

MENTAL TRAINING

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Abstract: This article provides a series of musical techniques validated to polish musicians and mental qualities to play at the highest level possible. Given the wide scope of involvement mental qualities (also called Cognitive-behavioral) to other areas of performance was assumed hypothesis that specific techniques of cognitive-behavioral repertoire are helpful to elite musicians. This paper serves as the foundation for the development of mental qualities by introducing relaxation techniques and mental trial.

1.1 Introduction

For decades, athletes have developed performance by exploiting advances in applied psychology and science. An important element of these performers training has been focused on the interaction between the mind and physical skills. Indeed, connoisseurs can say that physical accuracy and excellence go hand in hand with mental agility, determination, attention, and vision unimpeded performance outcome. Thus, the effectiveness and value of pursuing holistic mind-body approach for the development of both physical and mental were taken for granted by sports trainers and coaches. Of course the same argument could be used for musical performance. For example, a player who plays the Dvorak Cello Concerto will need to have control of a number of psychological characteristics among them, not least the ability to merge his own musical ideas with those of the conductor or other orchestra members to effectively communicate this vision combined audience and reduce any excess anxiety that the interpreter may feel. In music, as in sports, it happens quite often that those qualities that are needed to achieve these characteristics are achieved after years of hard work, study, experience and self-reflection. The program aims of mental qualities, therefore, was to outline and run a training method derived from applied psychology sports. This is based on examining how mental skills can be used to prepare and to meet various performance issues instrumentalists and ensure and achieve long-term goals. It is important to note that mental skills are learned and developed in the same way as any other quality music and regularly repeated. Musical performance incorporates many aspects: hours of laborious study, mental preparation and wellbeing of physically-and for many, the interpretation itself is the ultimate goal of all these preparations. However, once the interpretation is complete, listeners will judge. Evaluation can be as enthusiastic ovation and a murmur of cold unconvincing applause, a report that provides an assessment of how well the musician fulfill certain criteria, or alternatively, a critic writing glowing or polemic reports the next day. Regardless of the rating, which is an integral part of the performance.

1.2. The evaluation of musical performance

Typical forms of musical evaluation seeks to determine either the level of performance in comparison with others (time reference), or to determine how well it

meets predetermined performance review criteria (basic criteria). Reference standards are common procedures in competitions, music festivals, where the intention is a class winner to be designated and to classify the participants in terms of their performance. Based criteria methods are more common in institutions that seek to determine what progress has been achieved and if the musician or ensemble learning can demonstrate the mastery of the predetermined skills. Both the use of the method and the basic criteria of the reference standard is typical of music critics to focus attention on a number of musical parameters to guide their assessment - be it personal criteria resulting from their previous work as evaluators and musicians, or the type of criteria that have been identified by the authorities designated to define the most appropriate parameters to guide an evaluation. This view has some limitations because any assessment will be influenced by a number of additional factors that have an impact on the quality assessment. Thus, a better understanding of the evaluation process occurs with a broad vision music including music in addition to the criteria and parameters extra musical and nonmusical complement measurement errors that affect all forms of assessment. Therefore, while critics may think that they assess the value of a musical performance, they also include other factors in their assessment. The following example describes this broader perspective:

Factors: nonmusical, extra musical, music measurement error => (process evaluation) =>

Performance Evaluation

1.2.1. The value of music

Much of the evaluation literature tacitly asserts that it is possible to access the true value of an approach behavior is also evident when the criteria used to assess the performance of traditional music. Undoubtedly, in order to increase the value of a musical performance is an essential goal, but the evaluation is much more complicated music. The existing literature about the criteria used to assess performance suggests that there are at least five types of skills that are commonly used in musical institutions, from which are designed the proper evaluation of performance criteria [1].

1. Technique: Physiological - breathing, posture, relaxation, tension, balance, coordination;

Physical -sound production, planning and control instrument / voice and consistency, clarity and attention to timbre in all registers and dynamic levels, intonation, physical control (resistance), body coordination;

Instrumental - coordination ensemble, balance, cohesion, accuracy, confidence and ease pace, heights, articulations, dynamics and timing, and extent to which errors undermine and detract from the overall quality of performance, boost performance, sensitivity intonation;

2. Interpretation: - authenticity-understand style / genre and establish the practice of performance, accuracy based on fair reading or memorizing score achievement and exploration, the intentions of the composer, music-choice perceptual consistency of tempo, correct phrasing, dynamics, meaning, melody, understanding the structure as a whole;

3. Expression: - understanding the emotional character of the work, character and job status projection, communication of important structural points and turning points of the paper, proper use of texture and color, of light and shadow;

4. Communication - between ensemble members, trust, demonstrated performance that must be convincing and deliberate, interest, in the idea of the interpreter manages to captivate the audience's attention, maintaining a sense of direction, creating a sense of occasion, and stage appearances in a compelling, expressive design issues, interpretative and structural composition sung;

Evaluation criteria above contain a mixture of categories that can be classified as either skills or the mastery. Psychology that deals with the study of music began to clarify microstructural changes affecting expressive interpretation, and there is now a substantial set of 'rules' of expressiveness that musicians can incorporate in their interpretation and help them to convey expressive intentions of their audience. Given the musical interpretation of evaluation criteria may develop different ways to be a musical performance of the highest quality. The following chapters will introduce methods that musicians can achieve excellence in music, using his mental abilities to put their skills both physical and emotional ones.

