**Continued Investigation of the Effect of a Male Singing Model on Kindergarten Children’s Use of Singing Voice Achievement**

Joanne Rutkowski
Professor, Music Education
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA, USA

rvi@psu.edu

*Presented at the annual conference of the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association*

*Hershey, PA*

*March 26-27, 2015*

* In previous research a female singing model has been found to be more effective than a male singing in his natural voice for helping kindergarten children learn to sing.
* In this study, children improved in their singing response to a male model, but they also heard a female model during instruction. Males may want to use falsetto initially with children who are developing their singing voices, but then move to their regular voice, one octave below the children once their singing becomes more consistent.
* Kindergarten children’s use of singing voice can improve during the academic year when given informal, structured musical guidance:
	+ singing songs and patterns in a variety of tonalities and meters
	+ not “forcing” children to respond
	+ not providing corrective feedback, other than appropriately modeling
	+ giving children opportunities to sing in small groups and alone
* You need to give children time to learn to sing! Children have shown minimal singing improvement from October to December but more improvement from December to May. Be patient!

ABSTRACT

Replicable singing models are important as children learn to use their singing voices. Previous research indicates that for elementary school aged children a child model is most effective, then a female model, then a male model. However, in my work with preschool children in a more informal setting, I have noticed that many of these children do not seem to have difficulties singing along with my male undergraduate students. In a recent study I conducted, significant differences in models were found. However, gains in singing were not noted until the second half of the year and the male teacher was only part of instruction for the first half of the year. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of a male singing model over an entire academic year of instruction on kindergarten children’s singing voice achievement. Kindergarten children (N=15, n=10) received informal music guidance once a week for 30-40 minutes from October to May from a team of two music teachers, one female and one male. The teachers sing together during activities, but sometimes the female teacher would take the lead; other times the male teacher. The children were administered the *Singing Voice Development Measure* (SVDM) four times during the instructional period (October, December, March, May). For each test time, on one day the female teacher administered the test with her voice as the singing model; on a different day the male teacher administered the test with his voice as the singing model. Two raters evaluated the randomized recordings of the children’s singing. Intra-rater (*r*=.809 to .958) and inter-rater (*r*=.749 to .869) reliabilities were acceptable. A 3-way repeated measures ANOVA revealed a significant interaction by time and model. The children’s scores increased over time for both models except for the final text performances with the female model; one of these performances appears to be an outlier. With a sample of 10, one outlier would impact the results. Mean scores did increase for both models. In addition, the pretest scores were quite high which would also impact results from a statistical analysis. Given the small sample size a qualitative analysis is recommended and further study is warranted.