they want to use them or not”. Wilson offered a different opinion:

I have a moral responsibility as a practitioner to say, “You will do that at your peril and not with my blessing, because it may cause damage that may not be repairable”. I’d like to know that any teaching I do enhances that person’s ability to sing till they don’t want to anymore.

In summary, some pedagogues cautioned about the use of effects. Three were cautious in teaching belt while others referred to screaming as problematic for singers of CCM
styles. Ideas for the safe teaching of the more extreme style-related vocal effects included balancing the voice through cross-training, the use of style-related effects as stylistic choices only, building a strong technical foundation for the voice, and developing compensatory strategies prior to venturing into the regular use of such sounds.

7.4 BELIEFS REGARDING THE CORRELATION OF CCM SINGING AND VOCAL HEALTH IMPLICATIONS FOR SINGERS

There has been much adverse press about CCM singers suffering vocal fold pathologies; for example, in 2018 the pop icon Pink had to cancel a number of concerts in Australia due to illness, incurring sensationalist media criticism. This type of publicity has reflected negatively on CCM vocal performance generally (Bartlett, 2011) with commentary from some authors claiming inevitable voice damage for singers of CCM styles. In a doctoral thesis, Bartlett (2011) states:

I was troubled by the general dearth of research sources that addressed singers of non-classical styles and their singing. Where studies did exist there was often a conclusion of inevitability about style-driven vocal damage. For the most part, the evaluations of what constitutes a healthy vocal production reflected critics’ own backgrounds in classical voice and their aesthetic preferences for a tone and quality based on an implicit stylistic hierarchy favouring classical voice; or, on select samples of contemporary style singers who were in treatment for voice disorders. (p. 176)

A recent research study of professional CCM singers assessed the potential for any voice damage that might be caused through the sustained use of the most common vocal effects. Caffier et al. (2018) explain:

The following effects were subject to investigation: breathy voice, creaky voice, vocal fry, grunting, distortion, and rattle. All presented vocalizations had to be applied regularly in the everyday life of the singer, meaning they were practiced and subjectively reproducible. (p. 341)
The authors conclude that all ten ‘trained’ participants in the study were vocally in good health: “The long-lasting use of the investigated non-classical vocal effects had no negative impact on trained singers” (Caffier et al., 2018, p. 340).

When asked if they thought that contemporary styles were more problematic for a singer’s vocal health than classical styles, the pedagogues were unanimous in their view that vocal health issues were not exclusive to singers who performed CCM styles. They considered singers of classical styles equally susceptible to vocal health issues. Wilson said that vocal health concerns did not discriminate between genres: “We have had years and years of looking at classical styles; and they get into terrible trouble too with varying things”. Furthermore, she explained that “it can happen to any singer who is performing repertoire which is not suitable for the singer in terms of their stage of vocal development, irrespective of genre or style”.

Two other pedagogues agreed with this assertion. When asked if CCM singers were at higher risk of developing voice disorders, Zangger Borch insisted, “Definitely no; I can elaborate, but I won’t. Definitely no. I don’t think these singers experience any more voice problems than the classical singers and actually the phoneticians don’t [believe so] either”. Ng believed that classical singers were at greater risk of experiencing phonatory disorders than CCM singers. Ng believed that the aesthetics in vocal production used across CCM styles meant that these styles were more problematic than classical styles: “It feels like, because of the speech-based quality of CCM styles, that they are going to be more damaging than say classical styles. I know there’s an article saying that it’s classical singers that get injured more”.

**Voice Issues Associated with Hyper-Functionality**

Voice disorders can manifest as a range of issues characterised by altered vocal quality, pitch, loudness, or vocal effort. The literature describes many vocal issues that are associated specifically to hyper-function—too much physical activity—and hypo-function—too little physical activity (Brown, 1996; McKinney, 1994). According to Brown (1996), most singing-related voice disorders arise from hyper-functionality; he lists vocal overuse and overloading of the voice as two conditions that are problematic when evaluating and diagnosing pathologies in singers. Six of the pedagogues in this current study regarded hyper-functionality as the primary cause for vocal pathologies for all singers, irrespective of genre. According to Caffier et al. (2018), “The possibility of long-term negative consequences depends on the individual constitution,
specific use, duration, and extent of the hyper-function” (p. 345). Peckham believed that vocal health concerns arising from hyper-functionality were due predominantly to singers’ being oblivious to their vocal limitations:

*Overuse injuries seem to be the biggest problem, and that of course can happen in classical music as well as non-classical music. It’s the overuse or inappropriate use of the mixed registers, or the belt, which are most problematic in young women in the middle range when they are trying to get into the contemporary sound and they are not aware of their limitations. That of course can happen in classical music too.*

LoVetri emphasised that all singers, irrespective of genre, must consider their individual vocal limitations when performing repertoire, and that regard must be given to the vocal abilities and physicality of the individual singer when they choose to use style-driven vocal effects:

*I do think that people have to understand that belting is high energy singing, and it is more likely that people who don’t know what they are doing are going to get into trouble. You can make that same statement about very complex classical music, also. In all styles you have to know the limits of your physical and vocal stamina.*

Hughes commented that young singers were more susceptible to overloading their voices, especially when attempting to perform repertoire that was inappropriate for their stage of development. She said that pre-adolescent and adolescent singers needed to be aware of their physical limitations. Hughes believed that a strong technical foundation was needed to underpin the voice production, irrespective of genre:

*If singing has been a progressive development and students are aware of potential vocal health issues, and are aware of overloading their voice and things like that, I think there are just as many considerations with young voices, in particular with classical, or voices aren’t fully mature in classical repertoire as they are in contemporary.*

When evaluating problems associated with vocal health across classical and CCM styles, Brown (1996) states, “Popular and classical singers live in different worlds. They have instruments that are physically different and they use different techniques.
In spite of these differences, the same rules for healthy voice use apply” (p. 136). Chandler’s comments accorded with Brown’s view:

Singers are singers are singers when it comes to the medical side of the voice, and any one genre that is not sung ‘on point’, the singer is at risk of some kind of stamina issues such as vocal fatigue, or more serious problems such as lesions from overuse or misuse. It’s not really the province of one style of singing more than the other. Vocal health issues are not genre specific and I suspect that they both have their potential vocal health issues, but the problems are different.

From her experience as a speech pathologist and voice researcher, LeBorgne believed that voice disorders were not exclusive to singers who performed CCM styles:

A lot of my research is on that, so in general, anywhere from 35 to 50 per cent of classical singers will actually present with a non-symptomatic pathology. We just published an article that somewhere between 35 and 100 of commercial music singers, at least in musical theatre, are going to present with some kind of abnormality, but the reality is that it’s not necessarily perfection but uniqueness that gets hired. What I go for from a vocal health standpoint is that you have flexibility and consistency in your sound to meet your performance demands, as well as vocal stamina.