1.3. Relaxation

Excitation is the degree of activation of the body and the level of excitement can impact the performance and quality of the training. A relaxed state is characterized by an absence of unnecessary work and pressure, it is a time of stillness that need work or any sense of deficiency is subdued or at least stopped for a while. In terms of performance music, relaxation techniques can be used to manage overdraft levels that might interfere with the time before, during or post-performance and control life in general and occupational stress, which can affect physical and psychological wellbeing. First, a large number of studies have produced remarkable results when used cognitive-behavioral interventions to reduce stage fright, typically associated with emotional, physical and mental excitation. [2] Although the degree of excitement according to performance will vary from individual to individual and from one public appearance to the next, relaxation exercises can help body and mental awareness. This awareness can then be used, for example, to reduce muscle tension that interferes with coordination or physical qualities to distract from anxiety created in the mind of the interpreter. Thus, increased focus on

interpretation. Of course, there are degrees of relaxation and tension based on excitation but when used as part of a routine training a recital, audition etc., relaxation techniques may be associated with mental alertness. Achieving a relaxed state, lethargic will not be any good to the performer, therefore, relaxation techniques should be implemented and tested long before any crucial event. Second, relaxation techniques provides benefits on lifestyle, which is very important in learning activities and performance. For example, they can regenerate body, mind and emotions by inducing a state of good; can be used to increase the power of learning and memorizing. At the same time, improve sleep and energy conservation. [3] In fact, research suggests that skills are best learned in a relaxed state and interleaving periods of relaxation with learning and can be treated without damaging the learning. [4] Relaxation techniques tend to be physical (reduction in muscle tension) and mental (visualization of natural scenes, quiet). Both tend to be used to achieve a deep level of relaxation either be a time of reduced depth, the depth at which each relax depends on the time and concentration given exercises. Practicing deeper relaxation methods is best done after rather than before a musical activities. (After a session of intense study before dinner or bedtime, when you need to combat fatigue or excessive care). Relaxation time can be used in relation to musical performance in various ways: before the warm-up is made (to induce a sense of physical, mental and emotional), in breaks during study or a stage appearances (to reduce unnecessary tension and to focus again on the interpretation), or before practicing any form of mental rehearsal. As relaxation exercises the most important are breathing exercises during which you should be aware of all the sounds around you, all physical sensations, thoughts and also the breath itself. The way you breathe has a great impact on mental status, physical and emotional. Deep breathing that starts in the abdomen can be relaxing and energizing.

1.4. Mental rehearsal

1.4.1. Introduction in mental rehearsal

Mental rehearsal is the cognitive or imaginary rehearsal of some physical abilities without the use of muscle movements. The basic idea is that the predominant senses-auditory, visual and kinesthetic of musician-to be able to be used to create or recreate a similar experience with a physical event. Anyone has the ability to mentally rehearse, but musicians can be greatly helped by this technique to enable analytical skills, to observe how they should play, move, and the power to think and to memorize. Research has shown that physical and mental practice are connected to a psycho-physiological level. Hale (quoted in Freymuth, 1993) [5] found that intern images produce the same muscular activity that would produce the body itself. In addition, Bird and Wilson [6] studied the electroencephalograms and electromyography results obtained from the conducting students and their teachers while mentally repeating. The results showed that despite individual differences, most talented teacher and students have produced several repeated electromyographic patterns almost identical to those during actual performance. Given that the conducting

students need more practice mind, these results show that through the practice, mental rehearsal can be really an effective supplement for physical repetition. Mental rehearsal can be integrated into routine of the musician practice to avoid muscle problems (dystonia) which may arise from physical strain. Ross's research [7] and Coffman [8] supports the notion of combining the physical with the mental study that is especially useful to the musical study. It is very interesting to see what students gain from integrating mental study in daily study. Course, the benefits depend very much on how gifted is the musician, the learning techniques they prefer, provided that a certain piece will be interpreted, but most importantly, the extent to which mental rehearsal techniques is practiced. Finally, not be asked whether physical or mental rehearsal should be addressed but rather how to be combined as effectively as these two approaches. Research on motoric skills identified situations and conditions in which mental repetition is very effective. For example, the person must have previous experience of execution of that task. Similarly, mental rehearsal can be beneficial during the early stages of learning the new insights can be made and ideas about musical tasks and during advanced stages strategies to enhance performance grown. In addition, the musician should try to imagine the muscle response during the actual performance [9]. However, years of research in the field of sports psychology led to some basic rules of mental rehearsal. [10] Thus, it is recommended to practice every day, especially in the morning [11]. Mental rehearsal is preferable short on several occasions [12]. Mental rehearsal begins with relaxation, so that clear signals can be transmitted between mind and body. It is important that the musician to be positive and focus on issues that help to achieve the goal and not on those which are not directly related to improve performance. All senses should be used to play as close recurring real situation. In conclusion, to successfully practice mental rehearsal, very important is relaxation in combination with focus on the task, followed by more realistic experience and daily practice.

