



A TENOR TANTRUM

TRAINING THE TENOR & BASS
PASSAGGIO IN THE CHORAL REHEARSAL



A TENOR TANTRUM

PERCEPTION OF MOST COMMON VOCAL ISSUES

PHONATION EFFICIENCY

HOW EFFECTIVELY THE GLOTTIS CLOSES / VIBRATES

LARYNGEAL POSITION

VERTICAL POSITION / LENGTH OF VOCAL TRACT

REGISTRATION

PHYSIOLOGY OF THE VOICE

Breath



Phonation



Phonation Issues to Address

1

Inspiration

- Posture of Thorax
- Accurate Terminology
- Interconnection of Breath and Phonation

2

Expiration

- Muscular Antagonism
- Suspension of Collapse
- Consistent Airflow

3

Onset

- Balanced
- Full Adduction
- Vibration

Three Types of Onsets

Aspirated

Air passing through VF as they begin to vibrate.

- Results in an unwanted H sound
- Can result in hypofunctional phonation
- Not optimal, Not efficient

Pressured

Sub-glottal pressure vibrates folds suddenly

- Results in glottal sound / sudden burst
- Can result in hyperfunctional phonation
- Not optimal, Not efficient

Balanced

Consists of both events simultaneously.

- Results in a clean start of sound
- Can cause more balanced phonation
- Most efficient initiation of sound

Strategies

Guided use of extremes can result in balance.

- "Uh Oh!" / "Hello" / "Oh no!"
- Repeated onset with breath release
- Rhythmicize breath through vowel space

Onset Exercises

1



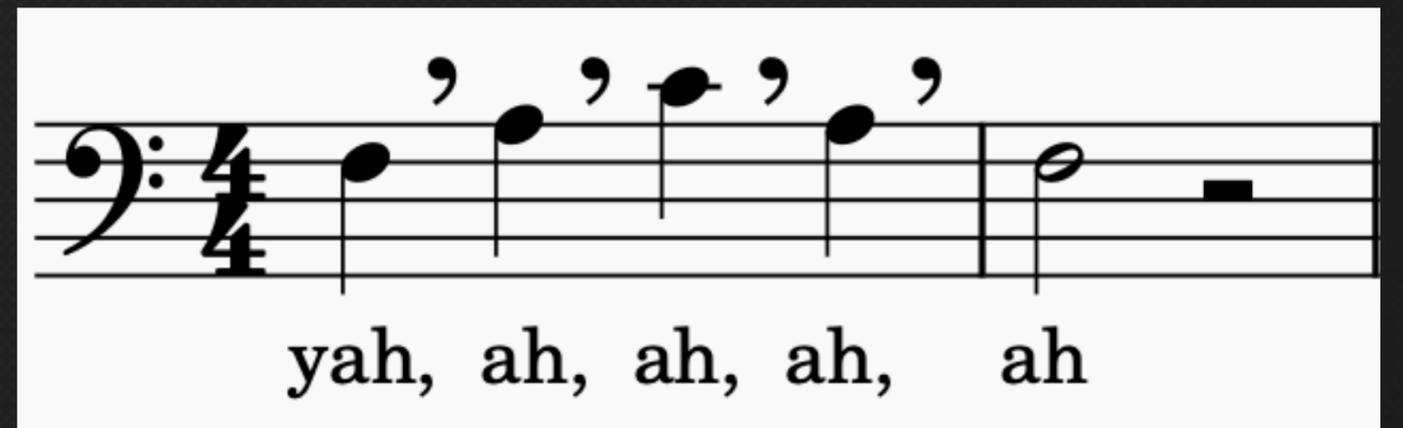
8

yah, ah, ah, ah, ah

Detailed description: This musical exercise is written in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. It consists of five measures. The first measure contains a quarter note on G4. The second measure contains a quarter note on A4. The third measure contains a quarter note on B4 with a sharp sign. The fourth measure contains a quarter note on C5. The fifth measure contains a half note on B4. Above each of the first four notes is a comma, and above the fifth note is a comma and a bar line. Below the staff, the syllables 'yah, ah, ah, ah, ah' are aligned with the notes.