**Voice Issues and CCM Music Industry Practice**

Although CCM dominates today’s music industry, there is little in the literature on the singing voice or vocal pedagogy that discusses the prevalence of vocal health issues for professional CCM singers. According to Bartlett (2011) the literature has relied on authors’ etic views and anecdotal commentary rather than grounded, empirical research:

In spite of their significant number and high public visibility, PCGS [professional contemporary gig singers] have been overlooked or excluded from pedagogical studies by researchers and their distinct pedagogical needs have been disregarded by those pedagogues who dominate the singing voice literature. (pp. 1−2)
Wilson agreed that there was a gap in the literature which addressed CCM singers as a group: “Yes, there are huge problems in CCM, huge ignorance, because there has not been enough research and there still isn’t’.

This lack of research is problematic for CCM singers because stylistic demands vary significantly compared with those required for an authentic classical sound. According to LoVetri, a singer who wants a professional performance career must specialise in a particular style, not only to ensure the integrity of a style, but for vocal longevity:

*We don’t yet have any recognised singers who perform in opera and then turn around and sing rock and roll and jazz, and have an audience accept all of that artistically. We don’t even know if that is possible. I make this statement not based on research or science but my life experience as both a singer and a teacher.*

Peckham said that vocal health concerns amongst this group of singers were caused by how they communicated physically and emotionally in performance. She believed that the delivery of a classical music performance was more subdued, therefore less problematic for the performer:

*The intensity, emotional qualities, and the ideas in contemporary music are very relatable for young people, and so they throw themselves into it in a very physical way, whereas in classical music it seems to be a little more formal and reserved, and the head voice dominant sound plays into the ease of production.*

In contrast, Wilson said that the prevalence of vocal health concerns confronting professional voice users was associated with current music industry practices across both CCM and classical music genres. She said that the voice problems confronting many artists were caused by the mismanagement of financially motivated industry personnel. Wilson identified the same dilemma for professional singers in all genres, and said that many singers, irrespective of genre, were being treated as commercial commodities:

*There are problems right across the board due to managements, and here it could be opera management, a concert management of a solo artist, could be rock band manager, could be the A&R [artists and repertoire]
person at the recording company you are signed to as a solo recording
artist in pop or anything. Managements are greedy and are less likely to
take notice of expert advice to do with conservative voice regimes. It
happens in musical theatre, it happens in rock and roll, it happens in
classical.

Bartlett (2011) reports that the highly competitive nature of the CCM entertainment
industry pressured the singers in her research to dismiss potential vocal health hazards
and venue-related environmental issues to meet audience expectations, performance
demands, and contractual commitments. Her participants reported that, as professional
singers, they were often expected to perform irrespective of vocal health issues
(Bartlett, 2011). Similarly, Kayes acknowledged that performance demands associated
with expectations and stresses of the CCM industry placed this group of singers at a
high risk of voice disorders:

*It’s not the music, it’s the culture that might lead to problems for the CCM
singer. I think that the demands that are made on the performer are often
what lead to problems. So it’s not the style. It’s the gig. It’s going in the
gig where the musicians are playing loudly and don’t have a decent sound
system. It’s your promoter saying you have got to sing this in this key
because the original artist does it in that key; it doesn’t suit you. It’s doing
three sets a night on a Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Classical singers
don’t do that. They don’t do gigs back to back like that, so we have got to
recognise that in the culture, and know how to deal with it. We know that
musical theatre singers experience heavy vocal loading because they often
have to do two shows back to back, and they might be dancing on stage as
well. There is not a culture of that in classical music because you have
your voice category and you sing in your voice category, and nobody is
going to mess with that.*

Hughes also identified music industry hazards that were problematic for the CCM
singer:

*Other considerations that could impact on their general health, and maybe
on their vocal health through tension and things like that, are expectations
to sing for certain amounts of time or at certain times of the night without
adequate breaks or without building stamina. I guess the consideration of
repertoire choice comes into that as well, because there is this popular belief where some of the reality shows which air, there is a culture of big is great. Audiences will applaud bigness.

Hughes attributed the vocal health issues of CCM singers to the misuse of amplification and ignorance of the acoustic environment:

For CCM styles of singing, singers need to have a great understanding of not only amplification, but of acoustics. If they are suddenly in a room where there’s quite live sound and they are getting a lot of feedback, so they are turning down levels to compensate and then they can’t hear themselves, all of those things are things they need to have a great understanding of, otherwise they can potentially overload their voice.

Research conducted by Caffier et al. (2018) supports this view:

In addition to a properly learned vocal technique—which includes the correct handling of glottis and supraglottis, airflow, diaphragmatic support, and vocal tract—sufficient knowledge about the microphone and the sound system such as directional characteristics and microphone selection are also helpful in maintaining a healthy voice in nonclassical singing. (p. 345)

Hughes elaborated on the significance of training CCM singers to use amplification, addressing the need for focussed education:

I think it is one thing to be able to teach someone how to use their voice effectively and to communicate effectively through a range of different styles, but if you don’t teach them how to do that effectively using amplification, then you are only teaching half the voice, and unfortunately there are singing teachers out there who don’t fully understand that, even if you have a microphone through an amp, it is not teaching someone about sound. You are not teaching them that they will typically be hearing themselves through speakers in front of them down low on the stage, or it won’t be teaching them to have the skills to communicate to sound technicians when they can’t hear themselves, or all of those other kinds of
skills that really are required in this type of singing that aren’t required in a classical world as much.

When profiling CCM singers and their vocal health, LeBorgne identified lifestyle choices as being problematic: “I think that some of the lifestyle choices that some of our commercial music singers make are not always the best lifestyle choices, and I am not sure we can relate the vocal health issues to singing technique alone”. Muckala (2013) and Foote (2015) report that alcohol and substance abuse (including nicotine and recreational drug use) is prevalent among CCM performing artists, and can be harmful in terms of vocal health. Hughes identified alcohol as part of the culture surrounding the commercially active CCM singer, and considered it a contributor to voice problems:

In particular, alcohol in the contemporary area would be more of a concern than classical. In fact, some of my own recent research where I have been working with a team of people, and we have been working with what’s happening in the industry at the moment, some participants have talked about alcohol being a part of the rider agreement within their contracts. Alcohol is freely available.

In summary, the pedagogues were unanimous that singers across all genres were vulnerable to voice injury and needed help with their vocal health concerns. Although the pedagogues emphasised that problems confronted by classical and CCM singers differed, most believed that issues arising from hyper-functionality were the most injurious for singers, irrespective of style, but especially for the long duration of CCM singing performances. The pedagogues believed that neither specific voice characteristics nor style effects associated with CCM are necessarily problematic when singers are trained in the management of sound production. Rather, issues relating to lifestyle and music industry demands were likely to be problematic for singers’ vocal health and longevity.