1.4.2 Evocative symbols and images

The images, sound and words can evoke certain feelings and physiological changes in us. Indeed, music teachers often use metaphors to suggest new musical ideas and to encourage students to express the music in different ways. In a study of 135 students, 81% were taught at one time by this method express music and 42% considered it to be the most effective comparing it with the emotions felt '(preferred by 39%) or 'phonetic modeling' (preferred by 25%).

1.4.3. Concentration

It is normal for the musicians to wonder why they have difficulty to concentrate in high voltage situations of performance. To be able to concentrate is a component of musical expertise [13], which is reached after many years of training and study. However, it is helpful to interpreters to understand some of the mechanisms of the concentration. The concentration may differ and vary in duration and intensity. For musical performance, this focus should take the form of a relaxed to be alert. In addition,

the interpreter must be nimble enough to move out quickly and easily, in conjunction with the relevant factors and external events. In his study with the athletes, Nideffer [14] has developed a model that is useful to be aware of how you need to focus the attention before, during and after a performance. This kind of concentration is made up of two main dimensions: the direction (internal or external) and size (or narrow). In terms of the involvement of the concentration, interpreters must remain aware of themselves and what is happening around them, letting them only relevant factors to get the attention of musician. Involving concentration and attention can help change the interpreters to become aware of things that are careful and why, and then to destroy unwanted thoughts or behaviors. Interpreters may then become much more familiar with the parts of their performance, and became master on the situation, managing to distance themselves or to interrupt thoughts to something else or concerns that arise from sources beyond their control. If the question is when a performer should concentrate, a plausible answer is throughout the entire event, but many offer periods of activity performance more or less active. This may require a change in direction, and intensity of concentration. To discover which is best to get your attention instead, during periods of inactivity requires practice. In general, changing focus between external and internal and between broad or narrow offers the performer a way to review and reorientation. When the direction of the attention is to the things which are irrelevant and distracting and unhelpful for performance, it is important that the attention be forwarded to relevant cues of the performer's task. The ability to accomplish this can be enriched by identifying opportunities or moments when distraction occurs routinely. Once-productive model is identified in the orientation of attention, mental skills training may be directed to replacement or solving the negative habits through the use of better ones. It is important to note that in the behavioral change a negative habit must be replaced with a more productive one: just stopping a habit without substituting another, can cause negative habit or to reaffirm their presence. There are several additional strategies that can be adopted and that can have an effect on enrichment attention. These include:

1. building and practicing a more powerful model
2. strengthen the focus on the object or action upon which the interpreter must point
3. deliberate attention to the distraction and trying to look positively

Things that a musician focus during the performance is the key inspiration perception. [15] Experienced artists focus on a range of characteristics when they play, such as their way of showing the public their relationship with it, etc. They are often aware that the consequences of focusing on each note played with perfect technique are often disappointing and may lead to severe anxiety caused by errors during singing. Moreover, they seem to focus on making and not the way they should do. To achieve an optimal state during the performance, the performer should be energetic yet relaxed, confident, attentive. However, the mind should cooperate with the body in unison, the interpreter should be able to control what plays and feel good on stage.

1.5. The use of mental skills of learning and long term training for performance

There are several qualities that artists should use in preparing long-term performance. These include maintaining high quality individual and group practice (adoption of a systematic practice by selecting the appropriate environment study the internal or external distraction is minimal and heating using a routine that prepares your body and mind for interpretation) technical training and learning (removal of unwanted physical movements and blood) and the preparation of expressive interpretation of music and trying to communicate these feelings, audience.

Mental skills training can also be used to help artists achieve their long-term goals. The essential ingredients of a strategy for any long-term training include the ability to assess the quality of performance, setting goals and a plan to act in order to achieve these goals and monitoring progress.

1.6. Conclusion

Mental skills are an integral part of the success of the performance. The ability to shift constantly in a state of calm, concentration, flexibility, mood-oriented objectives is essential to the performance of that renowned educators have promoted long. Karl Leimer, for example, the teacher of the famed pianist Walter Gieseking, recommended mental training to all his students primarily to help memorize and to refine the technique and inner ear development. Regarding the overall benefits of mental training, Leimer stresses the importance of practicing mental skills. The aim of this study was to provide musicians some workout ideas of mental and physical abilities that can be applied to their goals and plans. Performers are encouraged to experiment with these methods and adapt them to reflect on how their mental and physical abilities may help improve their performance. Despite the fact that mental skills training varies from individual to individual, a common factor of potential users is that the mental skills to be practiced regularly and should be used long term. By adopting and following a personalized diet mental abilities, benefits will manifest themselves both personally and professionally.

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