2



yah, ah, ah, ah, ah

Detailed description: This musical exercise is written in bass clef with a 4/4 time signature. It consists of five measures. The first measure contains a quarter note on G2. The second measure contains a quarter note on A2. The third measure contains a quarter note on B2 with a sharp sign. The fourth measure contains a quarter note on C3. The fifth measure contains a half note on B2. Above each of the first four notes is a comma, and above the fifth note is a comma and a bar line. Below the staff, the syllables 'yah, ah, ah, ah, ah' are aligned with the notes.

Pedagogy Tips

Posture:

Richard Miller addresses posture using the words 'noble rib cage'

- Sternum is high (10–15 degrees)
- Expansion at the last 2 ribs and into the abdomen
- “Singing on the Gesture of Inhalation”

Excess Tension:

Teacher can easily observe students and watch for tension

- Shoulder/chest movement
- Tightness in the sound
- Obvious visible tension in neck/jaw
- NO RUSHING! Vibrate!

Pedagogy Tips



TAKE TIME!

- Young students may attempt to rush
- Focus on the breath between
 - Relax excess tension
 - Focus towards vibrato

Laryngeal Position

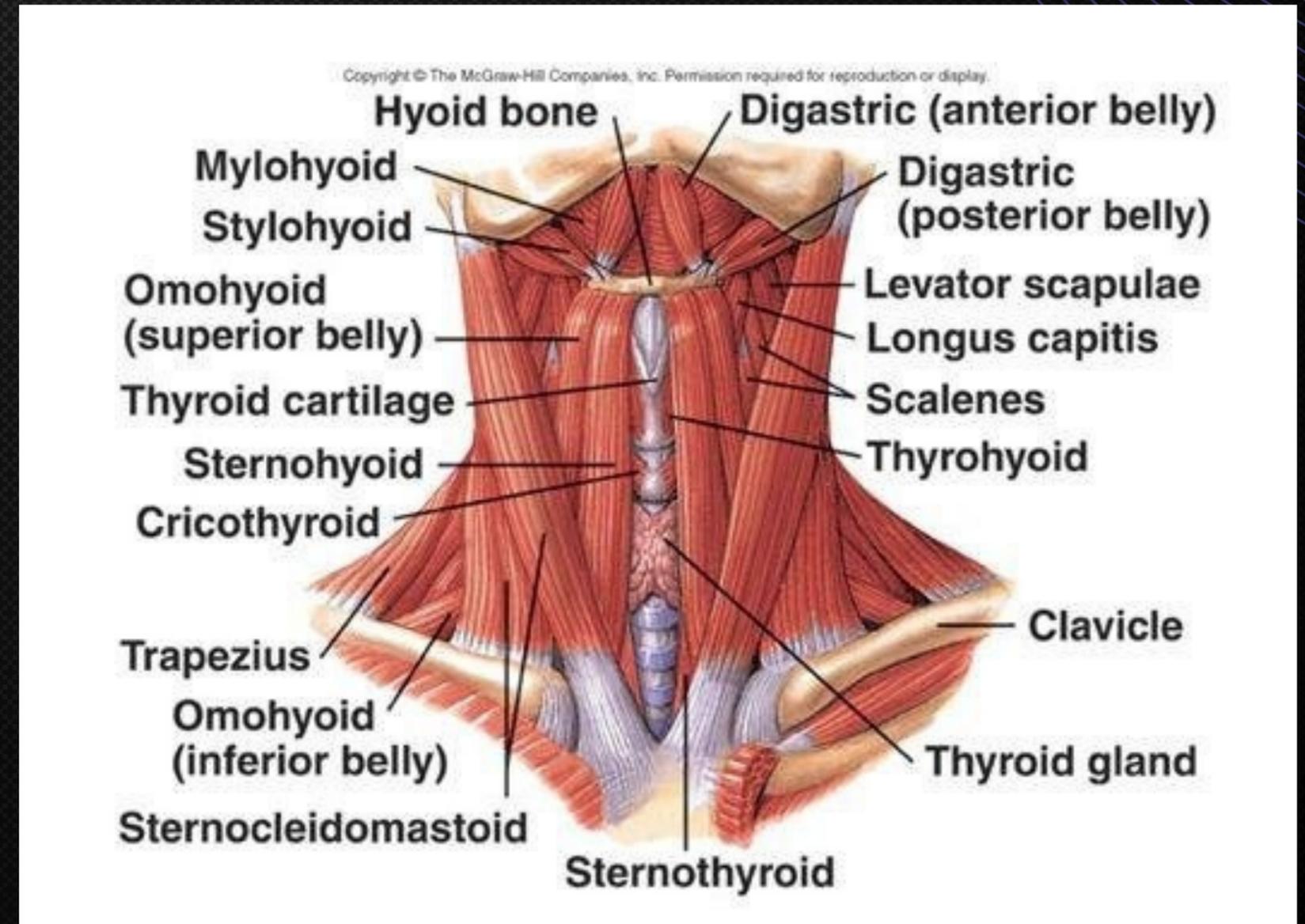
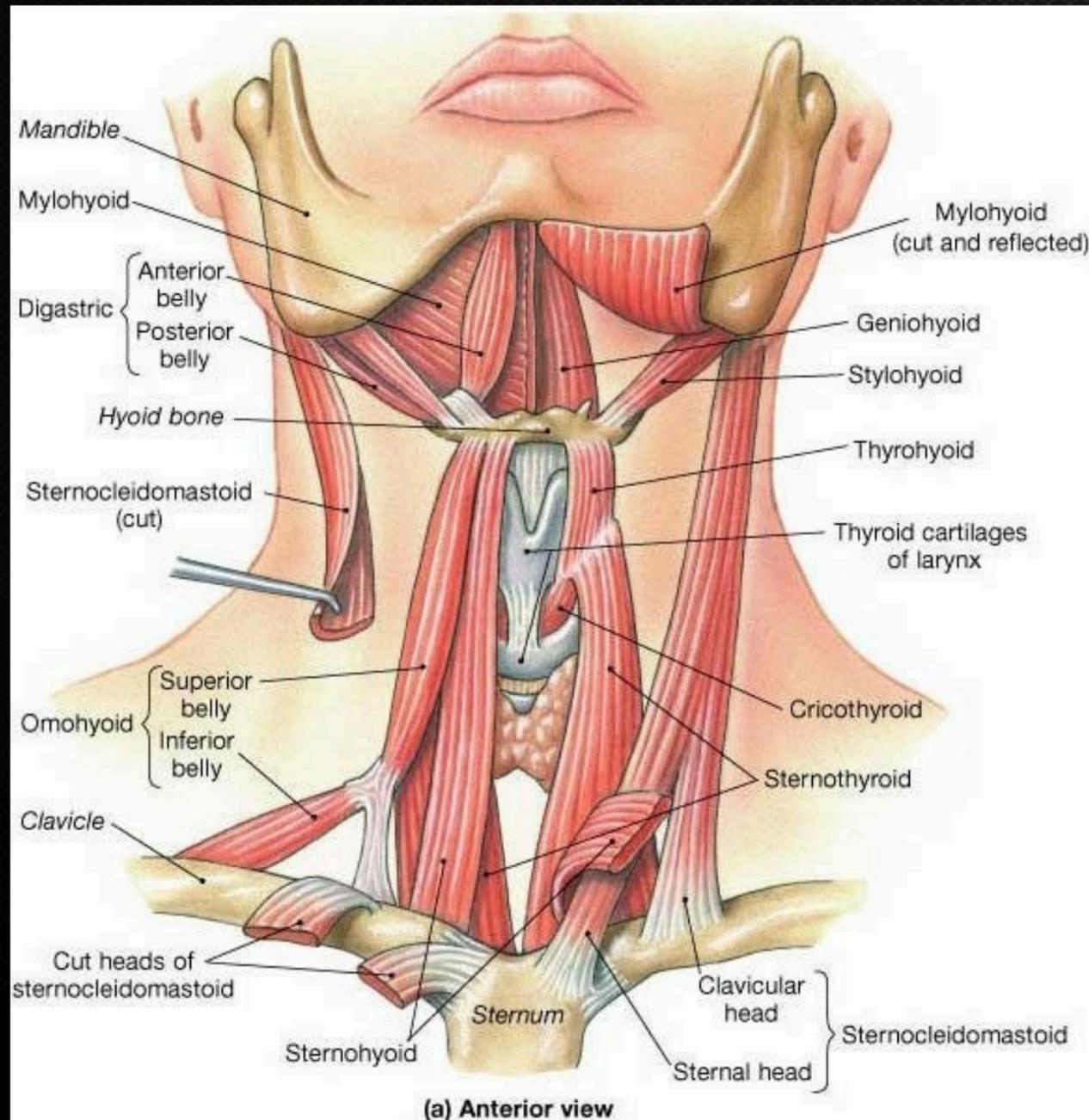
An anatomical diagram of the human head and neck in profile, showing the larynx and surrounding structures. The diagram is rendered in shades of gray against a dark background. The larynx is highlighted with a dashed line and a label. Other labeled parts include the hard palate, uvula, blade tip front, lower lip, and pharyngeal wall. The text 'Laryngeal Position' is overlaid in large, bold, orange letters with a white outline.