7.5 The Problems of a One-Size-Fits-All Teaching Approach for CCM Singers

Voice science and vocal pedagogy literature describes differences in technique, aesthetics, and muscle engagement that produce the sound qualities required for authenticity across both CCM and classical styles. Current research shows that it is
possible to measure and distinguish between these contrasting styles, and that the vocal techniques necessary to perform them effectively are not compatible (Edwin, 2007; Meyer, 2015; Titze, 2015b). DeSilva (2016) comments that “no single technique can serve all styles of singing. Regardless of the technique (CCM or classical), the goal should always be efficient, healthy, expressive singing; however, teachers need the tools to reach such a goal” (p. 16). In a more recent study, Caffier et al. (2018) stated:

The accurate analysis, understanding, and pedagogical teaching of these techniques, including how to correctly produce the described non-classical vocal effects, are of great importance to keep a healthy voice. Without this knowledge and training by experienced singing teachers, there is a high risk of damaging important laryngeal structures, which can manifest itself in acute injuries (eg, edemas or hematomas) or in secondary acquired lesions due to chronic overload (eg, vocal fold nodules). (p. 345)

Voice teachers are expected to provide the correct training to meet their students’ individual style needs while encouraging a healthy voice production. According to Meyer (2015), “Medical ethics can inform what we think as pedagogues. An ethical pedagogy is one which is designed to engage students in learning activities that optimise their chances of achieving their desired outcomes in a safe and sustainable way”.

When asked if they believed that imposing a classical pedagogical approach on a CCM singer could potentially lead to vocal health issues, the nine pedagogues held varying opinions. Wilson agreed with Meyer, stipulating that “just because I was taught strict bel canto, it mightn’t be the pathway for my students—even if they are singing opera!”. She suggested that a voice teacher should not impose any one teaching approach on any singer, irrespective of style: “Imposing any pedagogical model on any singer isn’t the way to go about it. A singing teacher, a voice coach, an MD, whoever—much like a doctor, any wise practitioner diagnoses the best treatment modality for the patient”.

The two primary muscles responsible for vocal fold activity are the thyro-arytenoid muscles (TA) and the cricothyroid muscles (CT) (Edwin 2007). The TA is responsible for shortening and thickening the vocal folds, and is responsible for producing the lower register in both men and women. The CT muscle is responsible for lengthening and thinning the vocal folds, thus producing the sound that is commonly associated with a higher register voice in women and falsetto in men. Edwin reports:
Research in voice physiology tells us that specific muscles are responsible for certain sounds (TA-dominant: chest, belt, mix; CT-dominant: head, falsetto). Acoustic research reveals that classical and belt sounds create different frequencies, formants, and harmonics. It follows then that different voice techniques are required to activate the muscles and produce the sounds necessary for a variety of singing styles. (2007, p. 214)

Singers of classical styles are required to sing with a vocal technique that supports an unamplified sound, using tall, round vowels with a CT-dominant production. This is typically unnecessary for the speech dominant vocal qualities of a CCM singer. Edwin (2007) states, “Classical technique serves only classical and traditional Broadway legit singing” (p. 214). In Zangger Borch’s opinion, classical training would lead to a singer sounding unauthentic across the style demands of CCM; however, he did not believe that this was necessarily detrimental to a singer’s vocal health: “No, I don’t think it will affect vocal health; more lead to a non-ideal sound for popular music”. LeBorgne also acknowledged that CCM styles demanded a technique different from classical technique, but did not believe that traditional classical training would cause voice injury for the CCM singer: “I do not think that a classical pedagogical technique with a CCM singer will lead to vocal health issues. However, they will likely go out and sing their CCM styles on their own”.

Wilson believed that in some cases classical training could assist the CCM singer and optimise their chances of achieving their desired outcomes. She suggested that, if the training was in keeping with the correct physiological set up of singers, a classical pedagogy could enhance their work without injury to them:

*I have to say that nothing in good classical pedagogy should harm any CCM singer if it’s used as a way of enhancing their work as a CCM singer, not trying to give them ‘better’ singing training because it is nice and ‘classical’. If a CCM student of mine needed a bit of classical-base pedagogy in their training, I’d suggest it, introduce it in a coherent manner that integrated with the rest of their training, and I’d stop using it the moment I saw that it wasn’t right.*

Because of the lack of empirical studies, LoVetri believed she could not comment on whether classical training was harmful to the CCM singer’s vocal health. She
acknowledged the lack of evidence and, like Wilson, remarked that there were times when classical training could be relevant to the needs of CCM singers:

*Much depends on the type of singer, the approach of the classical vocal pedagogy, and the desired sound in the CCM material. It cannot be stated definitely that classical training will or will not increase the likelihood of vocal pathology or general vocal health issues. The overall context of the training would determine the inclination towards or away from vocal health.*

Discussing the vocal production required for belt, Edwin (2007) comments, “In order to create a healthy, efficient, and artistically credible belt, a voice technique measurably different than that used in classical singing is needed”. Five pedagogues talked about the potential hazard for those who had been trained to remain in a classical CT-dominant sound in their attempts to belt. Kayes mentioned the possible risks associated with a lack of TA dominance:

*Chest register, while necessary, can contribute to ‘heaviness’ in the sound, and to forcing vocal production. Lack of chest register, especially at the lower pitch range, can lead to weakness, which can also contribute to an increased possibility of vocal pathology, especially if the vocalist is trying to belt or sing in a strong chest-dominant sound.*

Ng acknowledged that a speech-based, TA-dominant vocal production was imperative for CCM singers: “The best way to come to CCM is to come from speech, and the way we sing it translates very much from the way we speak. We know the first passaggio, then it finds itself in other funny ways”. Ng also pointed out that classical training did not equip a singer with techniques required to belt in a sustainable manner:

*How can one learn CCM classically? Of course, it is going to cause vocal health problems because how do you do the equivalent of a yell in classical? When you are doing Puccini, it is classical belt; but that is very different.*

Although LoVetri said she had no conclusive evidence that imposing a classical training regime on a CCM singer could cause voice production problems, she
associated vocal health issues arising from hyper-functionality with a lack of TA engagement in speech-based vocal production in some singers:

Some voices have a naturally strong lower register and respond easily to exercises that rest in a speech-oriented production, and some do not have that capacity. And, if someone has been trained in a head-register dominant vocal production—as many classical females are—and then crosses over to CCM, it can take quite a bit of work to develop the necessary depth and power that would allow the vocalist to sing it appropriately. All of these factors have the potential to affect vocal health. Too much tension on the vocal mechanism can contribute to hyper-function which, in turn, contributes to a higher possibility of vocal fold pathology.

Hughes considered hyper-functionality a concern if CCM singers were trained to remain in a CT-dominant sound when singing primarily in a lower register. She commented, “I think that one of the vocal health issues that could arise is overloading the voice, particularly in relation to lower registration, because of its potential unfamiliarity”. Like LoVetri and Hughes, Chandler considered hyper-functionality as problematic for singers who were attempting to belt in a CT-dominant sound. She believed that this was a concern especially for classically trained female singers:

In my teaching studio I have seen head-voice-dominant female singers push the limits of their head-voice setting in the mistaken belief that they are in fact singing in chest voice. Conversely, I’ve also seen classically trained female singers belting in a somewhat reckless, unpleasant, unsustainable, unbalanced way in the mistaken belief that that’s what it takes to sing CCM. Both scenarios are cause for concern for maintenance of vocal health in my opinion.

