Definition of vocal pitch accuracy in a melodic context

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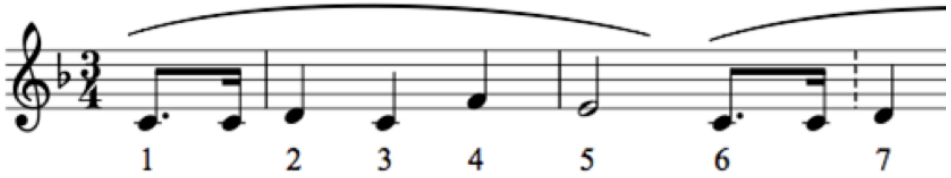
March 28th 2014

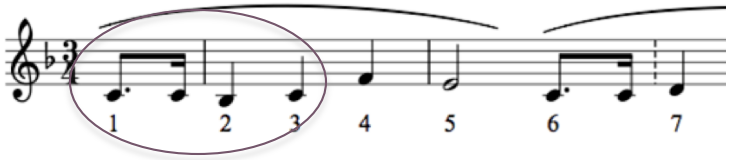
In tune?

Musical errors

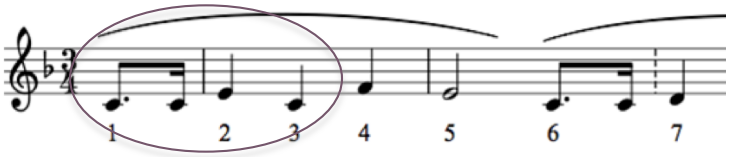
Musical errors



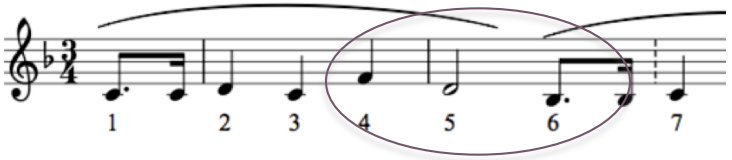
Contour error



Interval error



Tonality error

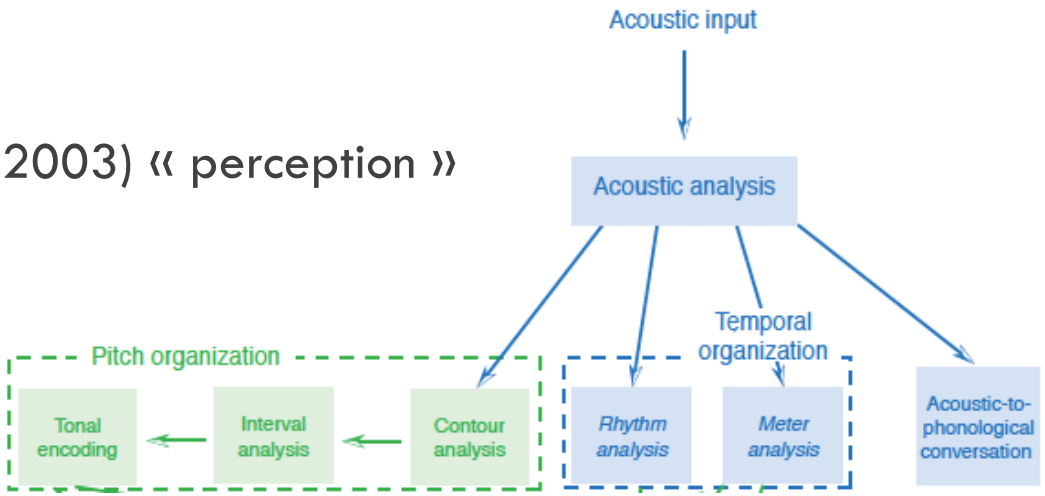


Musical errors

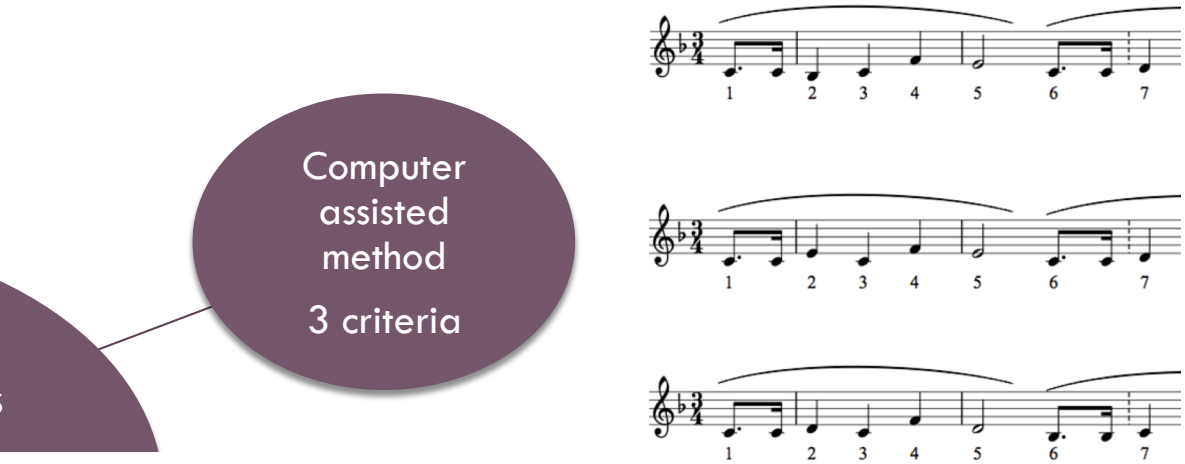
- Young age
  - Categorisation of contour errors:10 months (Ferland & Mendelson, 1989)
  - Discrimination of tonality and intervals (Hannon & Trainor, 2007; Gooding & Stanley, 2001; Plantinga & Trainor, 2005; Stalinski et al., 2008)
- Errors perceived by adults