Vocal Tract

**“The first objective for
passaggio training is... A
stable laryngeal position and
a relatively convergent
resonator shape ...”**

-Ken Bozeman

Extrinsic Laryngeal Muscles



Pant like a dog!



Larynx Position Exercises

1



Alternate: [o, u, e, i]

2



Alternate: [o, e / u, i]



REGISTRATION

WHAT IS A REGISTER?

Let's make this easier...

1. **Adjacent pitches (could be an 8+)**
2. **Produced using the same basic physiology**
3. **Share a similar timbre**

Registers of the Voice

1

Mode 1

Thyroarytenoid Dominant

“Chest Voice”

“Heavy Mechanism”

“Speech Register”

2

Mode 2

Chrycothyroid Dominant

“Head Voice”

“Light Mechanism”

“Loft Register”

“Falsetto”

T/B Voice Registration

“A correct execution of passaggio entails allowing F1 to fall below H2 as the Fundamental frequency rises...”

–Donald Miller

“While many pitches in the *zona di passaggio* may be achieved using either register, the tenor/bass voice predominantly remains being produced using Mode 1.”

–Richard Miller

The term “mix” / “mixed voice” refers to the muscle/tissue coordination that is established when good balance of Mode 1 and Mode 2 is employed. I think about “mix” as a noun not a verb.

Falsetto Use

Crycothyroid Engaged
Thyroarytenoid lacks
Lower Closed Quotient
Less Harmonic Activity

- Can be used to lighten tense sounds in passaggio
 - Laryngeal tilt or "lift"
- Goal post for formant tuning
 - Glissando down for laryngeal positioning
 - "Yodel" affect for laryngeal tilt

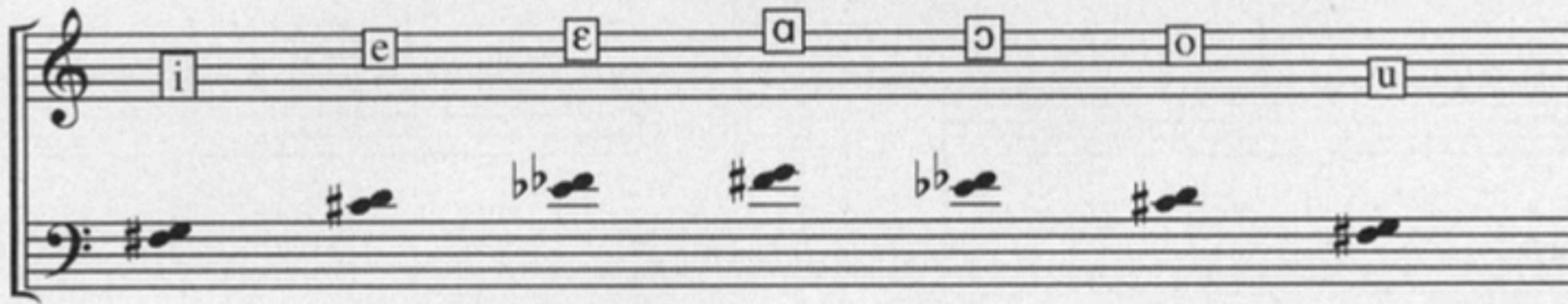


Figure 2. Lyric Tenor Passaggio Events
(Location of Transitions Relative to First Formants)

