



Focal dystonia in trombonists: a reference tool for brazilian music educators and performers

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Abstract: This research discussed about Focal Task Specific Embouchure Dystonia (FTSED), a movement disorder that can affect brass musicians. The document's goal was not only provide information for music educators, applied instructors, and performers in Brazil, but also retraining options for those who may be in need. It discussed the existing literature, possible pedagogical implications that may contribute to the appearance of the disorder, explored personal cases of FTSD published in books, periodicals, and web pages. It also discussed two retraining systems that the author experienced, provided considerations, suggestions and recommendations for future studies as well.

Keywords: Medical Problems of Brass Musicians, Focal Task Specific Embouchure Dystonia, Retraining.

Resumo: Esta pesquisa discutiu a Distonía Focal de Tarefa Específica de Embocadura (DFTEE), um distúrbio do movimento que pode afetar instrumentistas de metais. O objetivo não foi apenas fornecer informações para educadores musicais, professores de instrumentos e intérpretes no Brasil, mas, também, visou oferecer opções de retreinamento àqueles que podem precisar de ajuda. Discutiu-se a literatura do tema focando-se nas possíveis questões pedagógicas que podem vir a contribuir para o aparecimento da desordem, explorando estudos de caso desse quadro (DFTEE). Também foram discutidos dois sistemas de retreinamento vivenciados pelo próprio autor. Por fim, foram feitas considerações, sugestões e recomendações para estudos futuros.

Palavras-chave: Problemas médicos em músicos de metais, Distonía Focal, Embocadura, Retreinamento.

1. Introduction

The goal of this research was to disseminate the information about focal dystonia among Brazilian music educators and performers. It investigated how the disorder affected brass playing in general, and it analyzed the author's own recovery process. To achieve this, the author studied the manifestations, triggering factors, and risk groups for focal dystonia, as well as the potential relationship between the disorder and differing views on brass pedagogy. The author also provided a historical overview of the research that has been done on focal dystonia as well as how frequently it has been discussed and reviewed by health care providers, performers, and music pedagogues in the United States. The focus then shifted to existing treatments, retraining techniques, and possible, ways to prevent the disorder. This work also presented two retraining processes: the first acquired during the author's course work at the University of Kentucky School

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of Music from retired Professor Dale Warren, and the second, a three-day intensive retraining period with Professor Jan Kagarice, a world renowned, leading expert in the field of focal dystonia.

To summarize, this research not only provided information about Focal Dystonia for Brazilian music educators and the Brazilian brass community, but also offered options for retraining and suggestions for how to prevent the disorder from occurring.

2. Literature Review

The literature review answered the following questions for brass performers, pedagogues, and music educators:

1. How is focal dystonia (FD) in brass instrumentalists different from general dystonia? This question seems redundant, but performers and music educators may not be familiar with the terminology and these explanations will provide a better understanding of the disorder.
2. How frequently are brass musicians affected? How does FD affect brass playing? Which instrumentalists from the brass family are affected the most?
3. Are there specific risk factors for FD? Are performers of a particular style affected the more than others? (Classical, Jazz, Pop, Folk).
 - a) Gender? Age?
 - b) Is it possible to attribute the onset of FD to specific pedagogical approaches to brass playing? Social Pressure? Technique/teacher? Practicing behavior? Change of equipment? Can overuse lead to FD? What is the difference between FD and overuse?
4. Is there any treatment for FD? How can FD be prevented?

3. Retraining Review

The retraining review described two different systems that the author experienced first hand. Together, these systems have minimized the effects of FD and made it possible for the author's own return to public performance.

The first retraining period was with Dale Warren, retired trombone professor at the



University of Kentucky School of Music, and the second was a three-day retraining period with Jan Kagarice, adjunct professor at the University of North Texas and a world-renowned expert in the area of focal dystonia. An examination of these two systems served as a guide for trombone teachers and performers who have been affected by dystonia. It also verified whether any of the techniques applied during the author's retraining process have a direct relation to the reviewed literature.

4. Conclusion

The conclusion briefly discussed the information from the literature and retraining reviews. In addition, it will attempt to answer the questions and concerns raised in the explanation of procedures, literature review, and retraining review. Finally, it Draw conclusions based on what has been examined and discussed what must still be done to further increase the information available concerning focal dystonia, as well as make suggestions of new areas for research.

5. Appendices

The appendices contain a self-study case, a transcription of all exercises used during the two retraining systems, and a glossary of terms.

The self-study case served to encourage other brass musicians from around the world to take action and to speak out about their struggles, anxieties, and difficulties, and above all to show that dystonia is not a "psychological problem." Musicians who are affected by dystonia are not crazy or delusional, and the disorder is not contagious. Finally, the self-study case will also serve as a referential work for other researchers and health professionals.

The transcriptions of the retraining exercises are intended to serve as a resource for brass pedagogues, music educators, and musicians that might be retraining students and/or themselves. The author will also provide information that may be needed to contact him such as email, telephone, or addresses in the event that more information is needed.



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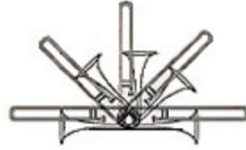
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