Dowling & Fujitani, 1970; Edworthy, 1985; Stalinski et al., 2008; Trainor & Trehub, 1992

Peretz & Cortheart (2003) « perception »



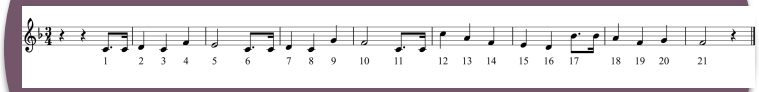
Method



Computer assisted method

3 criteria

166 performances



http://sldr.org/sldr000774/en

Judges

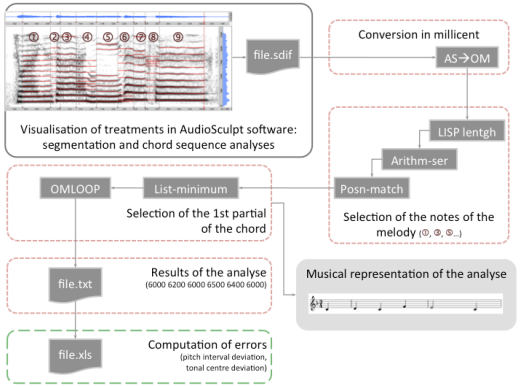
1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9

Out of tune In tune

Computer assisted method

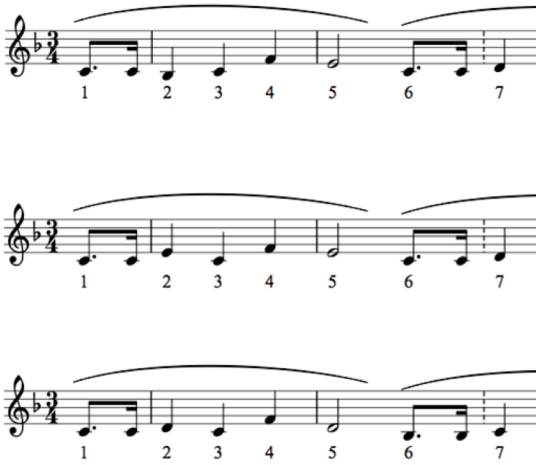
Manual segmentation

AudioSculpt (Ircam)



F0 information

AudioSculpt and OpenMusic (Ircam)



Quantification of errors

Excel (Microsoft)

Larrouy-Maestri, P., & Morsomme, D. (in press). Criteria and tools for objectively analysing the vocal accuracy of a popular song. *Logopedics Phoniatrics Vocology*.

Participants

	Experts	Non experts
n	18	18
Gender	8 women	8 women
Age	*M* = 29.89; *SD* = 14.47	*M* = 33.06 ; *SD* = 9.57
Expertise	5 professional musicians 5 professional singers 4 music students 4 speech therapists	___
Musical or vocal practice	OK	___
Audiometry	___	OK
MBEA (Peretz et al., 2003)	___	OK
Production task « Happy Birthday »	___	OK

Results

	Non experts	Experts
Model	$F(3,165) = 104.44;\ p < .01$	$F(3,165) = 231.51;\ p < .01$
% variance	66%	81%
Criteria	Interval deviation	Interval deviation Tonality modulations

Larrouy-Maestri, P., Lévêque, Y., Schön, D., Giovanni, A., & Morsomme, D. (2013). The evaluation of singing voice accuracy: A comparison between subjective and objective methods. *Journal of Voice*.

Definition

- Musical errors
  - Intevals are important in the definition of vocal pitch accuracy in a melodic context
- But …

Pitch categories

For now

- Pitch discrimination
  - http://www.musicianbrain.com/pitchtest/
  - http://tonometric.com/adaptivepitch/
- In a melodic context
  - Semitone (100 cents) Berkowska & Dalla Bella, 2009 ; Dalla Bella et al., 2007, 2009a, 2009b ; Pfordresher & al., 2007, 2009, 2010
  - Quartertone (50 cents) Hutchins & Peretz; 2012 ; Hutchins, Roquet, & Peretz, 2012 ; Pfordresher & Mantell, 2014

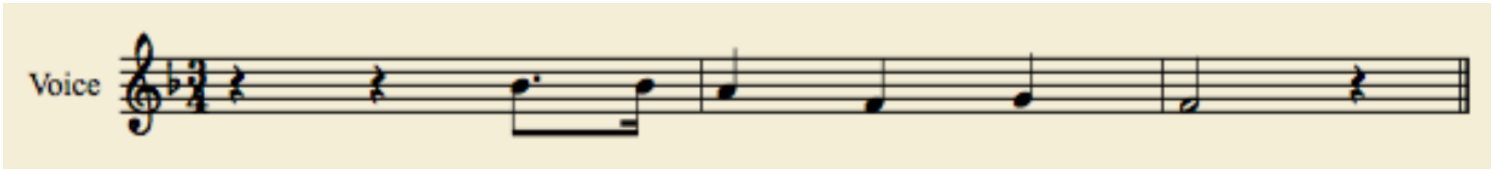
➔ **Which threshold in a melodic context?**

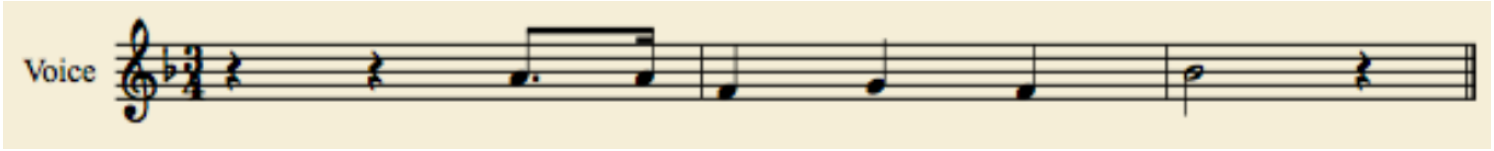
➔ **Effect of familiarity?** Yes (Kinney, 2009) No (Warrier & Zatorre, 2002)