The treble clef locates the first formant of each vowel, and the bass clef approximates pitch locations of vowel turning (when the H_2 of the voice source would pass through the F_1 of the indicated vowel).

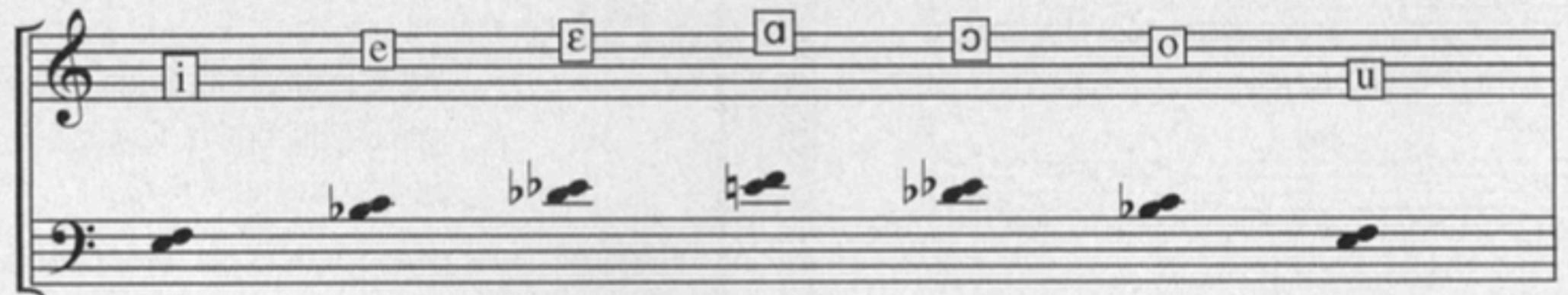


Figure 3. Lyric Baritone Passaggio Events
(Location of Transitions Relative to First Formants)

*“Registration Strategies for
Training the Male Passaggio”
by Ken Bozeman
The Choral Journal (2008)*

Formant Tuning

Ranges

- Tenor Passaggio: D4 - G4
- Baritone Passaggio: B-flat3 - E4
- These may differ slightly

Basic Goals

- Allow Vocal Tract to remain static
- Ease pressure of phonation - no pressing / squeezing / pushing
- Avoid sensation of "flipping"