Chandler added that classical training for females singing in CCM styles was detrimental to vocal health: “In my experience, I have seen it cause problems for female singers because of the disparity in the main settings used in singing: CT-dominance (head voice) in classical singing and TA-dominance (chest voice) in CCM”.
The production of belt singing can be described as dramatically different for men and women because, as Edwin (2007) comments, “All male singers, with the exception of pop and classical countertenors, sing with a TA-dominant vocal fold source. Therefore, in order to belt, men are not required to change vocal registers” (p. 215). Similarly, Chandler doubted that teaching male CCM singers classically “would pose too much of an issue health-wise, as both CCM and classical male vocal settings are TA-dominant at least”. However, Edwin (2007) believes that a classically trained female singer attempting to sing in a belt sound is at greater risk of developing voice disorders than classically trained male singers performing CCM styles:

Female singers in order to belt also must have a TA-dominant vocal source; bright, speech-like sounds; non-continuous vibrato; and a text-driven approach. As with a male singer, a female singer who sings with a TA-dominant vocal fold source will find it fairly easy to produce a belt sound. However, for a female singer whose primary vocal fold source is CT-dominant, the register shift could be quite daunting. For the classical female singer, the shift to belt may be even more difficult since it not only involves a register shift, but also a shift from tall, round vowels and formal language to the production of bright, narrow vowels and speech-based language. Carrying TA-dominant sounds up the scale with tall, round vowels is stylistically inappropriate for belt as well as overly taxing and potentially damaging to the instrument. (p. 215)

Three of the nine pedagogues made reference to vocal health problems associated with hyper-functionality and the use of greater subglottal air pressure for CCM singing. Hughes explained:

*Classical technique typically requires trained singers to be capable of high subglottal pressure that may lead to a ‘forcing out’ of the contemporary vocal sound. The implication here is that contemporary styles do not necessarily require the same subglottal energy or resonance capabilities as classical singing.*

Kayes explained that subglottal pressure levels were greater for classical singing than for CCM singing, which is predominantly a speech-based voice quality. When asked if imposing classical training for CCM styles was cause for concern to the singer’s vocal health, Kayes asserted:
My response is yes! I have specific reasons that I have observed from my own teaching practice. Classical vocal style requires long phrases, with even tone and legato singing. This impacts on subglottal pressure levels (flow phonation), volumes of air in lungs and ‘breath groups’. In CCM singing there is no call for consistent legato, and much less call for an even tone. When a singer has trained to take in larger volumes of air into the lungs than the target subglottal pressure and phrase lengths required, he/she is in more danger of overloading the vocal folds during the execution of CCM phrase patterns. I’ve witnessed it happening and I have seen singers become hyper-functional as a result.

Ng discussed the positioning and function of the larynx as a distinction between classical and CCM styles: “Essentially the laryngeal position is so completely different, the laryngeal movements are different, and feels different”. According to Peckham, the low laryngeal positioning required for classical singing is incompatible with CCM voice production, and singers should make laryngeal adjustments to avoid potential vocal health issues:

I believe the issues would have some impact on vocal health. But more importantly, classical technique without any awareness or adjustment for contemporary singing technique has the potential to create confusion and frustration for the vocalist. A consistently low positioning of the larynx is incompatible with the configurations that are necessary for singing contemporary music styles.

In summary, eight pedagogues agreed that imposing a classical pedagogical approach to some degree on singers of CCM styles would be problematic in terms of reliable vocal health. Three suggested that the issue of greatest concern was hyper-functionality, because of differences in voice production (laryngeal position, subglottal pressure, et cetera) between CCM and classical singing. The lack of a specific training approach for CCM singing could be perpetuating issues relating to compromised vocal health for the CCM singer. A systematic pedagogy would ensure students could achieve their style goals without compromising vocal health.
7.6 Summary

Fundamentally, it seems that singing teachers are still having problems with the building blocks of CCM. Many have had to move from a formal classical structure to an informal, self-taught model. The pedagogues’ responses showed differences of opinion about the styles that come under the umbrella of CCM. They highlighted some of the difficulties in teaching and managing all the stylistic forms of CCM repertoire, and most admitted that they could not accommodate some style effects in their teaching. Some of the styles the pedagogues did not feel comfortable teaching were the same ones they identified as not belonging under the CCM umbrella, such as musical theatre, rap, death metal, and heavy metal.

The pedagogues stated unanimously that vocal health issues were not exclusive to CCM singers, and that they considered classical singers just as vulnerable. Their solution was to approach the teaching of CCM styles on a case-by-case basis. To adequately serve those seeking tuition in CCM styles, they believed that teachers should find ways to accommodate the needs of the individual student in terms of age, style preference, style effects, and vocal ability.

The analyses presented in this and the previous two chapters have implications for those wishing to teach CCM. Collectively, the pedagogues’ responses to the research question—How can the beliefs and teaching approaches of eminent CCM vocal pedagogues inform the development of a pedagogical framework specifically for CCM singers?—suggest that the teaching of CCM could benefit greatly from a framework that could guide teachers to make decisions about their teaching, one that is centred on the individual student and is responsive to the individual’s technical, repertoire and style needs. In the final chapter I summarise the findings of this research project and suggest a framework for a pedagogical approach adaptive to the needs of CCM singers.
We have survived significant changes in the world of singing, and our profession will surely survive current transitions, provided we are willing to adapt.

(Meyer & Edwards, 2014, p. 442)

Pedagogy is the art and science of teaching and, as we move into the twenty-first century, research into the science and pedagogical practice of voice training has failed to reflect the realities and demands of today’s modern music industry. Contemporary commercial music (CCM), as a pedagogical discourse, appeared in the literature nearly two decades ago, and highlighted the lack of a pedagogical model for singers of CCM styles. In spite of the overwhelming growth in audience demand for CCM styles, pedagogical and research studies continue to focus on singers of classical music styles, either neglecting CCM completely, or extrapolating classical pedagogical models as a universal approach regardless of genre and style. The CCM industry is dynamic, and singing teachers recognise the need for new expertise to manage students who want to sing CCM styles and sub-styles as they emerge. This growing need for a specific and appropriate pedagogical framework for singers of CCM styles has brought me to the primary research question that drives this thesis: How can the beliefs and teaching approaches of eminent CCM vocal pedagogues inform the development of a pedagogical framework specifically for CCM singers?

As discussed in Chapter 2, an effective pedagogy engages students in learning activities that optimise their chance of achieving desired outcomes for success in their chosen industry. In this study, the word pedagogy has been focussed on the practice of teaching and learning for CCM singers. When I began my investigations, I was troubled by the lack of research and teaching environments for CCM singers. Western classical traditions remain the preferred approach irrespective of style. Many researchers (for example, Bartlett, 2014; DeSilva, 2016; Meyer & Edwards, 2014) believe that this is especially true in the majority of Western tertiary institutions where the one-size-fits-all classical model continues to be offered as the standard basis of training for all singers regardless of style. Because of the noted differences in voice production between CCM and classical singers, the imposition of a classical
pedagogical approach creates a number of challenges for CCM singers, not only aesthetically, but also for a singer’s longevity and vocal health.