➔ **Effect of the direction of the error?**

Material

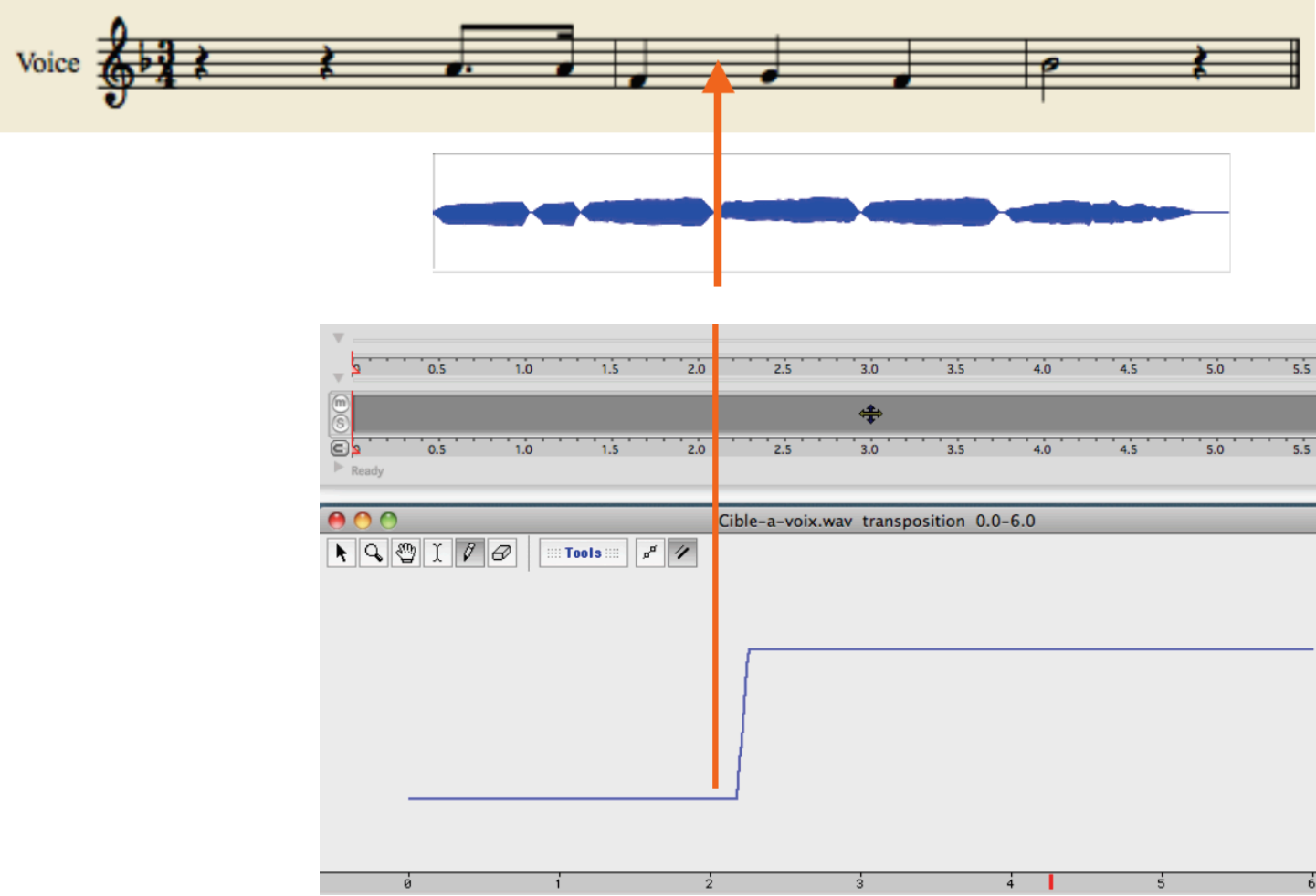
- Two melodies



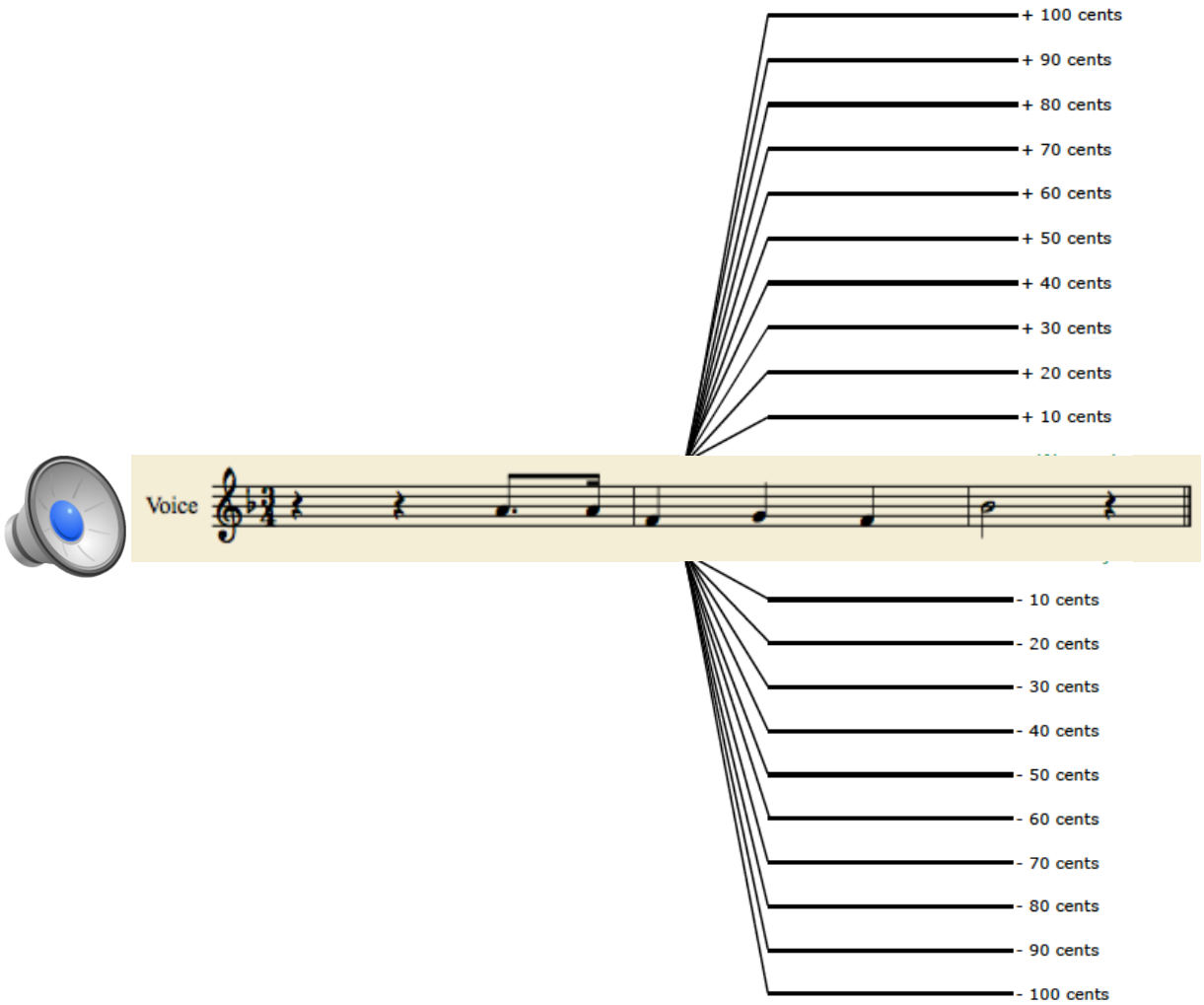


- Familiarity ?
  - Online questionnaire
  - 399 participants from 13 to 70 years old ($M = 29.81$)
  - $t(398) = 20.92$, $p < .001$

Material


Voice
Cible-a-voix.wav transposition 0.0-6.0
Tools
Ready
[sec]
[cents]

Material

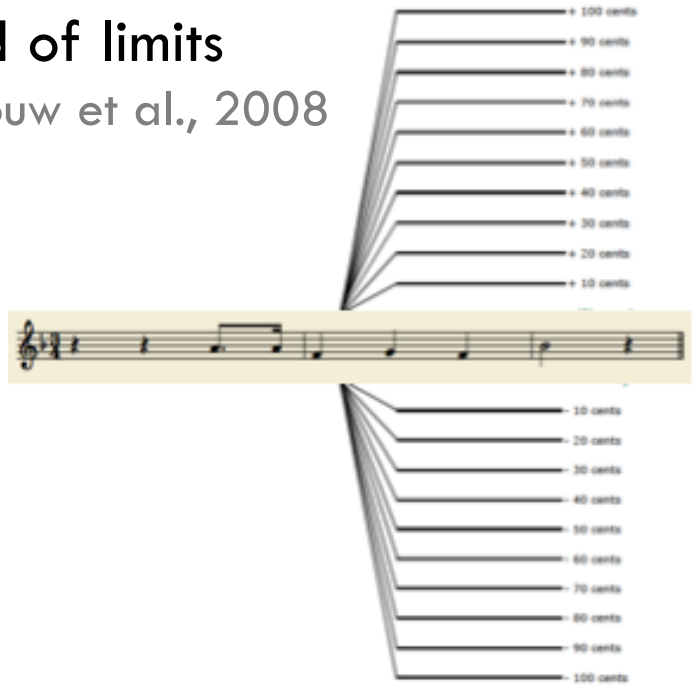