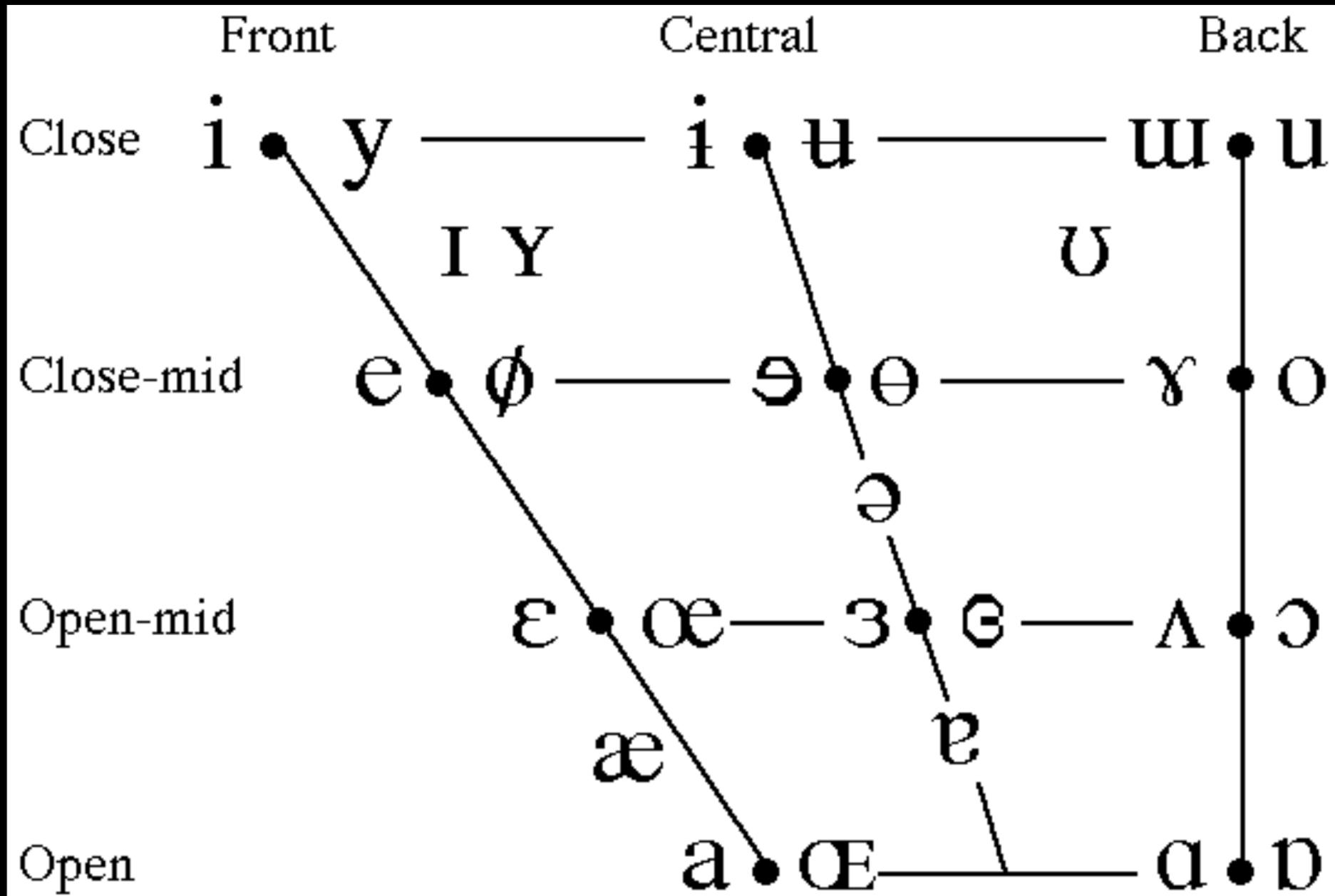
Success

- Different for each voice
- Timbral change without change in VT
- Modification of vowel is comfy and not obvious (perception of pure vowel)

Strategies

- Shape open vowels towards their more narrow relative
- Allow naturally close vowels more room

Vowel Position



Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

IN GENERAL:

- [a] towards [ʌ]
- [ɔ] towards [o]
- [o] towards [ʊ]
- [i] towards [y]
- [e] towards [ø]
- [ɛ] towards [œ]

Male Voice Registration

Key Points:

1

Expand Mode 1

- Avoid Flip to Falsetto!
- Sufficient Breath Energy
- Stable Vocal Tract
- Allow Timbral Migration

2

Vowel Migration Strategy

- Stable Vocal Tract
- Relax Pressure
- Keep Closed Timbre in Passaggio
- It Happens Naturally!

