

Reading Vocal Music:

Eye Movements and Strategies

Maria Timoshenko-Nilsson



LUND
UNIVERSITY



DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Doctoral dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) at the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts, Lund University, to be publicly defended on Saturday 23rd of November 2024 at 13:00, Nathan Milsteinsalen, Royal College of Music in Stockholm, Valhallavägen 105, Stockholm

Faculty opponent

Associate Professor of Music Education Rebecca Atkins, Hugh Hodgson School of Music, University of Georgia, USA

| | | |
|--|---|-------|
| Organization: Lund University, Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts, Box 8084 SE-200 41 Malmö & Royal College of Music in Stockholm, Box 27711 SE-11591 Stockholm | Document name: Doctoral Dissertation | |
| | Date of disputation: 2024-11-23 | |
| | Sponsoring organization | |
| Author: Maria Timoshenko-Nilsson | | |
| Title and subtitle: Reading Vocal Music: Eye Movements and Strategies | | |
| Abstract: <p>Music reading is a central skill for choral singers and conductors. The objective of this dissertation was to address the question of what strategies experienced musicians with a choral background use when reading and memorizing vocal music. This investigation consisted of four studies, each shedding light on musicians' reading and processing strategies.</p> <p>The research was conducted using a variety of methodologies, including questionnaires, individual and group interviews, verbal protocols, and eye-tracking technology to measure eye movements during the reading of notated scores. The mixed-methods research design allowed the combination and integration of quantitative and qualitative analysis and results.</p> <p>Across the four studies, several key findings emerged: (a) skilled singers' music reading processes were focused on melodic lines instead of lyrics, and influenced by the structural features of the music; (b) the individual cognitive orientation of choral conductors affected how they read during silent practice; (c) in group performances, choral singers combined typical music reading on their own voice line with information-gathering processes concerning other lines, relying on both auditory and visual cues; and (d) music students employed both holistic and segmented memorization approaches to facilitate recall. Overall, the complexity and density of the musical material had a considerable impact on the gaze patterns of musicians.</p> <p>The findings may have potential implications for higher music education and choral rehearsals, as they may contribute to the development of advanced training methods and stimulate future research in the domain of choral music.</p> | | |
| Key words: eye tracking, memorization, music education, music expertise, music reading, sight reading, silent reading, singing, vocal music | | |
| Classification system and/or index terms (if any) | | |
| Supplementary bibliographical information | Language: English | |
| | | |
| ISSN and key title: Studies in Music Education Royal College of Music | ISBN 978-91-629-0552-1 (print) ISBN 978-91-629-0553-8 (electronic) | |
| Recipient's notes | Number of pages: 200 | Price |
| | Security classification | |

I, the undersigned, being the copyright owner of the abstract of the above-mentioned dissertation, hereby grant to all reference sources permission to publish and disseminate the abstract of the above-mentioned dissertation.

Signature:

Timoshenko-Nilsson

Date 2024-10-03