+ 100 cents
+ 90 cents
+ 80 cents
+ 70 cents
+ 60 cents
+ 50 cents
+ 40 cents
+ 30 cents
+ 20 cents
+ 10 cents
Voice
- 10 cents
- 20 cents
- 30 cents
- 40 cents
- 50 cents
- 60 cents
- 70 cents
- 80 cents
- 90 cents
- 100 cents

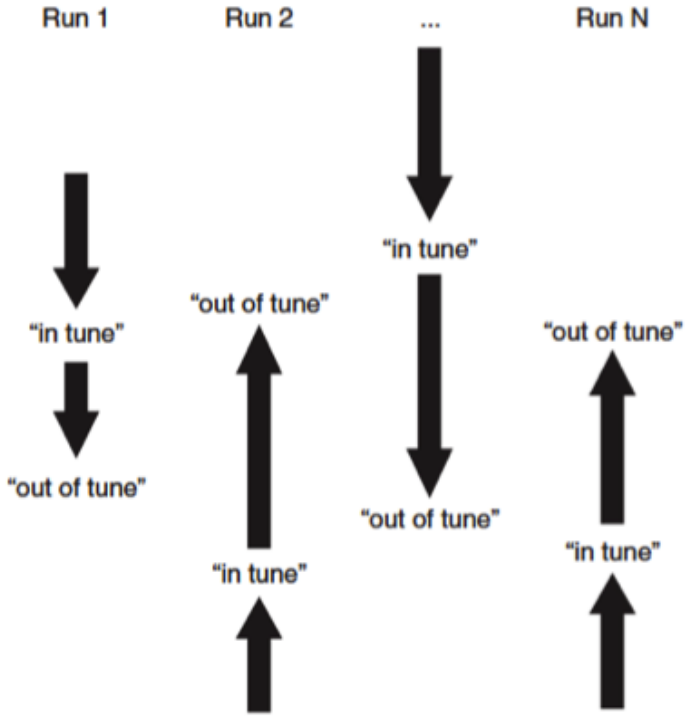
Participants and procedure

- 30 non musicians (*M* = 21.33 years; *SD* = 2.45)
- Two times with 8 to 15 days in between