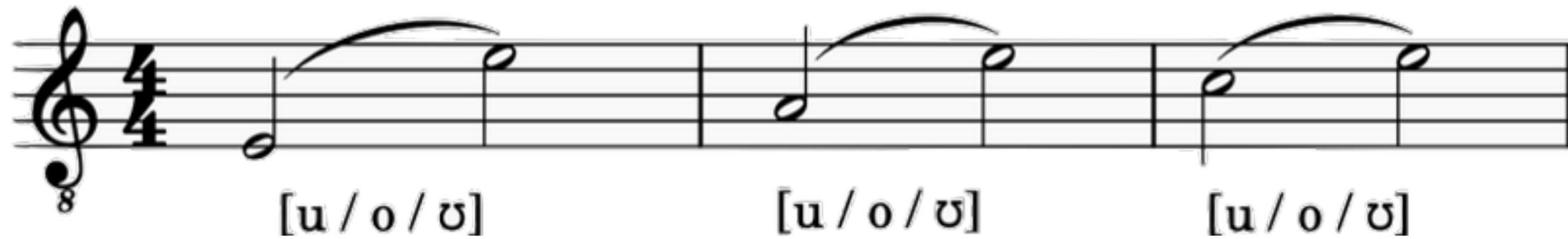
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Sounds Above Speech

- No yelling!
- Use Affect!
- Timbral Shift

Expanding Modal Register

1



Expanding Modal Register

2



"Ha... ha... ha... "

The image shows a musical staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody consists of four notes: a half note on G4, a half note on A4, a half note on B4, and a quarter note on G4. The first three notes are beamed together and have a diamond-shaped accent mark above them. The final note is a quarter note with a downward-pointing stem.

“Count Dracula Laugh”

Exploring Above the Second Passaggio

Encourage the use of affect / emotional expressions (Ken Bozeman)! The human voice is capable of a spectrum of sounds, some of which can be applied to the Classical Singing voice!

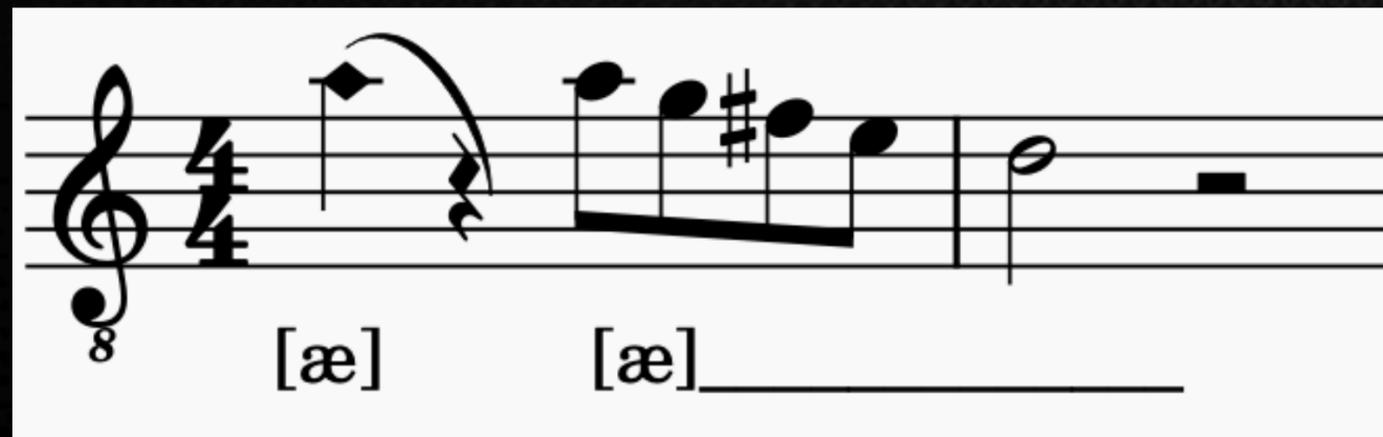
Whining, Crying, Sobbing, Laughing, Humming, Moaning, etc.

Expanding Modal Register

3



Musical notation in 4/4 time, treble clef, showing a melisma on the word "No". The melody starts with a half note G4 (marked with a flat and a diamond), followed by a quarter note G4, then a half note G4 (marked with a flat and a diamond), and finally a quarter note G4. The lyrics "Oh....." and "No....." are written below the staff.



Musical notation in 4/4 time, treble clef, showing a vowel exercise. The melody starts with a half note G4 (marked with a diamond), followed by a quarter note G4, then a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The lyrics "[æ]" and "[æ]" are written below the staff.

“Oh No!!!”
Has different timbre
than chest voice or
falsetto

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