

Bel Canto for the Saxophonist: Evaluating Influences of Voice Pedagogy on Saxophone Pedagogy with Suggestions for Future Pedagogical Development

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Overview of the talk

- Intro, disclaimers, and my background
- Need for study / phases of my research
- Contextual timeline
- *Bel canto* – the term, the style, the pedagogy
- The “post-*bel canto*” era
- “Resonance imagery” (term borrowed from James Stark)
- Resonance / resonators for singing and saxophone playing
- Saxophone pedagogy of resonance in context
 - Cecil Leeson’s ideas about the voice
 - Larry Teal, *The Art of Saxophone Playing*
 - Sigurd Rascher and Eugene Rousseau’s altissimo methods
 - David Liebman and Donald Sinta: homing in on the vocal tract
 - J. Michael Leonard, Marcus Weiss & Giorgio Netti: resonance imagery returns
 - John Harle, *The Saxophone: The Art and Science of Playing and Performing*
- Reiterating the premise
- Fly-by of related topics – breathing, the glottis, etc.
- Some applications to the saxophone
- Conclusions

Vocal anatomy

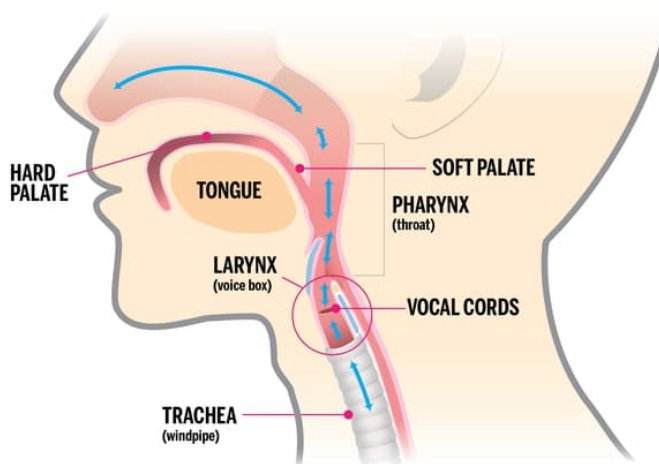
Larynx – the voice box, a hollow box holding the vocal folds; elevates and lowers as needed

Vocal folds – another word for vocal cords

Glottis – the space between the vocal folds (as in a glottal stop/glottal)

Pharynx – the throat (divided bottom to top into laryngopharynx, oropharynx, nasopharynx), the main vocal resonator

Velopharyngeal port – passage between the oropharynx and nasopharynx (closed by the soft palate for wind playing and most singing aside from nasal consonants)



Some applications to saxophone (more are coming!)

Also available on <http://www.derekgrangermusic.com/nasa>

Register blending, adapted from *Hints on Singing* by Manuel Garcia, II (1894)

Diamond note heads=short/palm key fingerings / X note heads=overtone fingerings (others normal)

Blending: middle & side D	Crossing: middle & side D	vary lower pitch to C, B & Bb
Blending: middle & side D#/Eb	Crossing: middle & side D#/Eb	vary lower pitch to C, B & Bb
Blending: middle & side E	Crossing: middle & side E	vary lower pitch to C, B & Bb

Register blending using *messa di voce*

Messa di voce is a perfect controlled vocal swell with continuous vibrato and unwavering pitch. Vocalists often use these to strengthen *passagio* (register break) notes.

1st saxophone *passagio*

2nd saxophone *passagio*

3rd saxophone *passagio*

Sample vocalise

Vocalises are like mini-etudes, though are taught by rote, accompanied, and endlessly flexible. Any accompaniment is fine; the simpler the better. I composed this vocalise to work on consistent air, expressive vibrato, seamless legato, and making a basic phrase. Good intonation is of course a focus of all vocalises.

Alto Saxophone

Piano

Andante (rubato)

etc.

I I IV V I (new I, or its V7) I I

(accompaniment provided just as an example)