Method of limits

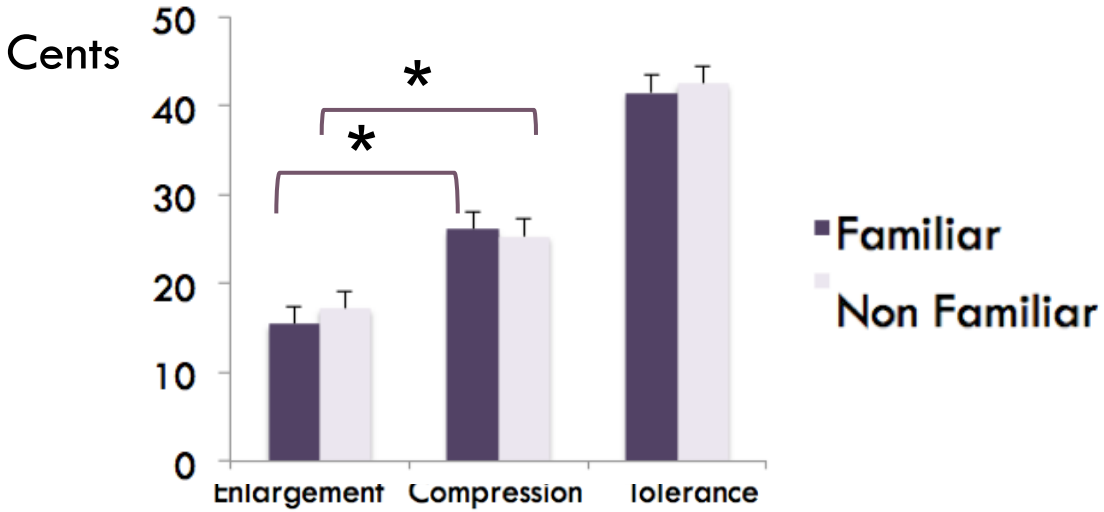
van Besouw et al., 2008





Results

- ✓ Good intra-judges and inter-judges reliability



- ✓ No effect of familiarity
  - Familiar : $t = -4.94$, $p < .001$
  - Non Familiar : $t = -3.27$, $p = .003$
- ✓ Threshold depends on the direction of the error

Definition

- Musical errors
  - Intevals are important in the definition of vocal pitch accuracy in a melodic context
- Pitch categories
  - < quarter-tone, depend on the direction of the error, whatever the melody
- But …

Pitch fluctuations

For now

- Complex signal (Sundberg, 2013)
- Effects of pitch fluctuation on pitch perception (Castellengo, 1994; d'Alessandro & Castellengo, 1994; Hutchins et al., 2012; van Besouw et al., 2008)
- The case of operatic voices (Larrouy-Maestri, Magis, & Morsomme, 2014, in press a, in press b)

➔ **What is a "normal" voice?**

➔ **Perception of "non ideal" sung performances ?**

Descriptive model of pitch fluctuation

- Modification of the temporal adaptation model of Large, Fink & Kelso (2002)
- Not a cognitive model … just designed to get relevant summary statistics for pitch fluctuations

Pitch at time *t*
Comes from "**s**tart" fluctuations
and "**e**nd" fluctuations
influencing an ***asym***ptote

$$Pitch_t = Y_{s_t} + Y_{e_t} + asym$$

Descriptive model of pitch fluctuation

$$Pitch_t = Y_{s_t} + Y_{e_t} + asym$$

$$Y_{s_t} = \left[A_s * \exp(-b_s t) * \cos(2\pi f_s t + \theta_s) \right]$$

Beginning perturbation

Approach to asymptote

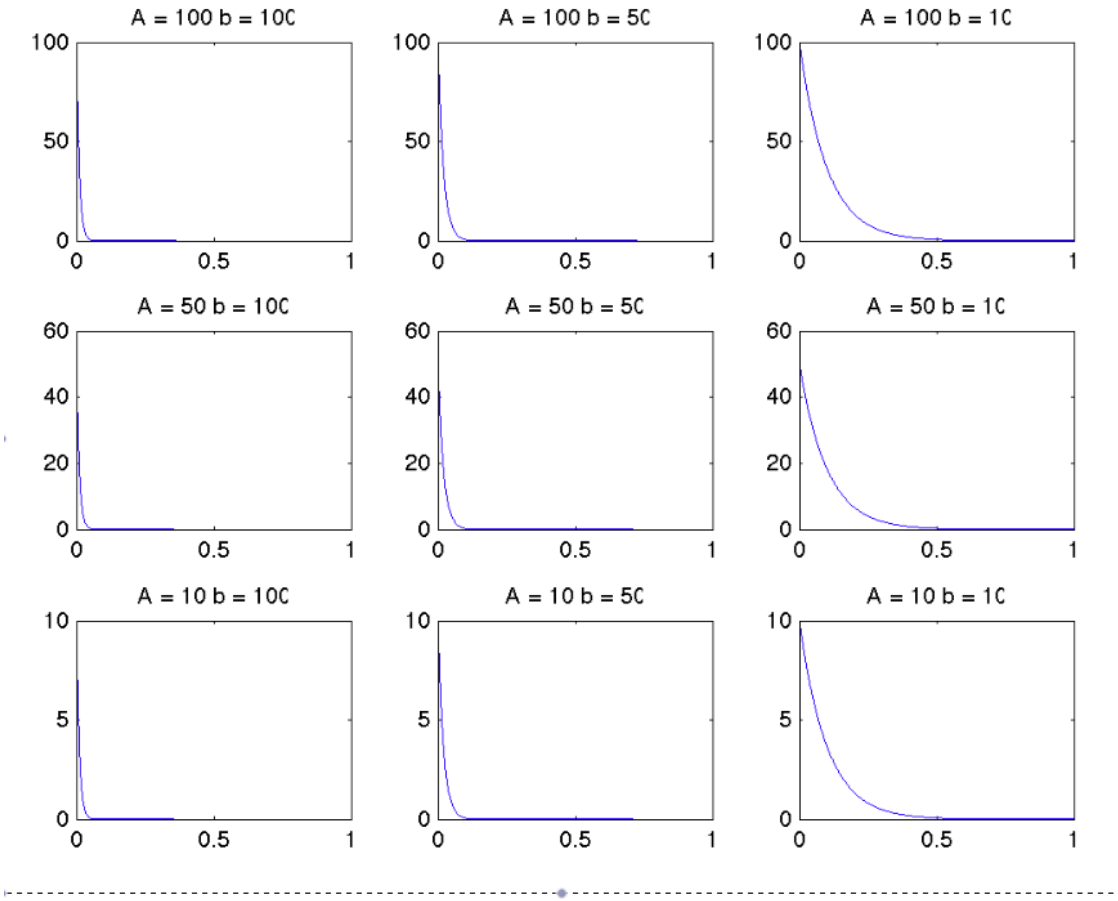
Oscillation around target (overshoot)