This study is not intended to be critical of classical voice training as a teaching model, nor is it intended to focus on the aesthetic differences between CCM and classical vocal characteristics. Rather, the research attempts to lay the groundwork for developing a framework for a style-relevant CCM vocal pedagogy that is different from the traditional, classically focussed training model, and responsive to the vocal production requirements of CCM singers in today’s music industry. Through this research, I aim to develop a preliminary framework for singing teachers that addresses the needs of CCM singers and aligns with the shift in audience music consumption. For that purpose, I offer guidelines on how students can learn to sing CCM styles while maintaining voice health and producing sustainable style-related elements and effects. The focus of this research has been to seek the views, experiences, and perceptions of eminent pedagogues in the field regarding the training of CCM singers. This approach allows me to examine how the participants have responded to student demands, as defined by trends in music markets, and the pedagogical approaches they employ to train this group of singers. Furthermore, this investigation is intended to provide new knowledge and information to others in the singing community, contribute to the literature of voice training and offer informed recommendations on how a CCM pedagogical framework for singers of CCM styles can be adapted and contributed to in the future.

As described in Chapter 1, although the terms pedagogical model and pedagogical framework are often used interchangeably, pedagogical models are usually aligned to a specific pedagogical approach (Conole, 2010). In this chapter, I lay out a preliminary framework founded on outcomes from this research with reference to existing literature in the field of CCM. I have distilled the findings of the previous chapters, and proposed a CCM pedagogical framework that is responsive to the needs of CCM singing teachers and their students. I aim to offer a pathway for collegiate work in pedagogy research in order to build the professional capacity of teachers who train singers of CCM styles, thereby improving the learning experiences and outcomes for students. I offer this research as a starting point; a foundation for the further development and refinement of a specific pedagogical framework relevant to the learning and artistic objectives of CCM singers.
8.1 Towards a CCM Pedagogical Framework

Through the process of analysing the nine pedagogue’s perspectives against the pre-identified key themes (see Chapter 3), several similarities in perspectives and approaches became apparent.

The pedagogues agreed that efficient vocal instruction should be geared to function and style according to individual student needs. For example, they were unanimous that a technically sound voice was required to create a healthy and sustainable vocal production. In addition, they said that, to express specific style elements, vocal freedom and flexibility should be developed as components of a healthy vocal production. To present more broadly what I interpret to be the key findings, these and other similarities outlined in each of the concluding sections of the relevant chapters are drawn together here as summaries across each of the themes and grouped into three main areas: the individual student, technique, and repertoire and style. These key areas were inductively derived from the analyses presented in previous chapters. Each has various sub-components that were also derived from salient aspects of the analyses presented in previous chapters of this thesis.

In addition to similarities, there were differences in the pedagogues’ perspectives, particularly concerning technical elements. These differences related to the pedagogues’ backgrounds; they all reported some form of classical training and possessed little or no CCM performance experience. Beyond their personal training experiences, they were accomplished CCM teachers and had extensive CCM teaching experience. They had all constructed their own CCM teaching approaches due to the lack of pedagogical resources available to them for training CCM singers.

The proposed framework has been based on an examination of the pedagogues’ responses against information reported in the literature. It is not fixed. I recommend that this framework is adapted, modified, and built upon when trialled in practice by teachers with their students and when further research is conducted in the field of CCM. Figure 3 represents the three core components of the framework.
The three core components highlighted in Figure 3 reflect the key themes that I have identified as being most integral to the framework: that is, the individual student, and the key elements of technique, repertoire and style. These core components provide structure for a focussed approach to the training of CCM singers. The relationship of each component to the others is interactive; each informs and influences the others.

I view each core component as having a number of sub-components that can best be described as satellites and that share an intricate and dynamic association within the framework. What follows is an overview of relationships between the core components and the sub-components of the framework.

1. The Individual Student

The first component of the framework is the individual student. The nine pedagogues believed that their teaching approaches should accommodate and respond to an individual student’s diverse technical needs, special interests, and repertoire demands. They agreed that every singer was unique, and that teachers needed to respect and
acknowledge that students learn in different ways, have distinct motivations for learning, come from diverse backgrounds, and perform in a variety of context-specific settings; a student’s prior knowledge and experience has implications for the type of learning that is most appropriate for them. It follows that a pedagogical framework must be a flexible structure that can be readily modified according to a student’s age, physicality, technical ability, special interests, and needs. For this reason, the individual student is central to the framework and will influence how the other core components interrelate in the teaching environment.

The sub-components of this part of the framework reflect the uniqueness of each student, and focus on student needs while recognising the value of personalised learning. The three sub-components are: *age and physical development*, *ability*, and *special interests and needs* (see Figure 4).

![Figure 4: Sub-components affecting the individual student.](image)

\textit{a. Age and physical developmental considerations}

The pedagogues in this study were unanimous that the physiology and anatomy of the vocal apparatus had a significant influence on their approaches to the teaching of children and of the ageing singer. The singing process requires a whole-body engagement and, as the human body experiences physical growth and hormonal change, the structure and function of the vocal anatomy will also undergo change. As
a result, particular modifications need to account for the age and the stage of technical development of the individual singer.

When interacting with children in the CCM studio, the pedagogues found that these young singers wanted to perform repertoire they knew and loved, with little or no consideration of what was appropriate for their stage of physical and emotional development. Vocal health issues, therefore, can occur as young singers try to emulate their favourite pop artists. The pedagogues reported a similar set of difficulties associated with the ageing voice. Changes to the structure and function of vocal anatomy may result in some singers who are experiencing problems, such as a loss of range, vocal strength, and flexibility. One solution offered by the pedagogues was to make appropriate repertoire selections that took into consideration the timbre, dynamic range, and tessitura of the individual voice. Based on these elements, appropriate adjustments could be made to the repertoire to fit the technical needs of each student.

An effective CCM pedagogical framework needs to adapt to individual student needs based on the student’s age and stage of physical development. In a CCM pedagogical framework, the age and physical development of the individual student will have particular implications for the application of technique, and will guide decisions on repertoire and style.

b. Considerations relating to the individual student’s ability

Each of the pedagogues in this study said that it was not only the age and physiology of the CCM singer that guided decisions about their teaching approaches in the voice studio; it was also the student’s level of vocal proficiency and technical development. The pedagogues were often challenged when searching for repertoire that not only met the students’ musical tastes, but also influenced their technical progress. The pedagogues recommended that careful attention be given to matters concerning an individual student’s strengths, weaknesses, and overall skill level.

c. Considerations based on the individual student’s special interests and needs

The pedagogues did not refer specifically to the special interests and needs of the individual student when discussing technique as they did when discussing repertoire and style. Each student has a different reason for wanting to learn to sing. For many, singing may be a hobby, an activity they can enjoy irrespective of age and ability. The
aim for these singers may be to become more proficient at singing their favourite songs. For others, singing may be a career aspiration. In this instance, voice lessons are essential for health and sustainability. The pedagogues suggested that teaching approaches would be different according to whether the singer was a beginning student or a singer who already had a performance career.