Approach is down (= 0) Or up (= pi)

Similar to starting fluctuations, except
-Time values mirror reversed
-New and adjusted parameters

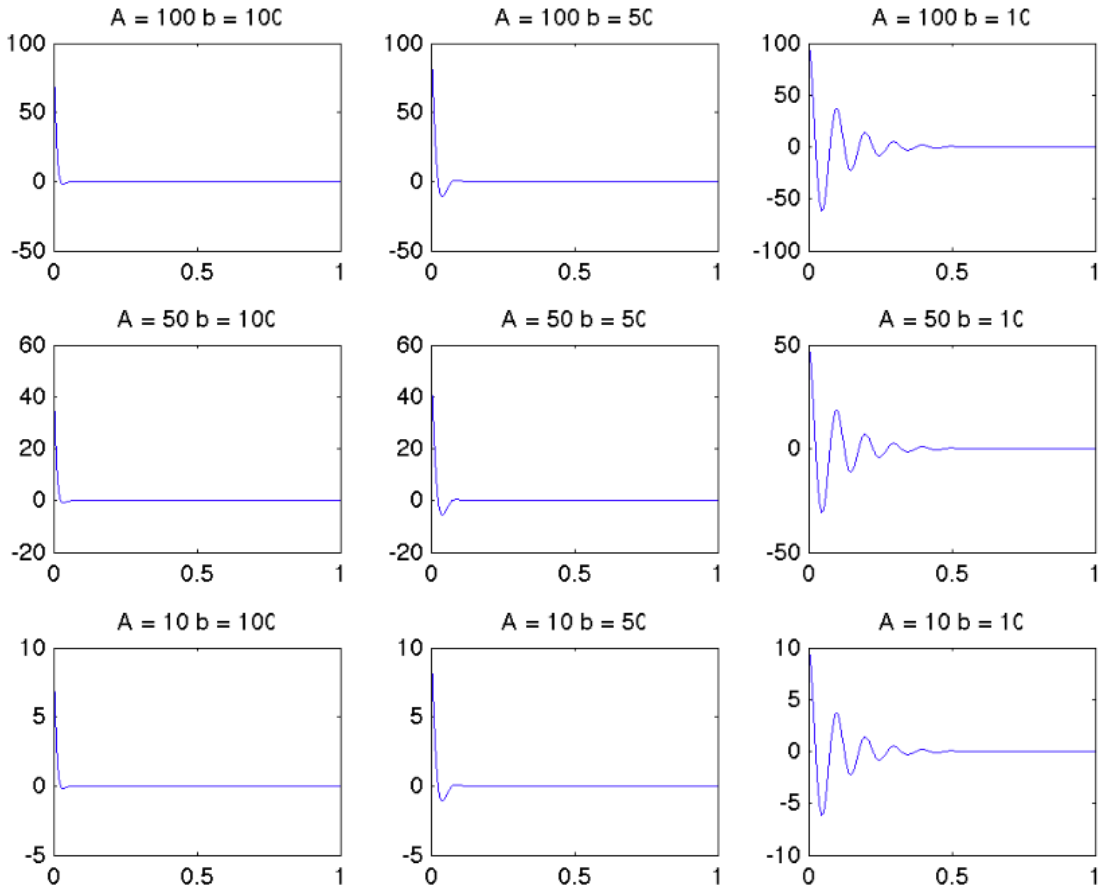
What the model does

Starting fluctuations: magnitude (A) and rate of approach (b)



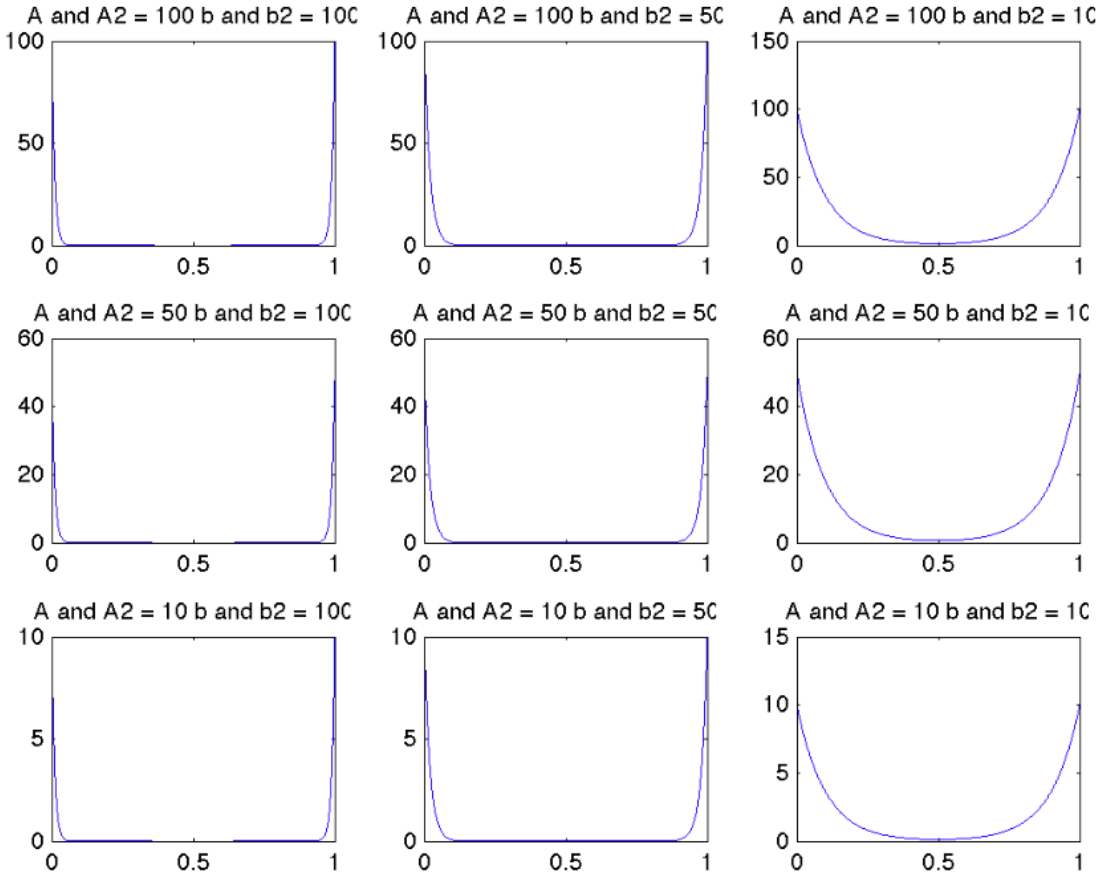
What the model does

Oscillation around approach (f)



What the model does

Starting and ending fluctuations: A_s (and A_e), b_s (and b_e)

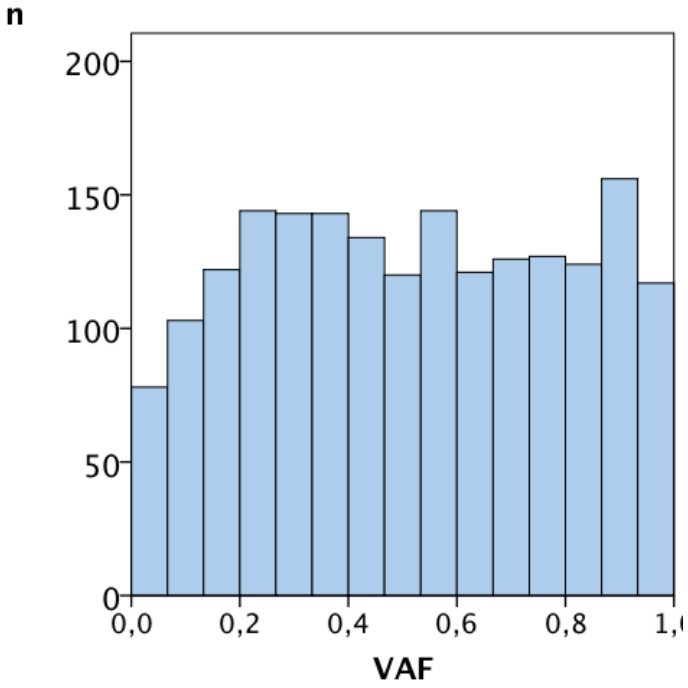


What the model does

- Fitted parameters
  - Rate of approach: b_s, b_e
  - Oscillation around target: f_s, f_e
- Parameters from data
  - *asym:* from middle portion of tone (median)
  - A_s values from difference of beginning to *asym*
  - A_e values from difference of end to *asym*
  - θ is effectively a 'toggle'

How the model fits the datas

- Database
  - Pfordresher & Mantell (2014)
  - 12 “poor” and 17 “good” singers
  - Imitation of accurate singers
  - Melodies of 4 notes
  - 1902 tones to analyse



- Distribution (Shapiro-Wilk $p<.001$)

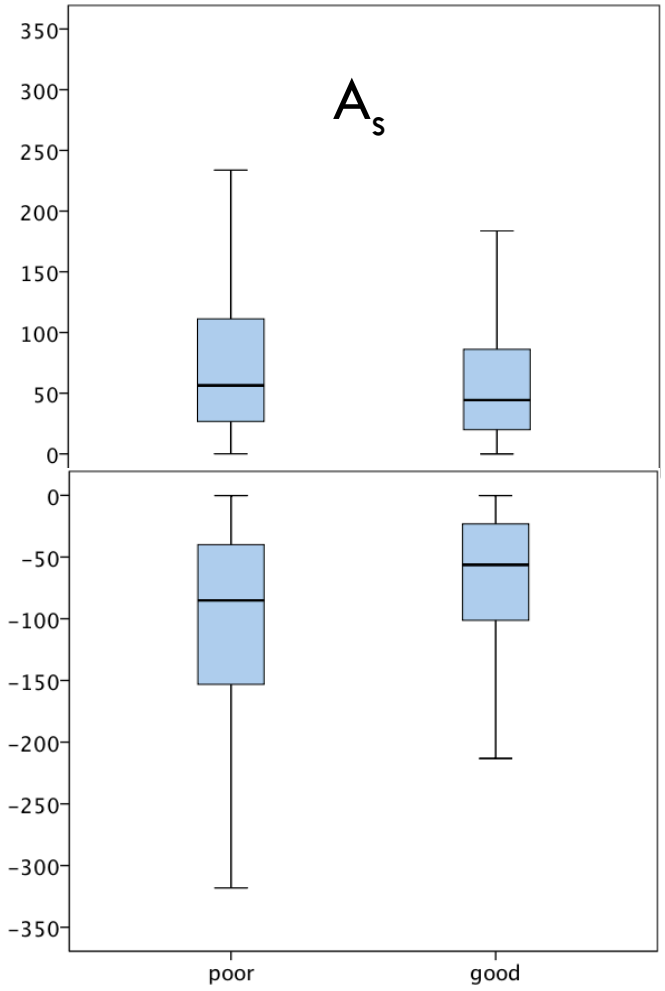
- Not different depending on the quality of the singer
  - $t(1459) = .473$; $p = .637$