In this framework, the *individual student* and sub-components share a complex relationship with the other two core components. Figure 5 is a representation of the relationship between the sub-components of the *individual student* and the key elements of *technique* and *repertoire and style*.

![Figure 5: The relationship between the sub-components of the individual student, and the key elements of technique, and repertoire and style.](image)

2. **Technique**

The second core component of the pedagogical framework is *technique*. The pedagogues’ common aim in teaching the key elements of technique was to develop
healthy, sustainable and efficient vocal production. They agreed that vocal technique needed to be adjusted and optimised for each singer. The shared similarities and perspectives were apparent in the aims, approaches, and focus of their teaching across elements of technique. The pedagogues concurred that the voice should be built on a strong technical foundation for the singer to achieve their desired learning outcomes. However, they differed on matters concerning the voice lesson, and on the priority and order they gave to the key elements of technique. In the framework, the core component of technique has four sub-components: alignment, breath flow and support, resonance and articulation. The pedagogues regarded these sub-components as integral to creating vocal freedom for the individual student, and for facilitating vocal authenticity across the vast range of CCM styles. The sub-components are interactive and manifest differently in the pedagogues’ responses to the individual student and their repertoire demands (see Figure 6).

![Sub-components of technique](image)

Figure 6: Sub-components of technique.

a. **Alignment**

The pedagogues agreed that alignment was one of the most fundamental components in voice training, and eight of the nine suggested that the singer’s skeletal framework needed to be organised correctly to achieve optimal vocal efficiency. Most of the
pedagogues endorsed a whole-body focus and aimed to develop a balanced and tension-free instrument for creating optimal phonation across CCM styles.

b. **Breath flow and support**

Although a stylistically authentic CCM vocal production requires a speech-like quality with phrases which are mostly short and conversational, the breath requirements are still greater than those necessary in passive expiration. The pedagogues recognised the importance of creating a balanced breath flow to meet the demands of the vocal task at hand. The establishment of proficient breath flow and support is an integral skill for all singers. For CCM singers, the degree of abdominal muscle support has to be appropriate and flexible for the musical and style demands of CCM repertoire.

Most of the pedagogues defined breath management as establishing an environment that balanced freedom of breath with efficient phonation. They did not clearly explain of the role of breath management in CCM other than to say that the breath must flow, and must be supported and engaged to meet the demands of the vocal task at hand. On the basis of their responses, breath management is referred to here as *breath flow and support*.

c. **Resonance**

Five pedagogues concurred that stylistically appropriate resonance was important for CCM singers. When teaching resonance, most of the pedagogues focussed on *twang*, a means of intensifying the sound levels in a safe and sustainable manner. However, there were contrasting viewpoints about the CCM singer’s need for resonance. Two of the nine pedagogues believed that it was unnecessary to address resonance in the lesson because it would appear as a response to efficient respiration and vocal fold action. However, the pedagogues largely agreed that resonance was important to a CCM singer for vocal health and performance longevity.

d. **Articulation**

The pedagogues agreed that CCM required an informal articulation. When working with singers, they aimed to achieve a balanced and percussive articulation that was based on speech. To create an authentic CCM style, a consonant-driven articulation is required, whereby the first consonant is emphasised and the final consonant is usually
de-emphasised. In the performance of CCM repertoire, consonants are used to provide appropriate percussive articulation across styles such as rock.

Figure 7 highlights the relationship between the sub-component of technique and the other core components of the framework, individual student and repertoire and style.

3. Repertoire and Style

The third core component of the framework is repertoire and style; its sub-components are style authenticity, vocal effects, and performance and artistry. The pedagogues agreed that singing teachers had a responsibility to provide training that was relevant to repertoire demands and supportive of individual vocal expressivity within that style.
Gill and Herbst (2016) describe voice building and its relationship to vocal pedagogy as being “concerned with ‘building the instrument’, by establishing motor control and behavioral patterns which allow sustainable healthy voice production within the limits of ‘acceptable’ or ‘beautiful’ singing as determined by the chosen singing style and aesthetics” (p. 170). The pedagogues believed that issues relating to hyper-functionality were of the greatest concern for the CCM singer’s vocal health, and they highlighted the differences between CCM and classical singing. Style, aligned repertoire demands, and vocal nuances were requisite elements that deemed a style to be authentic (see Figure 8).

![Figure 8: Sub-components of repertoire and style.](image)

**a. Style authenticity**

The pedagogues believed that a song’s style-related effects should be considered. Embellishments, ornamentations, and effects in CCM repertoire can change significantly from style to style. The pedagogues agreed that it was important for CCM singers to be acquainted with the stylistic demands of the repertoire they were wishing to perform. Therefore, teachers must themselves be able to identify and have a sound knowledge of the stylistic parameters in each style. The nine pedagogues in this study believed that both students and teachers needed to develop critical listening skills to ascertain the essential characteristics of each style.
b. Vocal effects

Vocal effects such as belt, growl, creak, grunt, distortion, and screaming are commonly used in CCM repertoire as a means to communicate or exaggerate an emotion or a musical crescendo in a song. Vocal effects heighten a song’s dynamic range and the storytelling of the lyrics in a manner that normal phonation cannot. The pedagogues referred to the potential problems for a singer’s vocal health if these sounds were not produced in a safe manner. In dealing with style-related effects, the pedagogues recommended that such effects be used as style choices only, that the voice was balanced, and that singers developed a strategic approach to creating these sounds. They also believed that microphones and amplification were essential.

c. Performance and artistry

The CCM industry demands unique sound and individual artistic expression. CCM performers need to develop a sound foundational technique that will allow them the freedom to be expressive both emotionally and physically as an artist and performer. The pedagogues suggested that fostering a student’s ability to sing CCM repertoire required a voice teacher to not only pay careful attention to the style demands of the repertoire, but to also encourage the student to communicate a story to an audience. The pedagogues recommended that teaching approaches to artistry and performance be guided by the needs, abilities, and repertoire demands of the individual student. Therefore, a pedagogical framework for the teaching of CCM must support and encourage a singer’s freedom of expression as an artist and performer.

The complete CCM pedagogical framework is presented in Figure 9. It comprises the three core components and their sub-components, and demonstrates an interactive and dynamic interplay.
The structure of the framework is adaptable and responsive, allowing the CCM singer to develop creativity while supporting foundational technique for positive vocal health outcomes. For example, after performing a number of shows a student may come to a lesson with vocal health problems. The framework may be used as a guide to help pinpoint a student’s specific voice problem, and as a checklist for navigating teaching approaches to target these problems when they arise.