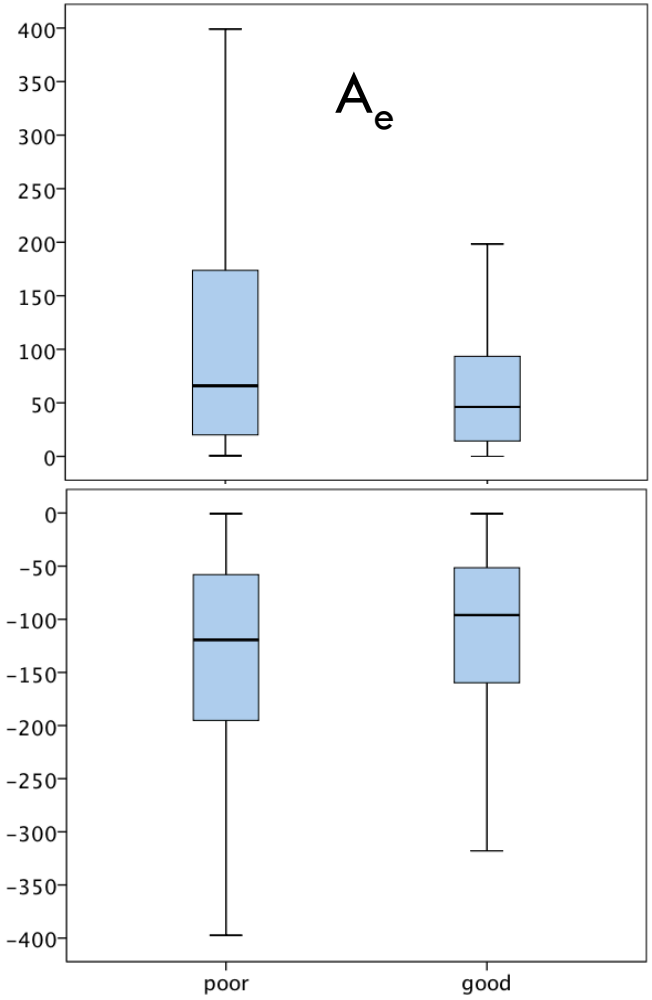
Comparison poor/good singers

	Poor M (SE)	**Good M (SE)**	**Difference**
bs	5.03 (.64)	6.02 (.57)	ns
be	5.55 (.41)	5.16 (.37)	$p = .003$
fs	1.11 (.32)	.68 (.30)	ns
fe	-.41 (.19)	-.35 (.11)	ns
As above	86.41 (5.40)	60.53 (2.55)	$p < .001$
As under	-113.90 (6.01)	-76.11 (3.66)	$p < .001$
Ae above	113.81 (10.38)	77.04 (8.39)	$p < .01$
Ae under	-148.96 (5.93)	-115.86 (3.34)	$p < .001$

Focus on As and Ae

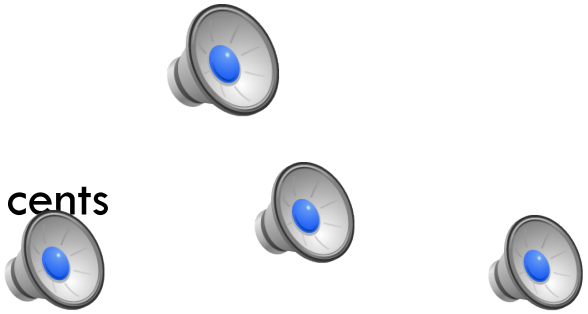
cents





Perception of pitch fluctuation

- Creation of melodies
  - Mean As and Ae in a particular context
  - Pitch deviations on the 3rd note : 0; +/- 50 cents
  - Insertion of pitch fluctuation (As and Ae)
  - Different combinations of As and Ae



- Pairwise comparison
  - Ranking: 1 point if “more in tune”, 0 point for the other, 0.5 point if similar
- Exp 1:
  - Task 1: modification of As OR Ae, with and without pitch deviation
  - Task 2: modification of As AND Ae, without pitch deviation

Perception of pitch fluctuation

- Exp 2:
  - Same as Exp 1 but in an other melodic context

- Exp 3:
  - Threshold / tolerance
  - Magnitude of As and Ae
  - Combination
- Questions
  - Effect of the direction of the attack/ending ?
  - Effect of the size of the attack/ending ?

➔ **Pitch accuracy perception of natural voices**

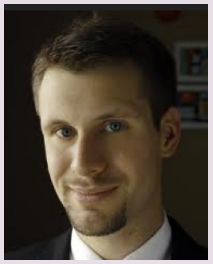
Definition

- Musical errors
  - Intevals are important in the definition of vocal pitch accuracy in a melodic context
- Pitch categories
  - < quarter-tone, depend on the direction of the error, whatever the melody
- Pitch fluctuation
  - Coming soon ☺

Conclusion

- Perception of pitch accuracy
  - Musical errors, pitch categories, pitch fluctuation
- Evaluation
  - Is Marilyn in tune?
  - Tools to evaluate singer quality
  - Tease apart good and poor pitch singers
- Representation of melodic accuracy
  - Toward speaking accuracy









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March 28th
2014

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Definition of vocal pitch accuracy in a melodic context

Thank you!

March 28th 2014

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