The temporal nature of CCM requires this framework to be fluid, evolving, contributed to communally, debated, and updated. The framework presented here is intended as a foundation for further exploration, refinement, and adaption. It not intended to be applied rigidly.
8.3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The landscape of CCM is diverse. In recent decades a proliferation of styles and substyles have emerged, and defining their vocal characteristics is challenging. As the landscape continues to evolve, singing teachers are being challenged to develop new expertise. CCM teachers have had to navigate their way through the landscape of CCM because of the lack of any systematic pedagogical framework to guide their teaching approaches. This framework, developed through the thoughts and responses of the nine pedagogues in this study, offers a starting point.

Limitations

The national and international pedagogues who participated in this study are highly esteemed CCM professionals. They were selected for their extensive experience in the field of CCM as teachers, researchers, and/or authors of international repute. However, I acknowledge that the framework I am presenting in this study has been developed from the collective perspectives of a small number of participants. Further exploration with a larger and more diverse participant group could provide a richer understanding of current practices in the field. For this reason, I present this study as an initial platform from which future research can extend.

The data for this study was collected exclusively from conversations with the pedagogues using a set of pre-formulated, semi-structured interview questions. The interview process proved extremely useful in understanding the pedagogues’ perceptions and experiences; however, I recognise there are limitations with this research approach. The interview process allowed participants to share or withhold information at their discretion, especially regarding any sensitive information about their studio practices. Observations of teaching approaches in the pedagogues’ studios, may help to verify that the information collected by verbal accounts is consistent with their teaching practices. Such a rigorous research design could be a useful approach in future studies.

The knowledge the pedagogues brought to this study regarding vocal style production and vocal health implications for CCM singers has been influenced by their training; for some this was exclusively in the classical tradition. As the pedagogues moved from a fixed to an informal teaching model, they have had to develop an eclectic teaching toolkit from a variety of influences in response to students’ learning preferences,
styles, and interests. Their pedagogical practices are founded on their own philosophical beliefs about teaching, as well as on the learning needs of individual students, forcing them to respond to the style demands of the repertoire the student wishes to perform. Their views and experiences, as presented in this thesis, act as a starting point and a synthesis of what could eventually be defined as best practice for the training of CCM singers.

**Recommendations**

There is an urgent need for teachers to develop empathy for the diversity of CCM styles. The framework I have presented aims to address this by being responsive to the teaching of the individual student and accommodating all CCM styles.

An ethical pedagogy promotes the highest standards of teaching and enhances the student’s opportunities of realising their goals and aspirations. In the development of this CCM pedagogical framework, the needs, perspectives and interests of CCM singers have been estimated and assumed through my emic knowledge and experience as both performer and teacher in the field. As further research and CCM practices progress, it will be important to solicit feedback from students and industry personnel; this could have a direct impact on students’ learning outcomes.

For teachers to remain empathetic to the needs of their CCM singing students, their teaching must be responsive to the demands of the CCM industry. Ongoing professional development seems crucially important for those teachers wanting to work with CCM singers. This research underscores that, to be effective, CCM teachers need a firm understanding of style elements and style-specific voice effects, and they would benefit from developing a range of strategies and practices that support style authenticity while addressing healthy voice production.

Based on the findings of this research, I encourage education institutions to review and, if necessary, revise their voice training programs to align with trends in an ever-changing music market with its increasing demand for CCM instruction. Ideally, this will be an ongoing process in which relevant curricula are regularly updated to incorporate new research findings and evidence-based pedagogical concepts.

In researching the literature of voice science and vocal pedagogy for this study, I discovered a minefield of terminology used to describe, define, and evaluate various
elements of vocal training, physiological behaviour, and aesthetics relating to voice production. This can be very confusing for both teachers and students. Industry jargon used by people such as vocal coaches on television talent shows adds to the confusion. Different methodologies of singing voice often lead to new terminologies as a way of claiming new solutions. To refine our teaching in the field and alleviate confusion, terminology needs to be aligned across CCM. A foundational CCM pedagogical framework will help to establish a structure around the teaching of CCM that encourages and incorporates the use of a common language for teachers in the field. It is hoped that this will, in time, lead to the development of a common shared vocabulary of terminologies relating to the singing voice.

This research lays the groundwork for the development of a tried and tested pedagogical framework for CCM. I recommend that further research is carried out to evaluate the success of the use of this framework and its outcomes resulting from its use in the teaching studio. Such research could investigate how teachers use the framework and how it is adopted in the teaching studio. This could prompt new questions about the framework, and possible changes and improvements.

**Final Comments**

I began my investigation into the teaching of CCM because, as a CCM voice teacher, I was searching for resources to help me teach beyond my own performance experience. I intend to use the pedagogical framework developed through this research and presented in this chapter as a practical guide to support me in my own practice. This framework serves as a reminder that each student presents with a unique set of vocal issues, special interests, and needs. It recognises that not all students should be given the same set of exercises from, or in the same order as, the teacher’s workbook. It promotes a culture of value and respect for the individual student and acknowledges also that individual student requirements can vary from day to day, week to week.

In summary, I suggest that this preliminary pedagogical framework could serve as a basis for communicating, promoting, and developing effective training approaches for singers of CCM styles in the future. It is designed in an effort to address the challenges that CCM teachers confront in their studios daily. My hope is that this research lays the groundwork for the development of a pedagogical framework for CCM and
inspires others to research and to evaluate the success and outcomes of the framework through its application in the teaching studio. I am optimistic that, as an academic- and practitioner-based community of singing teachers, we can come together and talk further about how this framework can be refined and adapted across different contexts.

I would like to close by thanking the pedagogues for their generosity in openly sharing their thoughts and knowledge and, most importantly, their passion for teaching and progressing research into CCM singing. To conclude, I offer the comments of three of the pedagogues, comments that were shared with me towards the end of their interviews.

*I am excited you are doing this. This is great. The more information we have out there, I think the better. I am so grateful for the pedagogues that have come before me. I hope that I have added some little bit to this world of crossing that bridge of art and science, because I think it is something that I truly love—just getting folks to do it healthy and smart as best as we can, knowing that the composers that write are continuing to write things that are more and more vocally challenging.* (LeBorgne)

*I am really pleased you are doing this because we need the people that are working in CCM fields to know that what they do is of equal validity as every other professional performer. That they are being taken seriously, they are being looked after well, and that they are being trained proficiently with an eye on their health, both emotional and physical.* (Wilson)

*I am passionate about wanting to help feed the ongoing research about CCM. There are so few people leading the way and even doing much on it at all academically. This area of research needs feeding.* (Chandler)
REFERENCES


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APPENDIX A: LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. BACKGROUNDING THE PARTICIPANTS

   a. Do you have an acronym or a phrase that you use to describe the styles that you teach?
   b. If not, do you ever use the term CCM to describe the styles that you teach? Not asked?
   c. Does your teaching adhere to any particular methodology? If so can you describe this methodology?
   d. Do you have a particular philosophy for teaching? (What do you base your teaching on?)

   For this study I am using LoVetri’s term of CCM as it seems the most widely used in the literature.

   e. How did you become involved in the teaching of CCM vocal pedagogy?
   f. Can you describe the type of vocal training you had prior to teaching CCM?
   g. To date if any what sort of singing training or professional development have you had?
   h. Describe your pedagogical background and training?
   i. What kind of performance experience do you have?
   j. How did you develop your pedagogical approaches to CCM
   k. Is there anything else you would like to add which has influenced your teaching and or contributed to your body of knowledge on CCM?
   l. To date how many years have you considered yourself to be teaching professionally?
   m. Is there anything further you would like to add?

2. CCM TEACHING APPROACHES

   a. Can you describe your pedagogical approaches to alignment?
   b. Can you discuss the strategies you employ to develop breath management with your students?
   c. What kinds of approaches do you use for developing good breath flow and support?
   d. Describe your methods for creating a resonant sound?
   e. Describe the approaches you use to work on articulation?
   f. Do elements such as age, vocal ability, style related effects and vocal maturity affect repertoire choices you might suggest to students and if so how do you deal with these issues in your studio?
   g. How do you suggest students learn repertoire?
   h. In your opinion, what styles do you think make up this family of CCM styles
   i. According to the literature CCM covers a variety of styles and sub-styles describe how you work with creating authenticity within each style and its demands?
   j. Describe your pedagogical approaches to developing artistry and performance skills within the individual student?
   k. Are there any styles within the CCM umbrella you are not comfortable teaching in your voice studio and why?
   l. In your experience do you think that contemporary styles are any more problematic than classical styles in terms of singer’s vocal health?
   m. Do you think imposing a classical pedagogy is problematic to the CCM singer?

Is there anything else you would like to add to this study?
APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT MATERIALS

INFORMATION SHEET

Who is conducting the research?

    Senior Investigator: Dr Irene Bartlett
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    Member of the research team, Student: Marisa Naismith
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    Phone: + 61 413 455222
    Contact email: marisanaismith@hotmail.com

Why is the research being conducted?

This research project is being undertaken as part of a Master’s of Philosophy program at Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University.

Description of Project

Over the last century, multicultural and technological changes have generated an increase in the exposure, popularity and diversity of CCM singing. As a result, the universal public appeal of CCM has relegated the traditional forms of classical vocal music to a comparatively small audience. Irrespective of this demand for CCM and the complexities relating to its various styles, the Western classical traditional model appears to dominate the pedagogical approach to voice training. This particular group of singers also continues to be overlooked in research studies. Where CCM singers have been included, there appears to be unsupported attributions of inevitable vocal health issues for CCM singers unless they receive traditional classical training.

There is little in the singing voice literature that offers specific reporting of pedagogical approaches and methodologies of highly qualified voice teachers who specialize in CCM styles. Authors in the singing voice literature recognize that CCM vocal pedagogy is still in its infancy and there has been little discussion that describes the technical training necessary for CCM singers to support their ongoing vocal health. Where there has been commentary, this has come from classical voice pedagogues speak from ‘outside’ the field.

Objective

Ultimately, students of CCM want to become vocally fluent in a number of styles and it is our responsibility as pedagogues to empower students with a firm understanding of how to safely transmit those sounds. The objective of this research is to interview prominent CCM pedagogues regarding their teaching approaches and report any commonalities or distinctions in their teaching approaches. The findings of this research are intended to provide new information to assist voice professional who work with CCM singers, contribute to the literature through a gathering of a cohesive body of knowledge, offer an alternative to the “one size fits all” classical model currently available to teachers and students of CCM singing styles and bring more consistency to CCM pedagogy practices in general.

What you will be asked to do

You will be invited to participate in an interview process. It is proposed the interview will take approximately one hour and will be conducted at a time which is convenient for you. I plan to interview the Australian participants in person at their work locations, and it is intended the international participants will be interviewed by Skype.

The data will be collected by means of a voice recording device and transcribed word for word. This transcription will be edited and sent to you for your approval prior to being disseminated in a thesis or any publications.
The basis by which participants will be selected or screened

You have been identified as part of a select group of CCM pedagogues, who are prominent both nationally and internationally. As a leader in the field of CCM vocal pedagogy I believe you will contribute most significantly to the data in this investigation.

I have been able to obtain your contact details as they are publicly accessible on various business and networking websites on the internet. My initial contact to seek your approval regarding your participation in the research will be via email. In the instance where I do not have your email address and could only obtain your business telephone number as listed on networking websites, I propose to call you to request you provide your email address and I will follow the same procedure emailing procedure.

The expected benefits of the research

It is anticipated that results from my research will provide new knowledge to assist those voice professionals who work with CCM singers. The objective of this research is to contribute to the literature through a gathering of a cohesive body of knowledge, inform others in the field of CCM, offer an alternative to the “one size fits all” classical model currently available to teachers and students of CCM singing styles and bring more consistency and structure to CCM pedagogy practices in general.

Risks to you

It is anticipated that there will be minimal risks associated with your participation in this research project and should be no more than you are likely to experience in daily life.

Your confidentiality

It is proposed that the data being collected, will identify you and other prominent pedagogues in any publication or reporting. Results of this study will be disseminated in the form of a Master’s Thesis or may be a part of a larger study. It is a requirement of this program to publish in a peer-reviewed professional journal. Results of this research study may also disseminated through textbooks, book chapters, conferences, presentations, and newsletters.

Your participation is voluntary

I hereby wish to advise you that your participation in this research project is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Questions / further information

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this project, you can contact members of the research team for additional information about the project.

The ethical conduct of this research

Griffith University conducts research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the research project you should contact the Manager, Research Ethics on +61 3735 54375 or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au.

Feedback to you

As stated previously, I will be any reporting back to you your own edited data results for final approval.

Privacy Statement—disclosure

The conduct of this research involves the collection, access and/or use of your identified personal information. As outlined elsewhere in this information sheet, your identified personal information may appear in the publications/reports arising from this research. This is occurring with your consent. Any additional personal information collected is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet government, legal or other regulatory authority requirements. A de-identified copy of this data may be used for other research purposes. However, your anonymity will at all times be safeguarded, except where you have consented otherwise. For further information consult the University’s Privacy Plan at http://www.griffith.edu.au/about-griffith/plans-publications/griffith-university-privacy-plan or telephone (07) 3735 4375.
CONSENT FORM

Who is conducting the research?

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By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the information package and in particular have noted that:

- I understand that my involvement in this research will include participating in a one-hour interview process, either in person or by Skype, subject to location. I will be responding in my own words to open ended questions and checking the edited transcripts of my interview.
- I have had any questions answered to my satisfaction;
- I understand the risks involved;
- I understand that there will be no direct benefit to me from my participation in this research;
- I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary;
- I understand that if I have any additional questions I can contact the research team;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time, without explanation or penalty;
- I understand that I can contact the Manager, Research Ethics, at Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee on 3735 4375 (or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au) if I have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the project; and
- I agree to participate in the project.
- I agree to inclusion of my personal information in publications or reporting of the results from this research.

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